



GLOBAL CHALLENGES RESEARCH TEAM (GCRT)

2024-2026 Request for Proposals

Deadline: January 31, 2024

The CSU School of Global Environmental Sustainability (SoGES) is inviting proposals for interdisciplinary research projects, with a special offering for projects focused on humanitarian crises. SoGES is dedicated to developing, documenting, and sharing the knowledge needed to address global sustainability. Our Global Challenge Research Team (GCRT) program, which supports “high-risk/high-reward” approaches to research, is a centerpiece of this effort. The GCRT program provides seed funding to foster **new, creative approaches to complex sustainability problems** and enable initial steps towards lasting solutions.

This proposal cycle has an opportunity to propose research teams in either of two categories:

- a. Sustainability research focused directly on humanitarian crises. SoGES will award ONE GCRT project in this category, which will receive \$60,000 total over two years.
- b. Research focused on any interdisciplinary sustainability topic. SoGES will award TWO GCRT projects in this category, which will receive \$30,000 total over two years.

SoGES was created to work across, within, and beyond colleges and disciplinary units to advance meaningful sustainability scholarship. We seek proposals that are **highly innovative and exploratory** in both their research questions and approach. Team composition should also be experimental, bringing together diverse perspectives, worldviews, career stages, disciplines, backgrounds, ages, genders, and cultures.

SUCCESSFUL PROPOSALS WILL:

- Clearly address sustainability grand challenges and consider social, economic, **and** environmental aspects of the challenge.
- Include a highly diverse PI team representing multiple CSU colleges and expertise. Teams must include at least one early career faculty member or research scientist.
- Articulate how the proposed research is distinct from existing work; and articulate how proposed approach is unique and creative.
- Include something different and collaborative, and demonstrate high-risk/high-reward. This must be evident in both proposed process and planned outcomes of the GCRT.



TIMELINE AND AWARD:

The funding period for SoGES GCRTs is 23 months: July 1, 2024 – May 31, 2026. The second year of funding is contingent upon steady progress in year one with a clear plan for spending in year two.

The **BROADER SUSTAINABILITY-FOCUSED** GCRT application can be for any interdisciplinary socio-environmental topic addressing global grand challenges. Sustainability-focused GCRTs will receive \$10,000 in their first year (July 1, 2024 – May 31, 2025) and \$20,000 in their second year (spending period July 1, 2025 – May 31, 2026).

The **HUMANITARIAN CRISIS AND SUSTAINABILITY** focused GCRT should include topics specifically focused on the causes affecting health, wellbeing, and safety of large groups of people, and solutions to them in areas such as: water, food, energy, climate, and other aspects of human security; unemployment and displacement; injustices due to social attributes whether gender, ethnicity or legal status; diseases, epidemics, and health emergencies; etc. The humanitarian crisis and sustainability-focused GCRT will receive \$20,000 in its first year (July 1, 2024 -- May 31, 2025) and \$40,000 in its second year (July 1, 2025 -- May 31, 2026).

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

- PI team must include at least 3 co-PIs from across a minimum of 2 different CSU colleges. If the team, or a subset of the team, has already been working together, proposal must articulate how proposed research is distinct from past work.
- People who are not eligible to apply: SoGES Executive Council members (Executive Council members can participate on a GCRT, but cannot be a co-PI); Students (GCRTs are highly encouraged to include students, but they cannot be members of the PI team); SoGES staff.

EXPECTATIONS OF GCRTs:

SoGES will provide a significant level of support to teams, including but not limited to: meeting and event planning, online presence, assistance with budgets, use of conference and meeting space, communications materials and support. SoGES expects teams to interact on a regular basis and be actively engaged with SoGES during their funding cycle.

In both years, GCRTs are required to submit brief mid-year surveys and longer annual reports. In year 2, GCRTs will present results to the SoGES community in a format that is relevant to proposed work and audience. Year 2 funding is contingent on demonstrated progress and SoGES review. Teams that fail to expend year 1 funds, or do not meet goals will not receive their second year of funding.

TO APPLY:

Application deadline: January 31, 2024. Submit a proposal in PDF format. Limit 3 pages, using 12 point Times New Roman font and 1" margins (page limit does not include budget or CVs). Include the following:

1. **Name of GCRT.** A GCRT name should be short and pithy, usable for general communications purposes including SoGES website.
2. **Short description.** Provide a brief, three to five sentence summary, written in third person, of the GCRT's proposed work in words that any audience would understand and any organization would want to fund. This short description will be used in all official SoGES communications (website, press releases, annual reports, etc.). Use verbiage that is understandable to both technical and non-technical audiences and can be used in isolation from the rest of the proposal.

