

BUREAU OF CANNABIS CONTROL
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
PUBLIC UNIVERSITY RESEARCH GRANTS



DATE ISSUED: SEPTEMBER 17, 2020

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Deadlines

Written Question Submission: September 24, 2020

Application Submission: October 19, 2020

Available Funds: \$30,000,000

The Bureau of Cannabis Control (Bureau) is accepting proposals from public universities in California for research projects related to the implementation and effect of Proposition 64, the voter initiative passed in November 2016, which legalized the non-medicinal adult-use of cannabis. One of the significant components of Proposition 64 was the imposition of taxes on the cultivation and sale of cannabis. A portion of these taxes, \$10,000,000 annually has been designated for grants to public universities to research and evaluate its impact. The Bureau has been provided with the authority to select grant recipients. Awards for any specific research proposal will not exceed two million dollars.

Research proposals must fall into one of several specified categories, which include public health, criminal justice and public safety, economic, environmental impacts, and the cannabis industry. A detailed description of the list of research subjects for grant funding is contained in [Revenue and Taxation Code section 34019](#).

Research projects should plan to use the grant funds within two years from the date of disbursement. However, in certain instances, the Bureau may extend the time in which to use the grant funds. A public university may submit more than one research proposal, provided submissions are not duplicative research projects.

Questions related to this Request for Proposals (RFP) must be submitted to the Bureau in writing no later than 11:59 p.m. on September 24, 2020, at BCCGrants@dca.ca.gov. Additional information may be found on the Bureau's website at https://bcc.ca.gov/about_us/research_grant.html. All applications must be submitted electronically through the Bureau's online portal, https://bcc.ca.gov/webapps/research_grant/, no later than 11:59 p.m. on October 19, 2020.

PUBLIC UNIVERSITY RESEARCH GRANT FUNDING

All proposals must propose research that addresses at least one of the following areas. The research areas include public health, criminal justice and public safety, economic, environmental impacts, and the cannabis industry. Specifically, they include:

Public Health Research. Research in this area should focus on the impacts of the cannabis industry on public health. This may include:

- Health costs associated with cannabis use;
- Cannabis use rates, such as cannabis use association with an increase or decrease in alcohol or drug use;
- Rates of diagnosis for cannabis related substance disorders and effectiveness of treatment programs;
- The effects of cannabis potency levels on health; and
- Impacts of marketing, advertising and packaging on cannabis use by youth.

Criminal Justice and Public Safety Research. Research in this area should focus on the impacts of the cannabis industry on criminal justice and public safety. This may include:

- Impacts on law enforcement;
- Impacts on public resources;
- Cannabis use by youth;
- Outcomes achieved by changes in criminal penalties with cannabis legalization; and
- Impacts on outcomes in the juvenile justice system, including up-charging for cannabis related offenses and probation-based treatments.

Economic Impacts Research. Research in this area should focus on the impacts of the cannabis industry on the economy. This may include:

- Impacts on private and public sectors;
- Government administrative costs and revenue;
- Tax structures and rates;
- Cannabis prices in the licensed and unlicensed markets;
- Monopolies and anti-competitive behavior and prevention thereof;
- Job creation; and

- Workplace safety.

Environmental Impacts Research. Research in this area should focus on the impacts of the cannabis industry on the environment. This may include:

- Environmental impacts related to cannabis production and the criminal prohibition of cannabis production.

Cannabis Industry Research. Research in this area should focus on more generalized impacts of the cannabis industry. This may include:

- Location, structure, and function of licensed cannabis business;
- Whether regulation of the cannabis industry is consistent with Proposition 64 and effectiveness of regulatory methods; and
- Demographic data, including race, ethnicity, and gender.

ELIGIBILITY

Grant funds are available to public universities in California. The Bureau will consider only one proposal per applicant for a given research project. Applicants may submit more than one proposal if the proposals are for separate and distinct research projects or activities. Applicants will not be awarded more than two million dollars for any specific proposal.

TIMELINE

All applicants are hereby advised of the following schedule and shall adhere to the required dates and times for submission. All submissions must be received by the Bureau by 11:59 p.m. on the last day for the submission.

RFP Issued	September 17, 2020
Final Date for Written Question Submittal	September 24, 2020
Responses to Applicants' Questions	October 2, 2020
Final Date for Application Submission	October 19, 2020
Grant Award Notification	November 6, 2020

QUESTIONS REGARDING RFP AND APPLICATION PREPARATION

This RFP provides grant applicants with the procedures for preparing grant applications to submit to the Bureau. Once the RFP has been issued, the Bureau may only answer technical questions about the RFP. Questions must be submitted in writing to BCCGrants@dca.ca.gov by the deadline in the table above. Additionally, applicants shall not contact or engage in discussions with other state government officials regarding this RFP. Bureau staff cannot assist applicants with the preparation of their applications.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Information must be provided as directed in this RFP. This includes following all instructions, using specific forms and formats, and providing requested information. Failure to provide the required information or to provide the information in the manner directed may disqualify the application or result in a lower rating.

