

T-STAR-Pacific Proposal Guidelines: FY05

Description

Tropical and Subtropical Agriculture Research (T-STAR), is a Special Grant of the USDA-CSREES, awarded to the College of Tropical Agriculture & Human Resources (CTAHR), University of Hawaii at Manoa, and the College of Natural and Applied Sciences (CNAS), University of Guam. T-STAR Goals and Objectives, Program History, Research Highlights, Workshops, Databases, and other information can be found on the T-STAR website: <http://www2.ctahr.hawaii.edu/t-star>.

Eligibility

Applicants (Project Directors (PDs)) must have tenured or tenure-track faculty appointments at CTAHR or CNAS.

Deadline

All proposals must be received by 4:30 pm, Friday November 1, 2004. Proposals received after this deadline will not be considered for funding.

Application Forms

An electronic file of the seven required USDA-CSREES forms is available from our office at the CTAHR Proposal Central page on the CTAHR Web Site here (bottom of the page) <http://www.ctahr.hawaii.edu/ctahr2001/Research/ProposalCentral.html>, or you may download these documents from the USDA-CSREES website at: <http://www.csrees.usda.gov/funding/forms.html> (under Standard Application Forms). Forms are on-screen fillable. These forms should be incorporated in the appropriate locations within the body of the proposal (see below).

The proposal narrative (Project Description) must be a Microsoft Word 2000 (or equivalent) document. Prepare the application on only one side of the page using standard size (8 ½" x 11") white paper, one –inch margins, word processed with no type SMALLER than 12 point font and single or double spaced. Please use an easily readable font face (e.g. Helvetica, Arial, Times Roman). Number each page of the application. Occasionally, merging USDA forms with the text files can be problematic; in this case, the USDA CSREES forms can be submitted as a separate file.

What to submit

One “paper” original with signatures, 5 paper copies, and one “electronic” copy on diskette or CD-RW. Note E-mail attachments are acceptable for the required electronic copy. Do not staple the application. Secure each copy with a binder clip. If original illustrations (photographs, color prints, etc.) are to be included – please include them in all copies to prevent loss of meaning through poor quality reproduction.

Where to Submit

Proposal should be submitted to:

Dr. Douglas Vincent
Special Director for Grants and Contracts
College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources
University of Hawaii at Manoa
Gilmore 202
3050 Maile Way
Honolulu, Hawaii 96822

If you have questions or require help with the forms, please contact Dr. Vincent (vincent@hawaii.edu) or Ms. Lynnet Higuchi (higuchil@admin.ctahr.hawaii.edu) or call (808-956-8157).

Additional Instructions

T-STAR proposals follow most (but **not all**) of the guidelines for USDA, CSREES-NRI submissions. To read about the various sections (and how to write them), please go to the USDA-CSREES-NRI website and download the current (2005) Application Kit. This Kit describes the type of information that should be in the various proposal sections. Because the submission requirements for T-STAR are slightly different, the order for subsections and a brief description of them is included below. All proposals should be reviewed for assurance of the presence of the following items in the order below. Use the following as a check list to ensure that all information is presented and in the proper order.

Contents

- **Cover Page** (Application for Funding; Form **CSREES-2002**)
(Note **CSREES-2002 page B** is **NOT** required for T-STAR proposals.)
- **Table of Contents:** The table of contents should contain page numbers for each component of the application. Page numbering should begin with the first page of the Project Description.
- **Project Summary** (Form **CSREES-2003**) – The application must contain a “Project Summary” of approximately 250 words, contained within the box, placed immediately after the Table of Contents and not numbered. The title of the proposals and the names and affiliated organization of all the PD’s and co-PD’s should be listed on the form. The summary should be a self-contained specific description of the activity to be undertaken and should focus on the project goal(s); and relevance of the project to the TSTAR Research goals. The importance of a concise, informative Project Summary cannot be overemphasized. If there are more than three co-PD’s for an application, please list the additional co-PD’s on a separate piece of paper and attach it to the Project Summary.
- **Project Description**
(**not to exceed 18 single or double-spaced pages including figures and tables**)
 - **Introduction** – A clear statement of the long-term goals(s) and supporting objectives or research questions of the proposed project should be included. Summarize the body of knowledge or other past activities that substantiate the need for the proposed project. Describe ongoing or recently completed significant activities related to the proposed project including work of key project personnel. Preliminary data/information pertinent to the proposed research should be included in this section. Current unpublished research conducted by the PD or the institution germane to the