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3. **Problem statement.** Describe the sustainability challenge(s) to be addressed and how the proposed work fills a need in sustainability research.
4. **Tell us how it's novel.** Provide a justification for how the research question, team makeup, and/or approach is novel and different. Include how it is uniquely poised to answer an important sustainability challenge and how the exploratory nature of the proposal will have greater impact because of its design.
5. **Plan of work** for both years, including a timeline, expected products, and anticipated milestones. Include metrics of success.
6. **Team list.** a) provide a list of all team members, titles, and affiliations. Indicate in the list who are co-PIs and who are members. Indicate which of the co-PIs should be included in GCRT-related correspondence. b) Tell us about the team makeup, how this team approach will advance work on this topic, and why each of these team members in particular are necessary to advance the work. Articulate how the makeup of the team is distinct from existing partnerships. If team members are already networked or working together, tell us how the proposed work is different than already established projects and thought within that team. Include non-PI team members, students, and collaborators, and what they will add to the project.
7. **Budget.** Plan for both year 1 and year 2. Include any other planned, pending, or received funding for this work. Include any additional resources that might be leveraged because of the GCRT. Funding may not be used for any sub or mini grants.
8. **CVs** for all team co-PIs.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

What in-kind support does SoGES provide that should NOT be included in the budget plan?

SoGES will provide in-kind support for meeting facilities, online presence, event planning, potential workspace, development of communications materials, and other support subject to budget and time constraints.

How are proposals reviewed?

Proposals are ranked and reviewed by a cross-disciplinary panel of CSU faculty, researchers, and SoGES staff.

Can a person apply to be a Resident Fellow and a co-PI on a GCRT?

No. Co-PIs that have also applied to be a SoGES Resident Fellow for 2024-2025 are highly discouraged and will decrease your chances for both proposals.

Can a person apply to both the broad sustainability focused and humanitarian crisis GCRT?

No. Applicants must choose one or the other.

Can my GCRT proposal include external research partners?

Yes. However, the PI team must still represent a minimum of 3 CSU faculty or researchers from across at least 2 of CSU's colleges. While your non-CSU, external research partners are welcome on a proposal, they will not be considered in your team's requirements to have diverse participation of expertise across colleges and cannot receive funding support. Be sure you still have multiple colleges and departments represented from the CSU co-PIs in addition to your external team members.

Can we add or change team composition during the funding period?

Yes, but it is critical to retain breadth across disciplines on the PI team.

I am a student interested in applying for a GCRT, can I put together a team?

Unfortunately, no. We highly encourage undergraduate and graduate student participation on GCRTs, but students are not eligible to apply for a GCRT at the PI-level.

We have been funded as a GCRT already – can we re-apply?

No. If any team members have participated on previously-funded GCRTs, it should be *clearly evident* how proposed work and team makeup are distinctly different than what has been done.

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS continued:

Can we propose development of a new center?

GCRT funding is not intended to be for center development. While some past teams have formed centers as a result of their work, SoGES does not provide GCRT funding for identification and formation of a center.

Can basic research be proposed?

Yes, but include a pathway toward applicability.

We would like to hire a coordinator as part of our proposed GCRT. Is that possible?

Yes, and encouraged if it will help advance the work proposed. Many past successful projects have had a designated coordinator. Generally, a coordinator is paid hourly through the GCRT account, and hours are submitted online to SoGES.

We would like to hire a GRA or graduate student as part of our proposed GCRT. Is that possible?

Yes.

Is the second year of funding guaranteed?

The second year of funding is contingent on demonstrated progress in year one.

Can year 1 funds be carried over to the 2nd year?

No. Funds for each year must be spent in full by May 31st, 4 weeks before the end of the fiscal year.

We want to hold an event, workshop, symposium, or other type of meeting as part of our proposed GCRT work. What should we include in the budget?

Awarded GCRTs receive in-kind support from the School for event planning and communications materials as SoGES resources permit. SoGES staff will help make bookings for space and food, arrange travel, help develop communications materials, and assist with promotion to relevant audiences. If hosting an event, your budget should include the cost of space, food, materials, facilitation, or any other on-site needs, but not promotion, videography, or staff time to help make arrangements, as those will be covered by SoGES.

Can we use funds for a course buyout for PIs?

Yes. Since we expect a serious time commitment from team leaders, limited funds may be requested to compensate departments for some teaching release time needed by co-PIs.

We would like to use funds for summer salary. Is this possible?

Yes and no. 9-month faculty can include some summer salary in the proposed budget. However, funds cannot be used to increase an individual's salary.

We would like to use funds for research scientist salary. Is this possible?

Yes and no. Proposals can include some research scientist salary.

Can our proposed budget be mostly salary support for co-PIs?

No.

Can funds be transferred to my department?

Generally, no. GCRTs usually spend directly out of the account housed at SoGES.

Can GCRT funds be used to purchase alcohol?

No.