USDA

Forest Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Health Protection
Special Technology Development Program

Proposal Instructions and Program Guidelines

Program Objectives, Priorities, and Project Eligibility

The Special Technology Development Program is administered at the national level and funds are provided by the USDA Forest Service Forest Health Protection, Forest Service Research, the Eastern Environmental Threat Assessment Center, and the Western Environmental Threat Assessment Center.

Projects submitted to this Program must contribute to fulfilling the Forest Health Protection (FHP) mission: To protect and improve the health of America's rural, wildland, and urban forests - i.e. *must address forest insects, forest pathogens and diseases, and invasive plants.*

National STDP Program Objective:

The objective of the FHP Special Technology Development Program is *to quickly move mature research findings into practical applications* by developing or improving technologies that increase our ability to manage and restore forest systems through prevention, detection, and response to forest insects, pathogens, and invasive species.

National Priorities:

Priorities are set by the FHP Directors, which if met, will give a higher ranking to proposals. STDP national program priorities are:

1. Technologies that address field diagnostics and screening tools that lead to the early detection of high priority emerging invasive species
2. Technologies that help quantitatively assess the impacts or risks of multiple interacting threats, including native/ invasive insects and diseases, invasive plants, fire, environmental disturbances, and climate change, and include capabilities to better integrate forest health data into cross boundary and landscape-level analyses
3. The development of silviculture and other pest management tools and methods that improve, maintain, and restore forest health

Proposal Requirements and Eligibility:

- ✓ Must address the FHP program mission
- ✓ Must be submitted through the STDP Regional Representatives
- ✓ Must have an FHP sponsor who is **directly involved** in the project proposal, development, and implementation. The **FHP sponsor must agree to sponsor the project** prior to proposal submission
- ✓ Have a maximum project duration of 3 years with results that **can be implemented** upon completion
- ✓ Must meet cost-share match requirements if you are a non-federal entity receiving funds through a Grant or Cooperative Agreement. However, in certain circumstances and on a case-by-case basis, match may be reduced or waived by the Deputy Chief for State and Private Forestry.
- ✓ Must meet FS Grants and Agreements requirements. Please specify where any requested salary expenses are going to (e.g., contracts, in-house, etc.). Additionally, Forest Service recipients must follow the new budget accountability and modernization (BAM) requirements. **See *Note below for additional information.**

Types of Projects Considered:

Technology oriented proposals addressing a broad range of topics are accepted. Examples include but are not limited to:

- ✓ More rapid or cost-effective detection of insects, pathogens, or invasive plants, especially exotics
- ✓ Improved hazard rating systems for insects, diseases, or invasive plants
- ✓ Models that evaluate climate change impacts on the spread of native and non-native invasive species
- ✓ Develop or improve insect trapping technologies

Note: Technologies for underlined biological control of invasive forest pests is covered under another Program! Those proposals should be submitted to Biological Control for Invasive Forest Pests (BCIFP) Program through the BCIFP Regional Representatives.

Submitting New Proposals and Project Reports

This Program is specifically for developing technologies that enhance the effectiveness of FHP Programs and program operations. _Do not_ submit proposals that would use STDP funds exclusively for research, routine surveys, or basic technical assistance.

To avoid duplication of planned or ongoing work, and to identify avenues for building on current work and potential cooperation, we encourage you to discuss your ideas with members of your local FHP staff and your Regional STDP Representative (see below). A maximum of 3 proposals may be elevated by each Region for National consideration.

Due Dates:
- ✓ There is one request for proposals, annually. New proposals are submitted to the national program by the Regional STDP Coordinators – so you must work with them. **The deadline to submit New Project Proposals, Progress, and Final Reports to Regional Representatives is October 20, 2023**. However, Regions may have pre-proposal deadlines to facilitate proposal preparations.
- ✓ **Regional Representatives will submit nationally elevated New Project Proposals along with Progress and Final Reports to the National Program Manager by December 1, 2023.**

Note: The federal fiscal year runs from October 1 to September 30. For example, Fiscal Year 2024 (FY 2024) starts October 1, 2023 and ends September 30, 2024.