- proposed work should be described. All works cited should be referenced. The citations themselves should be accurate, complete and written in an acceptable journal format.
- **Rationale and Significance** – Concisely present the rationale behind the proposed research. The specific relationship of the project’s objectives to the T-STAR Research Goals should be shown clearly. This section should include in-depth information as applicable: a) Estimates of the magnitude of the problem and its relevance to ongoing state, regional or federal food and agricultural programs; b) importance of starting the work during the upcoming year; and c) why this institution is the appropriate place to perform the proposed.
 - **Approach.** The activities proposed or problems being addressed must be clearly stated and approaches being applied clearly described. Specifically, this section must include:
 - A description of the activities proposed and the sequence in which the activities are to be performed.
 - Methods to be used in carrying out the proposed project, including the feasibility of the methods.
 - Expected outcomes
 - Means by which the results will be analyzed, assessed or interpreted.
 - How the results or products will be used.
 - Pitfalls that may be encountered.
 - Limitations to the proposed procedures and how they may be overcome.
 - Project timetable – the application should outline all important phases of the project (e.g. when objectives are anticipated to be met) as a function of time, year by year, for the entire project period.
 - A full explanation of any materials, procedures, situations, or activities related to the project may be hazardous to personnel, along with an outline or precautions to be exercised to avoid or mitigate the effects of such hazards.
 - **References to Project Description** – All references to works cited should be complete, including titles and all co-authors, and should conform to an acceptable journal format. Lists of reference are **not** considered in the page limitation for the Project Description.
 - **Facilities and Equipment** – Facilities and major items of equipment that are available for use or assignment to the proposed project during the requested period of support should be described. In addition, items of acquisition, justified on a separate page and attached to the budget. Equipment requests are limited to \$5,000 per piece of equipment.
 - **Key Personnel** – include the following as applicable:
 - The roles and responsibilities of the PD, co –PD, and/or collaborator should be clearly described.
 - The vitae of the PD and each co-PD, senior associate, and other professional personnel. This section should include vitae of all key persons who are expected to work on the project, whether or not CSREES funds are sought for their support. The vitae should be limited to **two (2)** pages each in length, excluding publications listings. The vitae should include a presentation of academic and research credentials, as applicable, e.g. earned degrees, employment history, professional activities, honors and awards, and grants received. A chronological list of **all** publications in **refereed journals** during the last **four (4) years**, including those in press, must be provided for each project member for whom a curriculum vita is provided. Also list only those **non-refereed** technical publications that have **relevance** to the proposed project. All authors should be listed in

the same order as they appear on each paper cited, along with title and complete reference as these usually appear in journals.

- **Collaborative Arrangements** – If it will be necessary to enter into formal consulting or collaborative arrangements with others, such arrangements should be fully explained and justified. If the consultant(s) or collaborators(s) are known at the time of application, a vitae or resume should be provided. In addition, evidence (e.g. letter of support) should be provided that the collaborators have agreed to render these services. The applicant also will be required to provide additional information on consultants in the budget portion of the application.
- **Budget (Form CSREES-2004)** – Prepare the Budget, Form CSREES-2004, in accordance with the instructions provided with the application form. A budget form is required for each year of the requested support. In addition, a cumulative budget detailing the requested total support for the overall project period. The budget form may be reproduced as needed by the applicant. Funds may be requested under any of the categories listed on the form, provided that the item or service for which support is requested is allowable under authorizing legislation, the applicable statutes, regulations and Federal cost principles and the T-STAR program guidelines and can be justified as necessary for the successful conduct of the proposed project. Applicants must include a budget narrative to justify their budget requests. You may want to build into your subsequent year's budgets, additional funds to cover the costs of inflation or salary increases in your key personnel.
 - Salaries/Wages – Show all CSREES funded work months that will be charged to the project for which salary is paid by USDA. Provide the funded work months for Project Director/Co-PD – Senior Associate, Research Associate. (Ph.D. level salaries must be budgeted as a Jr. Researcher or Asst. Researcher with appropriate fringe benefits; no postdoctoral stipends are permitted)
 - Fringe Benefits*
 - Non-expendable equipment (Single items costing over \$5,000) and having a useful life of more than one year.
 - Materials and Supplies – This could be anything from office supplies and software or laboratory supplies. For those things that aren't typical materials and supplies, a brief narrative or justification of how the item fits into the program should be included in the budget narrative.
 - Travel (Domestic and Foreign) – Provide information used in estimating costs such as: the destination, if know, purpose, number of travelers, and estimated cost per trip (e.g., St. Louis, Missouri to attend a conference, 2 persons - \$1,000 ea).
 - Publication/Page Costs – This line is associated with the publishing of an article in a scientific or technical journal or other type of field/program related publication or for commercial printing of brochures and program materials. Photocopying costs should be included in AODC categories.
 - Computer (ADPE) Costs – This line represents the charges associated with the organization's shared computer system. Charges for internet access may be included in this category. Equipment purchases should be listed under "Non-expendable equipment or "Materials and Supplies" as appropriate.

