



# Iowa energy center

*Special-Project Grant Program*

## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS — FISCAL YEAR 2017

Issue date: July 1, 2016

Expiration date: June 30, 2017

Proposal deadline: At least eight weeks prior to the date that funds are needed

515-294-8819 | [iecgrant@iastate.edu](mailto:iecgrant@iastate.edu) | [iowaenergycenter.org](http://iowaenergycenter.org)

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### About the Iowa Energy Center

**The Iowa Energy Center was created by the Iowa Energy Efficiency Act of 1990 with a mission to:**

- Strive to increase energy efficiency in all areas of Iowa energy use;
- Conduct and sponsor research on energy efficiency and conservation that will improve the environmental, social, and economic well-being of Iowans, minimize the environmental impact of existing energy production and consumption, and reduce the need to add new power plants;
- Serve as a model for state efforts to decrease reliance on imported fuels and to decrease reliance on energy production from nonrenewable, resource-depleting fuels;
- Conduct and sponsor research to develop alternative energy systems that are based upon renewable sources and that will reduce the negative environmental and economic impact of energy production systems;
- Assist Iowans in assessing technology related to energy efficiency and alternative energy production systems and support educational and demonstration programs that encourage implementation of energy efficiency and alternative energy production systems;
- Develop a program to provide assistance to rural residents for energy efficiency efforts;
- Cooperate with the state board of education in developing a curriculum which promotes energy efficiency and conservation; and
- Sponsor research grants and projects submitted on a competitive basis by Iowa colleges and universities and private nonprofit agencies and foundations.

**The Iowa Energy Center supports economic development, environmental sustainability and social well-being in Iowa through energy innovation, education and entrepreneurship. We provide Iowans with reliable, objective information on energy and efficiency options.**

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## Special-Project Grant Program Overview

The Iowa Energy Center's grant programs support Iowa groups that provide reliable, objective information on energy and efficiency options. For activities that do not readily fit within other Energy Center grant programs, the center's special-project grant program is seeking proposals for public education activities that will have high impact and statewide value, including events, publications, web development, studies, workshops, and technology demonstrations.

The Energy Center will not fund marketing or promotional campaigns for commercial products or services, nor will it fund policy advocacy activities.

## Estimated Funding

Subject to the availability of funding, the Energy Center will set aside \$70,000 to commit funding for approximately nine special-project grants to be competed on a first-come-first-served basis. Proposals for special-project grants will be considered during the period July 1, 2016, through June 30, 2017. Awards shall not exceed \$15,000 and will fund up to 50% of the overall project cost, including registration fees. All projects must be completed by December 31, 2017.

## Eligible Grantees

Organizations eligible to receive Energy Center grants are Iowa's educational institutions and Iowa-registered private nonprofit organizations and foundations. The Energy Center does not award grants to individuals; for-profit entities; and state, county, or local government entities — though those groups may be partners in the work conducted by the grant recipient. Proof of the private nonprofit status of the applicant may be requested. Collaborations among Iowa organizations are encouraged, but not required.

The proposal's designated principal investigator must be an employee of the organization applying for an Energy Center grant.

## Eligible Projects

Funding decisions will be based on how well a proposal to the Energy Center meets the following objectives, as detailed in the evaluation criteria listed later in this request for proposals. A proposal should:

1. Help create an educated citizenry in Iowa through, for example:
  - a. Capacity building that broadens the Iowa energy-related community or fosters ongoing partnerships. Projects may include demonstrations of energy technologies that engage a wide set of partners.
  - b. Public education. Projects may include workforce training activities, website development, conferences, seminars, or events that provide information sharing, a public

dialogue on energy issues, or dissemination of incentives and funding opportunities.

- c. Knowledge creation. Projects may include studies or focused workshops.
2. Have high and enduring impact with respect to the Iowa Energy Center's statutory mission to:
    - a. Strive to increase energy efficiency in all areas of Iowa energy use.
    - b. Conduct and sponsor research on energy efficiency and conservation that will improve the environmental, social, and economic well-being of Iowans, minimize the environmental impact of existing energy production and consumption, and reduce the need to add new power plants.
    - c. Decrease reliance on energy production from nonrenewable, resource-depleting fuels and serve as a model for state efforts to decrease dependence on imported fuels.
    - d. Conduct and sponsor research to develop alternative energy systems that are based upon renewable sources and that will reduce the negative environmental and economic impact of energy production systems.
    - e. Assist Iowans in assessing technology related to energy efficiency and alternative energy production systems.
    - f. Support educational and demonstration programs that encourage implementation of energy efficiency and alternative energy production systems.
    - g. Develop a program to provide assistance to rural residents for energy efficiency efforts.
    - h. Cooperate with the state board of education in developing a curriculum which promotes energy efficiency and conservation.

