

## Request for Proposals (RFP): 2019 WQRF Research Grant Program

RFP Issued: October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2018

Submission Deadline: January 7<sup>th</sup>, 2019

### Introduction

The Water Quality Research Foundation (WQRF) is issuing this request for proposals under an annual program which awards one research grant for a project relating to the point-of-use and point-of-entry drinking water treatment industry. This award is in addition to the other funding allocated by the WQRF for project specific requests.

The aim of this program is to allow academic and independent researchers more flexibility for direct submission of study proposals which are topical to the WQRF research agenda. For the 2019 grant, the WQRF will award funding to one proposal which falls under either of the following research agenda categories:

Final Barrier – Investigate point-of-use and whole house devices (*AKA point-of-entry*) as a means for sustainable treatment to create more opportunities for industry professionals to provide better quality water to more people.

Emerging Contaminants – Research to aid or support implementation of technologies to provide cost effective (*point-of-use and/or point-of-entry*) options for emerging contaminants.

For the 2019 grant the cost of the proposed research shall not exceed \$50,000, with preference for indirect costs not to exceed 13%.

### Who is WQRF?

The Water Quality Research Foundation (WQRF) was formed in 1949 to serve as a universally recognized, independent research organization for residential, commercial and industrial drinking water treatment topics. Since inception, WQRF has sponsored numerous research studies which have established best practices, generated essential marketing information, positively impacted legislative change, and helped decrease product testing costs.

### Research Agenda Topics

The proposal shall be relevant to either the “Final Barrier” or “Emerging Contaminants” research agenda topics. More information on these research agenda topics is provided above and in Appendices B and C.

### Requirements for Researchers

Researchers must be well-qualified and have expertise relevant to point-of-use and point-of-entry drinking water treatment. The names and qualifications of primary investigators involved in this project must be provided.

The researchers must have the facilities and capabilities to accomplish this project or provide a list of partners and their qualifications they will work with to accomplish this project, as well as a list of the primary investigators from those partners.

### Timeline

The timeline for the proposed project should be no more than 1-2 years (start to final report), with a preference for the shortest reasonable timeline.

## Restrictions

Please read this section carefully and consult with the WQRF if you feel your proposal borders on one of these restrictions. Proposals which violate any one of these restrictions will not be funded by the WQRF.

The proposal shall be scoped to prevent use of the study to promote or disparage a specific product model, company or brand name.

While the WQRF supports the benefits of product validation testing, the WQRF does not fund validation testing of new products or emerging technologies.

The researchers cannot have a commercial interest in any products or technologies proposed for inclusion in the study.

The research shall not be of a type ordinarily carried on by commercial or industrial operations such as the ordinary testing and inspection of materials or products, or design and construction of water treatment equipment or parts thereof.

## Business Requirements and Responsibilities

In support of this project, WQRF and WQA agree to the following duties and responsibilities:

- WQRF will provide the researcher with any background information needed, such as a list of industry stakeholders.
- WQRF technical staff and the WQA Water Sciences Committee will take an active role in technical review of interim reports and approval of the final report, especially with regards to industry specific knowledge or operations which the researcher may not be otherwise aware of.
- WQA will track progress and provide any necessary coordination with industry stakeholders throughout the course of the research, will supply technical input upon request, and will facilitate support and input from the Water Sciences Committee.
- WQA and WQRF will provide public access to an executive summary of the report and provide access to the full report for WQA members.

The researcher will contract with WQRF to perform the following activities:

- Perform all aspects of the research concept and any other activities deemed appropriate by WQRF that falls within the scope of the research.
- Provide an invoicing schedule for completing the research, including a schedule of interim reports for peer review by the research task force, and complete the study in a timely manner according to the schedule.
- Engage with and provide response to the WQRF questions relating to progress and coordination, as well as Water Sciences Committee comments on interim reports.
- Agree all intellectual properties and copyrights are owned by the Water Quality Research Foundation.
  - WQRF owns the entire right, title, and interests, including all copyrights and other intellectual property rights, in and to all Project Intellectual Property developed by WQRF personnel. Project Intellectual Property that is jointly developed by the researcher and WQRF personnel under this Agreement will be jointly owned by the researcher and WQRF.
  - It is important to understand that while the WQRF reserves the intellectual property rights associated with the final report submitted to the WQRF, and copyright thereof, and all rights to

publish the final report, the WQRF freely shares the knowledge gained through the research that they fund, and the researcher will not be precluded from republishing that knowledge with proper citation to the WQRF report, or from using that knowledge to further their own research.

- Please note that WQRF does not wish to fund product development activities (e.g., new product validation, ordinary testing and inspection of materials or products, design and construction of water treatment equipment, etc.). Consistent with this policy, the WQRF bylaws require that any accidental patents or trademarks resulting from research they fund shall be made available to the public-at-large on a non-discriminatory basis. While this is a critical limitation to WQRF funding that all submitters should be aware of, the WQRF has never had to enforce this clause since proposals which are expected to result in a patent for new technology, or to validate a new product, are not funded. Projects that involved general benchmarking of the benefits relative to a technology sector have been funded (e.g., the benefits of softening study, the benchmarking of emerging scale prevention technologies) only when they were structured to benefit the industry as a whole, and not to promote a specific product, to benefit a specific manufacturer, or to develop a new patent.
- None of the research information/results can be published without prior review and approval by WQRF (the WQRF may delegate this review to the WQA Water Sciences Committee or another WQA committee). However, it is WQRF's preference that after such review and approval of the final report, the researcher will seek to publish the study in a peer-reviewed publication.