* Use 38% for regular salaried personnel (APTS, Jr. Researchers, Asst. Researchers) 17% for graduate students, and 1.62% for prebaccalaureate students). **T-STAR cannot pay salaries for permanent faculty (summer salaries).**

- All Other Direct Costs (AODC) (Include subcontracts and “service-ordered” items)
 - Communication – Mailings, postage, faxes and telephone long distance charges.
 - Photocopying – In-house photocopying of materials associated with the program.
 - Subcontracts – When a portion of the work proposed will be performed by outside sources, a statement of work, separate budget and budget narrative from the proposed subcontractor should be submitted. The level of details required for the subcontract budget is the same as the recipient’s organization. It is expected that the awardees organization will do the majority of the work – therefore, any **budgets to the subcontractor cannot exceed 50% of the total funds for the project in any given year and in total.**
 - Consultants: A consultant is someone who renders expert advice in his/her field. The consultant should not be affiliated with the performing organization. Budget details should include the name of the consultant and his/her organization, a statement of work, and a breakdown of the amount being charged to the project (e.g. number of days of service, rate of pay, travel, per diem, etc.). A resume or vita for each consultant should be included.
 - Service or Maintenance Contracts – Costs should be in direct correlation to the use of the equipment for the project (i.e. if a particular machine is used 50% of the time for the project, the project should only be charged 50% of the service/maintenance costs). Provide details of the type of equipment and the amount of the service contracts.
 - Land-Use Charges – When there is a charge for using land owned by the Cooperative Extension Service, the Experiment Station or others for research and demonstration purposes, provide the charge per acre (or other rate charged), number of acres and total cost.
 - Fabrications of Equipment
- **Indirect Costs:** Pursuant to Section 1473 fo the National Agricultural Research, Extension and Teaching Policy Act of 1977, as amended, 7 V.S.C 3319, indirect costs are not allowable under Section 2(c)(1)(B) Special Grants projects, and no funds will be approved for this purpose.
- **Budget Narrative:** All budget categories, with the exception of Indirect Costs (**which are not allowed with this Special Grant**) for which support is requested, must be individually listed (with costs) in the same order as the budget and justified on a separate sheet of paper and placed immediately behind the Budget form. Please provide information in detail. Please provide sufficient detail in **all budget** categories – including what the personnel will be doing; itemization, as much as possible for materials and supplies.
 - **Budget Restrictions** – CSREES is prohibited from paying for the renovation or refurbishment of research spaces (including energy retrofitting), purchase or installation of fixed equipment in such spaces, or planning, repair, rehabilitation, acquisition or construction of buildings or facilities.
 - **Tuition Remission** -- In accordance with Section 1473 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (91 Stat. 981), as amended, tuition remission is not an allowable cost under Section 2(c)(1)(B) projects and no funds will be approved for this purpose. This includes paying post-doctoral training stipends.
 - **Expressly Unallowable Costs** – advertising and public relations costs; promotional items and memorabilia, including gifts; costs of alcoholic beverages; costs of entertainment, including amusement, diversion and social activities including tickets

to shows, sporting events; capital expenditures for general purpose equipment (vehicles) except where approved in advance by the sponsoring agencies; lobbying and fund raising costs; membership costs to civic or community organizations, country clubs or organizations. (See OMB Circular A-21 for more details:

http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/a021/a21_2004.html#j).