Appendix A provides example topic areas consistent with the Energy Center's mission.

3. Have wide-ranging, statewide value. For example, Energy Center funds may be used to turn a local seminar into a webinar that all Iowans could attend.
4. Make a large difference relative to existing funding from other sources.
5. Be sustainable once Iowa Energy Center funding ends. That is, the objectives and value of the project cannot depend on presumed future Energy Center support.
6. Be of a nature not currently supported by other Iowa Energy Center competitive grant programs (<http://www.iowaenergycenter.org/grant-funding/competitive-grants/>)

## Allowable Expenses

Special-project grant funds may be used to cover expenses that are typical of those associated with a sponsored project, including personnel, materials and supplies, travel, and services.

Allowable and unallowable expenses are outlined in 2 CFR Part 200 ([http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/retrieveECFR?gp=1&SID=394cce1f1add661dfe486ab68f07b1d1&ty=HTML&h=L&mc=true&n=pt2.1.200&r=PART#\\_top](http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/retrieveECFR?gp=1&SID=394cce1f1add661dfe486ab68f07b1d1&ty=HTML&h=L&mc=true&n=pt2.1.200&r=PART#_top)). Iowa Energy Center special-project grants may not be used to procure computers, for tuition, or for capital expenses. Indirect costs are not allowed under this grant program.

Although awards made under this grant program will be cost-reimbursable, funding advances can be made at the recipient's request and at the discretion of the Iowa Energy Center.

Payment will be made upon receipt of proper invoices until payment has reached 90% of award amount. The remaining 10% invoiced will be paid after the Energy Center has received and approved contracted deliverables.

## Proposal Deadlines

 Proposals will be accepted beginning July 1, 2016, and through June 30, 2017.

Special-project grant proposals will be collected and

 reviewed once per month, so applicants should submit proposals at least eight weeks prior to the date the funds are needed.

Since awards will be made throughout the proposal acceptance period, the pool of funds available for this competition may be expended before June 30, 2017. Applicants are encouraged to check the Energy Center website (<http://www.iowaenergycenter.org/grant-funding/competitive-grants/special-project-grant/>) to verify that the Special-Project Grant program is still accepting proposals.

## Proposal Requirements

All proposals must be submitted through the Iowa Energy Center's Grant Management System: <https://iec.smartsimple.com>.

Proposal narratives should not exceed 4 pages and should be uploaded as a single PDF file. A cover page should be entered separately through the Grant Management System (<https://iec.smartsimple.com>). Proposals shall not contain any confidential or proprietary information.

To enable the Iowa Energy Center to quickly and effectively review proposals, each proposal must contain the following elements:

1. A completed cover page, generated online, which contains the information shown in Appendix B.
2. A project narrative with the following sections:
  - a. **Abstract**  
A summary describing the need for special-project grant funds and the proposed work. The abstract should be copied into the Project Narrative text box in the Grant Management System.
  - b. **Scope of Work**

A summary of the proposed work, including:

- i. A description of the overall project.
- ii. A description of the work to be performed with Iowa Energy Center funding, including a timeline for specific tasks, milestones, and invoicing.
- iii. A list of deliverables to be provided to the Energy Center, including a final report.
- iv. A description of commitments from partners in terms of collaboration and resources.

### c. Impact and Reach

An explanation of how the proposed work meets the expectations listed in the "Eligible Projects" section above.

### d. Qualifications

A summary of the expertise and capabilities being provided by the team to fulfill the project.

## 3. Budget

- a. A completed budget proposal must be entered into the Iowa Energy Center's Grant Management System: <https://iec.smartsimple.com>. (Appendix C and <http://www.iowaenergycenter.org/grant-funding/competitive-grants/special-project-grant/>)
- b. A brief narrative justifying the items in each budget category.
- c. Special-Project Grants shall fund no more than 50% of the overall project cost. Allowable matching contributions may consist of cash and in-kind contributions. Valuation of volunteer hours is not allowable by the Energy Center as a contribution to the required match. In-kind contributions may include donated services, supplies, equipment, space, and unrecovered indirect costs. In-kind contributions may be provided by the proposing organization or third parties. Matching funds or contributions must be documentable and verifiable.

