

## Response to Questions about Sustainability Metrics Funding Opportunity UVM Food Systems Research Center

Is the funding \$600K total or \$600K per project?

- We anticipate funding up to \$600K per project for 2-3 year projects. These costs are inclusive of a post-doctoral fellow, which is approximately \$75K per year. Reminder that there is no overhead included, so this is all research dollars.

Can planning grant funding be used for salary, fringe, benefits for summer?

- Yes! These grants will run through Summer 2023 so 9 month faculty can utilize funding for summer. In addition, these grants will include the opportunity for academic year funding for 9 and 12 month faculty and staff.

Are Post docs included in \$600K of funding?

- Yes (see above)

Could you provide additional details on the total amount of funding you anticipate for sustainability metrics versus individual grants?

- We anticipate funding 7-10 planning grants of up to \$50,000, depending on the quantity and requests received. We anticipate having a total of \$250,000-\$300,000 total for planning grant funding. We anticipate funding 5 full sustainability metrics proposals for 2-3 years, at up to \$600K total per project. We anticipate having a total of \$2.5-\$3 million in funding for sustainability metrics proposals.

Will projects be required to include all five dimensions of sustainability?

- Proposals will be required to cover at least 3 out of the 5 dimensions of sustainability included in the existing framework. Inclusion of multiple dimensions of sustainability will be a criteria for evaluation.

Do you have to be a professor to be a PI?

- No. PI status is also available for research professors, extension, and staff, but is limited to UVM employees. Graduate students and post-doctorates are not eligible to be PIs; however, post-doctorates are eligible to be co-PIs or key personnel.

Can there be a balance between new tools and those integrating existing tools?

- Yes. We recognize that the framework is still a living document (and likely will remain so). As such, these grants are intended to provide the opportunity to test what works and what doesn't, and to discover and test new ways of measuring aspects of sustainability. As a result, we are excited about building new tools and metrics into the existing framework, and testing the viability of those already included in a real world context.

How can UVM faculty and staff meet ARS scientists? Can they be included on proposals?

- We are hoping to host a meet and greet for the Center sometime this semester, in addition to these workshops. In the meantime, Chris Peters or Meredith Niles can help make introductions for the two social scientists on the ARS team (please reach out if interested).
- ARS scientists can be included in proposals as key personnel, but can not be PI or co-PIs, and can't take salary off of proposals.
- In addition, we hope to offer events soon that will enable UVM faculty to connect further afield with other ARS scientists.

Are there certain metrics you're looking for in terms of success for the funded projects?

- These initial funding rounds are hoping to establish a framework of indicators and metrics that are viable, reliable, and realistic to be measured in the real world. We envision that these projects, and the framework that results from them, will serve as a baseline to assess the sustainability of local and regional food systems over time, and to enable comparison of status quo systems to alternatives. Ultimately, this work is not an academic exercise, it is grounded in helping to inform the future of agriculture and food systems for the state and the region, and should be done in concert with important community partners.

Can current postdocs apply to be the postdocs associated with the teams?

- We anticipate that the call and application for post-doctorates will be similar to the cluster hire style of the sustainable dairy projects. We will work with the funded project teams to develop a summary of their project, then advertise the five post-doctoral positions simultaneously as a cluster hire. Individual post-doctoral applicants can apply for a specific project. Thus, an existing post-doctorate at UVM would be open to apply for these positions. The interview and selection process of these post-doctorates will be led and determined by the project PI and their team (i.e. FSRC will not play a role in selecting the post-doctorates for individual teams, but can provide administrative support).

Do teams have to be interdisciplinary?

- Yes. See above for the need to address multiple dimensions. We recognize that interdisciplinary teams may also exist within a dimension as well.

How many people do expect to be on a team?

- This is up to the project team to determine, based on the available resources and the scale and scope of their projects. We anticipate that teams will necessarily be at least 3 people (given the focus on at least 3 dimensions), but may include far more members depending on the project complexity.