- **Current and Pending Support** (Form CSREES -2005) – All applications must contain Form CSREES -2005 listing other current public or private support (including in-house support) to which personnel (i.e. individuals submitting a vitae in response to the key personnel section) identified have committed portions of their time, whether or not salary support for person(s) involved is involved in the budget. Please follow the instructions provided with this form. Concurrent submission of identical or similar applications to other sponsors will not prejudice application review or evaluation. However, an application that duplicates or substantially overlaps with an application already reviewed and funded (or to be funded) by another organization or agency will not be funded under the T-STAR program. **Please note that the project being proposed should be included in the pending section of the form.**
- **Assurance Statement(s)** (Form CSREES-2008) – A number of situations encountered in the conduct of projects require special assurances, supporting documentation, etc. before funding can be approved for the project. In addition to any other situation that may exist with regard to a particular project, application involving any of the following elements must comply with the additional requirements as applicable.
 - **Recombinant DNA or RNA Research** – All key personnel identified in the application and all endorsing officials of the proposing organization are required to comply with the guidelines established by the National Institutes of Health entitled “Guidelines for Research Involving Recombinant DNA Molecules,” as revised. If your project proposes to use recombinant DNA or RNA techniques, you must so indicate by checking the “yes” box in Block 20 of the Form CSREES-2002 (the Proposal Cover Page) and by completing Section A of Form CSREES – 2008. For application applications recommended for funding, Institutional Biosafety Committee approval is required before CSREES funds will be released.
 - **Animal Care** – Responsibility for the humane care and treatment of live vertebrate animals used in any grant project supported with funds provided by CSREES rests with the performing organization. Where a project involves the use of living vertebrate animals for experimental purposes, all key personnel identified with the application and all endorsing officials of the proposing organization are required to comply with the applicable provisions of the Animal Welfare Act, as amended (7 U.S.C. 2131 et seq.), and the regulations promulgated there under by the Secretary in 9 CFR Parts 1, 2, 3, and 4 pertaining to the care, handling, and treatment of these animals. If your project will involve these animals, you should check “yes” in Block 20 of Form CSREES-2002 and complete Section B of Form CSREES-2008. In the event a project involving the use of live vertebrate animals results in a grant award, funds will be released only after the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee has approved the project.
 - **Protection of Human Subjects** -- Responsibility for safeguarding the rights and welfare of human subjects used in any grant project supported with funds provided by CSREES rests with the performing organization. Guidance on this issue is contained in the National Research Act, Pub. L. No. 93-348, as amended, and implementing regulations promulgated by the Department under 7 CFR Part 1c. If you propose to use human subjects in your project, you should check the “yes” box in Block 20 of Form

CSREES-2002 and complete Section C of Form CSREES-2008. In the event a project involving human subjects at risk is recommended for award, funds will be released only after the Institutional Review Board (IRB) has approved the research plan and CSREES has accepted documentation of the IRB approval.

- **National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)** – (Form CSREES -2006)-- As outlined in 7 CFR Part 3407 (the CSREES regulations implementing NEPA), the environmental data for any proposed project is to be provided to CSREES so that CSREES may determine whether any further action is needed. In some cases, however, the preparation of environmental data may not be required. Certain categories of actions are excluded from the requirements of NEPA. In order for CSREES to determine whether any further action is needed with respect to NEPA, pertinent information regarding the possible environmental impacts of a particular project is necessary; therefore, Form CSREES-2006, “NEPA Exclusions Form,” must be included in the application indicating whether the applicant is of the opinion that the project falls within a categorical exclusion and the reasons therefore. If it is the applicant’s opinion that the proposed project falls within the categorical exclusions, the specific exclusion(s) must be identified.
- **Appendices to Project Description:** -- Each project description is expected to be complete, however, additions to the Project Description (appendices) are allowed if they are directly germane to the proposed research and are strictly limited to a maximum of 2 of the following: Reprints or Pre-prints.

Additional Advice for T-STAR Subsections follows on the next page.

Additional Advice for T-STAR Subsections

NOTE: Important items are in bold type below

- 1) Form **CSREES-2002** (Proposal Cover Page)
 - All PD's and Co-PD's listed on this form must sign if they want to be included in the award documents. Page B for the **CSREES-2002** does **NOT** have to be submitted.

- 2) Form **CSREES-2003** (Project Summary)
 - Summary should be approximately 250 words. The abstract or project summary is the **MOST** critical section. This is what reviewers read first and if you cannot convince them of the worthiness of the project in this space, your project may not be funded.