## 4. Letters of Commitment

A set of commitment letters from the main collaborating partners should be uploaded through the Grant Management System. The commitment letters do not count toward the 4-page limit.

Applicants may upload any additional documentation they feel will help the decision process of the Iowa Energy Center. Although such appendices are not subject to the 4-page limit, applicants should exercise discretion in providing additional documentation.

Note that all people listed in the proposal as a principal, supporter, or collaborator must have given consent for their names to be included.

## Project Reporting

At a minimum, the grantee shall provide the Iowa Energy Center with a final report on the funded project. The report will be due 30 days following completion of the project activities or the grant end date, whichever comes first, and should include verification of the required cost

sharing. All projects funded under this program must be completed by December 31, 2017.

The Energy Center will periodically check on the progress of the project through its duration.

The Energy Center will track metrics for two years after completion of each funded project. The metrics will include, as appropriate, information on publications, student education, external sponsorship, and further collaborations among the partners that were facilitated by the Energy Center funding.

### Submitting the Proposal

*All proposals must be submitted through the Iowa Energy Center's*

*Grant Management System: <https://iec.smartsimple.com>.*

Applicants must submit their proposals through the Iowa Energy Center's Grant Management System (<https://iec.smartsimple.com>). Project narratives shall be uploaded as a single PDF file, which may not exceed 25 Mb in size. Paper proposals, whether faxed, mailed, or hand delivered, will not be accepted. Proposals that exceed the stated page limit may be rejected without review.

The Iowa Energy Center intends to treat proposals as proprietary until an award is made. Nonetheless, applicants should not include proprietary or sensitive information in their submittals to the Energy Center.

### Proposal Evaluation

All proposals must be consistent with the Iowa Energy Center's mission to advance the environmental, social, and economic well-being of Iowans through improved energy efficiency measures and alternative energy technology. Furthermore, proposed projects cannot be eligible for funding under another, currently open Iowa Energy Center grant program. At least 50% of the overall project costs must be provided by non-Energy-Center sources.

Eligible proposals will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

Weight	Criteria	Description
30%	<b>Public Education</b>	1. The project supports an educated Iowa citizenry through one or more of the following ways: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) The project supports capacity building that broadens the Iowa energy-related community or fosters ongoing partnerships.</li> <li>b) The project is effective in providing information sharing, promoting a public dialogue on energy issues, or disseminating information on incentives or funding opportunities.</li> <li>c) The project creates knowledge important to Iowa's energy-related issues and options.</li> </ul>
15%	<b>Merit</b>	1. The proposal provides a clearly defined, feasible, and implementable work plan and schedule with milestones and interrelated tasks that clearly lead to the successful completion of the project. 2. The proposal provides a clear set of deliverables.
35%	<b>Impact and Reach</b>	1. The project provides high and enduring impact with respect to the Iowa Energy Center's mission. 2. The project has wide-ranging, statewide value. 3. Energy Center funding is essential to the success of the project. Moreover, the value and objectives of the project cannot depend on presumed future Energy Center support.
20%	<b>Capability and Collaboration</b>	1. The team provides an appropriate level of expertise and capability to ensure success of the project. 2. The team has sought collaboration with other Iowa-registered nonprofits and Iowa academic institutions, including regent universities, independent colleges and universities, or community colleges. 3. The team has sought collaboration with private-sector partners, as appropriate.

## Applicant Notification

Proposals will be collected and reviewed once per month, with each cycle beginning on the first Friday of the month. For proposals received prior to the first Friday of the month, the Iowa Energy Center will strive to notify applicants by the first Thursday of the following month whether the grant will be awarded. The award process may take up to three weeks once a funding decision is reached, so applicants should accommodate that in their project planning.

The Iowa Energy Center may enter into pre-award discussions with an applicant to address issues such as:

- 1. Budget items;
- 2. The scope of the proposed effort that is selected for award;
- 3. Additional information that is needed to enable an award decision;
- 4. Any special terms and conditions that may be required.

## Questions about this Request for Proposals

Specific questions about this request for proposals should be addressed in writing to Mark C. Petri, Director of the Iowa Energy Center, at [iecgrant@iastate.edu](mailto:iecgrant@iastate.edu).