The individual submitting the application for the applicant must have the authority to submit the application on behalf of the applicant, must attest to the truth and accuracy of the information provided, and must provide reasonable assurance that the funding will be used in accordance with the application if selected for funding.

When completed, the application must include the Scope of Proposal and the Budget Form.

Scope of Proposal

The Scope of Proposal is the main body of information which describes the proposal. The Scope of Proposal should be a detailed description of the research the applicant proposes to conduct and how the requested grant funds will be used for that project.

The format of the Scope of Proposal must be:

- No more than four (4) typewritten pages of single-spaced type with each page sequentially numbered;
- Black and white print only; and
- Standard 12-point font.

When preparing the application, address each of the following four areas in the order in which they appear below using the enumeration below.

1. Description of your proposed research project

- Describe the benefits of the research project.
- Explain if there are similar research studies that have been done or are currently underway on the issue you propose to research. If there are, how is your proposed research project different from the research projects that have already been completed or are being completed on the subject.
- Describe the methodology that will be used to conduct the research project.

- Describe any partners or collaborators that will be used for the project.
- Will cannabis be used in the research project? If yes, explain how the cannabis will be obtained.
- Provide a detailed timeline for the research project.

2. Requested Funding

- Describe how the grant funds will be expended in detail and include all items that will be funded by the grant funds. Specifically address what activities the grants funds will be used toward.
- If you do not receive the full amount of grant funds requested, describe how the grant funds you receive will be utilized. Specifically address whether you will move forward with the proposed research project or a modified research project addressing the issue you propose to research.

3. Experience and Project Personnel

- Describe all cannabis related research projects conducted by your university.
- Describe current and past research projects conducted by your university in emerging areas of law, science, or public health.
- List all proposed staff that will be working on the proposed research or administering grant funds and their titles, including professional and technical, full-time and part-time staff, and the percentage of time each will expend on the proposed program, regardless of whether any salary is to be funded by the State contract.
- Please include a copy of the curriculum vitae for all staff that will be performing research and analytical activities (not included in the page limitation).

4. Resources

- Describe available resources and the capacity to manage overall research project.

Budget Form

A line-item budget form must be prepared for the application and the applicant must identify the need for each expenditure on the required form.

SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION

All applications must be completed and submitted electronically through an online portal which can be found at https://bcc.ca.gov/webapps/research_grant/. The application does not have a save feature to allow partial completion and submission at a later time. Once the application is submitted through the online portal and received by the Bureau, the applicant will receive a confirmation email that includes a copy of the data submitted with the application and a tracking number.

Applications should provide straightforward and concise descriptions of the applicant's ability to satisfy the requirements of this RFP notice. The application must be complete and accurate. Omissions, inaccuracies, or misstatements will be sufficient cause for rejection of an application. The completed application must also contain a Scope of Proposal and a Budget Form as described above.

Failure to include all necessary components may result in the rejection of the application or will result in a lower score in the rating process.

Costs for developing applications and in anticipation of award of the agreement are entirely the responsibility of the applicant and shall not be charged to the State.

An applicant may modify an application after its submission by withdrawing its original application and resubmitting a new application prior to the application submission deadline. Application modifications offered in any other manner, oral or written, will not be considered.

An applicant may withdraw its application by submitting a written withdrawal request to the Bureau, signed by the applicant or an authorized agent. An applicant may thereafter submit a new application prior to the application submission deadline.

Applicants, before submitting their documents, should carefully proof them for errors and adherence to the application requirements. The Bureau is not responsible for any errors or defects in the application and materials submitted, and applicants should not rely on the Bureau during the evaluation process to discover and report to the applicant any such defects and errors.

Applicants should also submit the Government Agency Taxpayer ID Form with the application.

The Bureau reserves the right to reject all applications at any time.

EVALUATION AND SCORING

Each application will be checked for the presence or absence of required information in conformance with the submission requirements.

Applications that contain false or misleading statements, or which provide references, which do not support an attribute or condition claimed by the applicant, may be rejected.

Applications that meet the eligibility requirements and that include all the required documentation will be evaluated and assigned a score. Applications that do not meet the minimum qualifications or fail to provide all the required documentation will be disqualified and will not be evaluated.

The applications will be evaluated and scored according to the criteria indicated below. Applications must receive a minimum combined score of 80 points out of a maximum 100 points. Applications that do not receive a minimum score of 80 points will be eliminated from consideration.