## Confidentiality

All proposals will be treated as confidential and will not be shared outside of the WQRF, with the exception of committees, task forces and WQA staff members who are acting under restriction of confidentiality on behalf of the WQRF. The distribution list includes the WQA Water Science Committee (members only) and their assigned Research Task Force. The Water Science Committee and its assigned Research Task Force are made up of subject matter experts from the water treatment industry.

## Proposal Format

Proposals shall follow the format provided in Appendix A and be accompanied with the one-page Executive Summary form. The Executive Summary form is available as a downloadable Word document at <http://www.wqrf.org/open-rfps.html>.

## Selection Criteria

Proposals will be mainly evaluated based on value by rating the potential (positive) impact of the research compared to the cost. The WQRF prefers to keep indirect costs at or below 13% of the total research budget. The researcher's credibility, previous experience, qualifications and publications will also be taken into consideration. Additional factors will be considered where applicable.

## Questions?

The contact for this RFP is Kayla Heriaud. Questions can be directed to her at any time.

*Kayla Heriaud*  
WQRF Research Project Leader  
630-929-2599  
[kheriaud@wqrf.org](mailto:kheriaud@wqrf.org)

## Due Date

Proposals and Executive Summaries must be submitted by email to [Kayla Heriaud](mailto:Kayla.Heriaud) no later than January 7<sup>th</sup>, 2019.

## APPENDIX A – Format

Proposals should include the following sections, and if necessary other sections may be added:

Abstract – Summarize the research project, plan, timeline and objectives. Identify which research agenda topic the proposal falls under. Explain the potential (positive) impact on the industry from your proposed project.

Introduction and literature review – Should include an overview of the research topic, especially focal points which are relevant to the proposed work, and a review of related research or publications which define what is already known about the research topic.

Detailed research plan and methodology - Describe the proposed experiment(s) including any equipment and methods which will be used to complete the work.

Deliverables - Describe the deliverable(s) that you will be providing for this work. For example, the project deliverables might include:

- Raw data;
- Interim research report(s);
- Final research report;
- Hosting a workshop; or
- Other deliverables.

Estimated timeline – This should be completed based on an unknown start date (e.g., the first interim report will be issued 3 months from the authorized start date...) The projected start date is subject to change but estimated to fall between May and June of 2019. The timeline shall not exceed 1-2 years from the start date, with a preference for the shortest reasonable timeline. Please include an estimated invoicing schedule along with your timeline that includes the percent owed at the start of the project and its various milestones.

Credentials and qualifications – A statement of qualifications, previous experience, and related publications of the primary and supporting investigators.

Budget – Total budget shall not exceed \$50,000. At a minimum, the budget should be broken down by the following categories (where applicable): Salaries, Fringe Benefits, Equipment (including materials & supplies), Travel, Subcontract fees, and Indirect costs. The WQRF prefers to keep indirect costs at or below 13%. Other categories may be added as needed.

Potential Conflict Circumstances statement (required) – A statement shall be included reporting any direct or indirect circumstances which could potentially create a conflict of interest. For example, if the proposed study could further the interests of a company with which the researcher or the research organization has a contractual agreement to provide testing, certification, consulting or other services (or is negotiating such an agreement), that shall be disclosed as a potential conflict circumstance. The WQRF shall have final authority over whether a potential conflict circumstance represents a Conflict of Interest.

## APPENDIX B – Final Barrier

*Final Barrier - Investigate point-of-use and whole house (aka, point-of-entry) devices as a means for sustainable treatment to create more opportunities for industry professionals to provide better quality water to more people.*

What is “Final Barrier”? Even though the water leaving a municipal facility meets the Federal Safe Water Drinking Act standard, it may not be of that same quality when it comes out of the faucet at the point of use. A lot can happen once the water has left the station:

- Formation of disinfection byproducts
- Water flows through corroded pipes and fixtures
- Inorganics from biofilms can be released into the water
- Contaminant intrusions from distribution line breaks

Technologies are currently tested, certified, and available for use which can economically provide a “Final Barrier” to guard against contamination in the home or workplace.

Additionally, these “Final Barrier” point-of-use or point-of-entry products can provide a higher quality of drinking water when needed for the protection of people who fall into a higher risk category. For example, point-of-use or point-of-entry products can be used for the removal of trace levels of unregulated contaminants, including endocrine disruptors.

Since these “Final Barrier” solutions are economical, they can also provide solutions for small systems which are out of compliance with the Safe Drinking Water Act and cannot afford the cost of a centralized treatment solution.

Proposals under the Final Barrier research agenda category should aim to fill in knowledge gaps which would facilitate point-of-use or point-of-entry products providing better quality water to more people.

## APPENDIX C – Emerging Contaminants

*Emerging Contaminants - Research to aid or support implementation of technologies to provide cost effective (point-of-use and/or point-of-entry) options for emerging contaminants.*

Emerging contaminants in drinking water that the WQRF is tracking or is aware of (listed in no specific order) include, but are not limited to:

- Contaminants which have been, or are currently being, monitored through the Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR)
- Perfluorochemicals (PFCs)
- Microplastics
- Hexavalent chromium
- Pharmaceuticals and personal care products
- Endocrine disruptors
- Opportunistic pathogens such as *Legionella* and other microbial contaminants
- Manganese