*The Iowa Energy Center reserves the right to fund, in whole or in part, any, all, or none of the applications submitted in response to this request for proposals. Submission requirements for this grant program may be waived at the discretion of the Energy Center.*

*In accordance with Iowa State University policy, the Energy Center does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, ethnicity, religion, national origin, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, sex, marital status, disability, or status as a U.S. veteran. Inquiries can be directed to the Office of Equal Opportunity, 3350 Beardshear Hall, Ames, Iowa 50011; (515) 294-7612.*

## Appendix A

### Guidance on Project Topics Consistent with the Mission of the Iowa Energy Center

#### **Example topics that meet the Energy Center's mission well:**

- Solar energy
- On-shore wind energy
- Biomass and biofuels
- Waste-based power production
- Geothermal power
- Conversion of waste heat and kinetic energy
- Combined heat and power
- Chemical storage batteries
- Fuel cells
- Commercial, residential, and industrial efficiency
- Heating and lighting
- Electricity transmission and distribution
- Energy workforce development
- Energy education

#### **Example topics not well suited for Energy Center support:**

- Nuclear fission and fusion power
- Off-shore wind energy
- Coal
- Pipelines and other energy-transport media
- Environmental and health consequences and management

## Appendix B

### Cover Page Information to be Entered Online

#### **Project information:**

- Principal investigator contact information
- Co-principal investigators
- Administrative contact
- Project title
- Project start and end dates

#### **Contracting information:**

- Organization contracting official
- Organization employer identification number
- Organization Iowa Senate district
- Organization Iowa House district
- Organization federal congressional district

## Appendix C

### Proposed Budget Worksheet - To be Completed Online

Refer to instructions for assistance in completing this worksheet

Project Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Project End Date: \_\_\_\_\_

	Requested from the Iowa Energy Center	Matching Contributions	Total Project Budget
<b>Salaries &amp; Wages</b>			
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
<b>Fringe Benefits (show rates by salary or wage class)</b>			
a.			
b.			
Total Personnel Costs	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<b>Supplies &amp; Materials (Show total and justify in the narrative)</b>			
<b>Travel (itemize and provide justification)</b>			
a.			
b.			
Total Travel Costs	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<b>Consultants (itemize and provide justification of rates and travel in the narrative)</b>			
a.			
Total Consultant Costs	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<b>Subcontracted Partners (itemize and provide total cost per subcontract in the narrative)</b>			
a.			
Total Subcontract Costs	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<b>Other Direct Costs (show total cost and provide justification)</b>			
<b>TOTAL COSTS</b>	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -

## Appendix C

### Proposed Budget

#### Instructions for completing the online Proposed Budget Worksheet

**Salaries & Wages:** List all personnel to be paid by the project. List their levels of effort (percent or hours and number of months). For university faculty, show summer salaries separately.

**Fringe Benefits:** Show rates and totals for each category of employee (faculty, clerical, graduate student, etc.).

**Supplies & Materials:** Show the total cost and briefly describe in the budget narrative the nature of the supplies and materials to be purchased.

**Travel:** List all planned trips and provide cost estimates for each. For each trip include destinations, number of travelers, duration, fees, transportation, lodging, and meals.

**Consultants:** Provide the rates and basis for rates for each proposed consultant. All consultant costs must be included in this category, including consultant travel. In the budget narrative, justify the need for outside consultants.

**Subcontracted Partners:** Routine services should not be included in this category. Include each subcontractor's total costs as a separate line item. Include a letter of commitment from each subcontracted partner.

**Other Costs:** This category includes routine services (e.g., chemical analysis, photographic services, etc.). In the budget narrative, briefly describe the nature of the proposed Other Costs. Telecommunication, printing, postage and other like services are only allowable if they can be clearly documented and itemized as being specific and necessary for the project.

**Allowable Matching Contributions:** This may consist of cash and in-kind contributions. Valuation of volunteer hours is not allowable by the Energy Center as a contribution to the required match. In-kind contributions may include donated services, supplies, equipment, space, and unrecovered indirect costs. In-kind contributions may be provided by the proposing organization or third parties. Matching funds or contributions must be documentable and verifiable.

NOTE: The Iowa Energy Center does not pay indirect costs. Tuition and equipment costs (items exceeding \$5,000) are not allowed under this grant program.