The scoring criteria is as follows:

1. Overall Proposal

The comprehensiveness of the proposed research project, the State's current need for information from the proposed research project, and the quality of the proposal, including:

- a. Description of Proposal (10 points): List the issue to be addressed, and how it satisfies the requirements under Revenue and Taxation Code section 34019(b).
- b. Funding Requested (5 points): Provide a dollar amount requested, with a breakdown of funds requested by fiscal year. This should also be reflected in the Budget.
- c. Goals and Objectives Summary (10 points): List the goals and objectives, and how they can be measurably achieved.

2. Scope of Proposal

The proposal is sufficiently detailed and describes the research to be performed including:

- a. Description of Objectives to be Achieved (10 points): The extent to which the proposed project is designed to achieve objectives as specified in Revenue and Taxation Code section 34019(b). Explain why this proposed project is more likely to achieve objectives than projects in other research areas.
- b. Description of Measurable Outcomes (20 points): The extent to which the proposed project is designed to achieve measurable outcomes, and the clarity of the measures for success, including, for research-

based objectives, the scientific and technical merit of the proposed project as evaluated by relevant experts. Include history of similar research projects and how these projects were successful or unsuccessful in reaching its goals and objectives.

- c. Feasibility (15 points): The extent to which the proposed project is feasible, demonstrated by a detailed timeline for project completion, including readiness. Timeline should include goals that are to be achieved in monthly increments if the estimated project completion date does not exceed one year, and in three-month increments if the proposed project is estimated to exceed one year.
- d. Personnel (5 points): Qualifications of the staff who will be assigned or working on the proposed project, and whether they provide direct services to grant activities. Qualifications should include staff resume, and description of duties and responsibilities with percent allocations.

3. Budget

- a. Line-item Budget (20 points): The budget contains a detailed line-item budget for the proposed contract period. The budget includes explanation of need for each item contained within the budget.
- b. Budget Proposal (5 points): The budget contains a statement on how applicant will ensure that the proposed project adheres to the line-item budget, and steps to be taken if grant activities exceed the budget.

Applications are reviewed by a committee, who will evaluate and score the applications. In awarding grant funding, the Bureau will take into consideration the committee's recommendations regarding the highest scoring applications and funding amounts.

GRANT NOTIFICATION AND DISTRIBUTION

The Bureau will notify the person who submitted the application on behalf of the applicant in writing whether the public university has been selected for grant funds and the amount of the award. If applications for funding are greater than the amount appropriated for this grant program, the Bureau will prorate funding as necessary. No public university will be awarded more than two million dollars for an individual research project.

A standard State contract (Std. 213) will be provided to applicants that are selected for funding. The contract is the agreement between the applicant and the Bureau, which authorizes the payment of grant funds. The agreement must conform to the applicant's proposal for expending grant funds, in accordance with the Bureau's award of the funds. The official signing the contract for the grantee must be the official designated by the public university to enter into the contract. The Bureau may request documentation establishing the person's authority to enter into the contract on behalf of the recipient.

Applicants selected for funding will be required to be in compliance with the Drug-Free Workplace Certification and Nondiscrimination Compliance Statement as required by the Bureau.

If an applicant selected for funding fails to provide the executed State contract provided by the Bureau by the date indicated by the Bureau, the Bureau in its sole discretion may determine that the applicant is no longer eligible for the grant funds.

The Bureau's determination as to eligibility for grant funding, or the amount of grant funding awarded, is not subject to appeal.

Grant funds will only be distributed after the state contract for the grant funds is executed and effective. Recipients will receive a single disbursement of grant funds awarded.

Recipients shall not subcontract any portion of the research project funding by grant funds awarded by the Bureau, nor shall they procure any equipment, without prior written consent of the Bureau.

DELIVERABLES

Recipients selected for funding through this RFP must utilize funds within two years from date of distribution of the awarded funds, unless otherwise authorized by the Bureau. If the project is authorized for more than two years, recipient shall publish a report on its findings at a minimum every two years.

A public university awarded a grant shall comply with all regulatory requirements promulgated by the Bureau, including the reporting requirements to the Bureau contained in section 5904 of title 16 of the California Code of Regulations. Recipients shall also provide information related to the research funded, and the use of, the grant funding to the Bureau upon request.

Halfway through the research project period, recipients shall publish an interim research report that at minimum includes: the scope of the research project; the preliminary findings; and preliminary recommendations.

At the end of the research project period, recipients shall publish a final research report that at minimum includes: the scope of the research project; the findings; recommendations; and issues of note.

All reports and documents that will be published shall be submitted to the Bureau at least 90 days before the publication date. Recipients shall make presentations related to the research project.

Recipients shall retain all research and financial data necessary to substantiate the purposes for which the funds were spent, for the duration of the funding, and for a period of seven years after completion of the research project. Recipients shall provide such documentation to the Bureau upon request.