Required Forms:

Use the New Project Proposal, Progress, and Final Report forms available on the FHP Grants web page.
- ✓ Please use the FY24 fillable "**New Proposal Form**" for submitting a new proposal.
  - ➢ Projects will only be accepted if they meet the definition of technology development.
  - ➢ The budget should show a thorough explanation of all costs and contributions (including non-federal match or leveraged funds) from the cooperators. Non-Federal entities receiving the funds through a grant or cooperative agreement for projects occurring on non-federal lands must show the appropriate cost-share (50/50) match. However, in certain circumstances and on a case-by-case basis, match may be reduced or waived by the Deputy Chief for State and Private Forestry.
- ✓ For **Continuing Projects**, whether or not you are requesting funding in the current year, please submit an STDP Progress Report form. Use the FY24 fillable "Progress Report" form for submitting a Progress Report. Continuing projects with requests for funding will be evaluated for appropriate performance.
- ✓ For **Completed Projects ending by September 30** of the current year, please submit a STDP Final Report form. Use the FY24 fillable "Final Report" form for submitting a Final Report. If the project is closed but products are pending, please fill out and submit a Progress Report form in lieu of the Final Report form.
- ✓ **NEW: In addition to the Final Report form, please submit a 1-page project summary** (template available on the FHP Grants web page).

NOTE: portions of these forms may become available to the public on the FHP Grants website. Please consider spelling, punctuation, verbiage, etc. accordingly.

STDP Regional Coordinators	FHP Program Office	Email
Gina Davis	Regions 1 (Northern Region)	gina.davis@usda.gov
Brian Howell	Region 2 (Rocky Mountain Region)	brian.howell@usda.gov
Monica Gaylord	Region 3 (Southwestern Region)	monica.gaylord@usda.gov
Carl Jorgensen	Region 4 (Intermountain Region)	carl.jorgensen@usda.gov
Stacy Hishinuma	Region 5 (California, Hawaii and Pacific Islands)	stacy.hishinuma@usda.gov
Iral Ragenovich	Region 6 (Washington and Oregon)	iral.ragenovich@usda.gov
Jaesoon Hwang	Region 8 (Southeast Region)	jaesoon.hwang@usda.gov
John Kyhl	NA (Northeastern Area)	john.f.kyhl@usda.gov
Robin Mulvey	Region 10 (Alaska)	robin.mulvey@usda.gov

Evaluation Criteria for New Projects and for Continued Funding

New Projects will only be accepted if they meet the definition of technology development (**National STDP Program objective**) and will receive additional points if the proposed project and products fit the **National STDP Program Priorities**. New Project proposals are evaluated by a panel of experts that specialize in a wide range of forest health issues. Please present information in a clear and concise manner and use terminology that can be understood by a general audience.

New Project Proposals will be submitted using the online fillable PDF form available at ([FHP Grants webpage](#)). For best results, please use [Adobe Acrobat Reader DC](#) when filling out the forms on either PC or Mac machines.

New Project will be evaluated using the following criteria:

1) **Importance** – Does the proposed project addresses current STDP national program priorities?

2) **Technical merit** – Does the proposed project have a strong foundational basis and technically sound approach?

3) **Results** – Is the proposed project likely to produce results which will be implemented/applied by FHP personnel and partners?

4) **Technology Transfer** – Is the proposed project supported with sound Technology Transfer after completion?

5) **Stakeholder and end user involvement** – Does the proposed project demonstrate support and need by stakeholders/end users from project initiation to the dissemination or distribution of information following project completion?

6) **Finance and Economic efficiency** – Are the proposed project costs reasonable and fully documented?

*Note: The following changes have been made regarding travel to meetings/conferences and salary expenses:

➢ A maximum of $2500 in travel is allowed in the 1st year *if* the project is a 1-year project.

➢ A maximum of $2500 per year in travel is allowed in the 2nd and 3rd year for multi-year projects or $5000 for the life of the project.

➢ Generally, salary and travel funds cannot go towards FS personnel. However, there are a limited amount of salary and expense (S&E) funds available for FS R&D personnel only. If requesting these funds, please fill out the FS R&D S&E budget table (available at [FHP Grants webpage](#)) in addition to the budget table in the New Project Proposal Form to indicate an optional mechanism (using non FS funds) to cover requested S&E activities.

Criteria for Continuing Project Funding and Continuing Projects:

1. Is the Project on track?
2. Are there proposed changes to the original project, and if so, are they reasonable/justified?
3. Is the progress report complete? Does it track information about the project activities by year (not just the activities for the most recent year)?
4. Does the most recent annual progress report clearly describe what techniques, technologies, or methods are working or not working?
5. Is the project within budget? Are proposed changes to the project reasonable?
6. Were completed supporting documents provided?
7. Was STDP acknowledged in any interim publications or reports?

Note: In all communications of **project results**, the Special Technology Development Program **shall specifically be credited** for cooperation and support (e.g., this project was funded by the USDA Forest Service, Forest Health Protection, Special Technology Development Program, project ID R1-2022-01).