- 3) Form **CSREES-2004** (Budget)

Please see complete instructions for completing Form CSREES-2004. Below are additional helpful points.

 - A budget sheet for each year of funding and one for total years combined.
 - Salaries and wages: how many people and months working.
 - Build in reasonable salary (and fringe benefit) increases for your key personnel
 - Make sure Fringe Benefits are the right percentage. [Use 38% for regular salaried personnel (APTS, Jr. Researchers, Asst. Researchers) 17% for graduate students, and 1.62% for prebaccalaureate students]. **T-STAR cannot pay salaries for permanent faculty (summer salary).**
 - Materials and supplies: must list items (e.g. lab supplies [Petri dishes, culture flasks, disposable bottles, chemicals, etc.] each must be broken down and the cost estimated for each category item); field/greenhouse supplies [shade cloth, pots, media, etc.)
 - Non-expendable equipment (cost of \$5,000 or more) list item and justification for each.
 - For both domestic and foreign travel, provide the purpose, the destination, method of travel, number of persons traveling, number of days, and estimated cost for each trip. Provide detail for foreign travel. **Trips to scientific meetings are not allowed during the first year.**
 - All Other Direct Costs (AODC)(needs justification and amount)
 - 1) Subcontracts need a statement of work, a budget narrative, **and a separate budget sheet for each year of the subcontract and for the total years, (CSREES-2004)**
 - 2) Maintenance contracts for equipment (approximate cost for service)
 - 3) All types of analysis work (approximate cost for each type of service, e.g. Agricultural Diagnostic Service Center requests would go under AODC.)
 - Under the T-STAR program, **indirect costs** (overhead, F&A) **are not allowed.** This **applies to subcontractors** as well.
 - **DO NOT SIGN BUDGET FORM.**

- 4) Form **CSREES-2005** (Current & Pending Support)
 - Need this form for each PD.
 - Need to include time commitment for all projects including the project approved for funding, the source of funds, and the amount.
 - Time commitments total 100% or less for each PI.
 - Please note that the T-STAR project being proposed should be included in the **PENDING** section of the form.

- 5) Form **CSREES-2006** (National Environmental Policy Act Exclusions Form)

- 6) Form **CSREES-2008** (Assurance Statement)
 - If it requires any type of research (i.e., involving recombinant DNA or RNA, vertebrate animals or human subjects), need approval date of the appropriate committee and copy of the approval. Start the process now, if such approvals are required. If you have questions, contact the Assistant Director or appropriate compliance officer.

Full Proposal Review Process

External Peer Review will be conducted by members of disciplinary panels composed of scientists well versed in each discipline of T-STAR projects submitted. The purpose of the letter of intent is to identify subject matter areas and help develop panel members to review the scientific merit of the proposals. The members of the Pacific Basin Technical Committee for T-STAR reviews and evaluates each proposal, based upon external peer reviews to make funding decisions. Each member will rank the proposals based on the criteria listed below, as well as reviewer input. External peers will use similar criteria.

Evaluation Criteria: Criteria followed by the Technical Committees are the same as those followed by peer panels in the NRI program, together with criteria specific for the T-STAR program. These criteria are:

- (1) Scientific merit
 - Conceptual adequacy of the hypothesis or approach as related to program objectives
 - Clarity and delineation of proposed project objectives as related to program issues and objectives
 - Adequacy of the description of the proposed work
 - Suitability and feasibility of the methodology for conducting the work
 - Probability of success of the project
 - Novelty, uniqueness, and originality

- (2) Qualifications of the proposed project personnel, partnerships and adequacy of the facilities and equipment available
 - Training and demonstrated awareness of previous alternative approaches
 - To relevant objective(s) listed in the Request for Proposals and/or potential for future accomplishments

- Partnerships with other disciplines and institutions
- Time allocated for systematic attainment of objectives
- Institutional experience and competence in the identified area of work
- Adequacy of available or obtainable support personnel, facilities and instrumentation

(3) Adoption or transfer of technology strategies

- Established or documented linkage with industry partner(s)
- Clear and effective plan for educational outreach and technology transfer to end users

(4) Specific T-STAR issues

- Relevancy to the needs of Caribbean and Pacific agriculture
- “Balance” in problem areas in the T-STAR program
- Current critical issues in tropical/subtropical agriculture
- Relevance to one or more of the Overall Goals of the T-STAR Program