

Wisconsin Highway Research Program Proposal Preparation Guidelines

WHRP research may be conducted by colleges, universities, industry, research institutions, foundations, engineering consultants, or others who possess extensive, demonstrated capability as well as proven experience in the project area.

Submitted proposals are forwarded to the appropriate WHRP Technical Oversight Committees (TOC) for review and evaluation. It is mandatory that proposals contain the following information:

1. Cover
2. Summary Page
3. Table of Contents
4. Research Plan
5. Time Requirement/Schedule
6. Budget
7. Qualifications of Research Team
8. Other Commitments of Research Team
9. Equipment and Facilities
10. Technician and Laboratory Certification
11. Collaboration with Wisconsin Institutions

Presentation

WHRP recommends that proposals be concise as possible. Proposals should include page numbers and be prepared with a minimum of 10 point font. The length of the Research Plan, should not exceed 10 pages. The entire proposal should not exceed 20 pages.

Details of Required Content

1. **Cover:** Cover shall contain the Title of the Project, limited use disclaimer, and identify the submitting agency. An example cover page is provided in Figure 1.
2. **Summary Page:** The summary page should immediately follow the cover and include the information as shown in Figure 2. Any questions/clarifications regarding the information required on the Summary Page should be directed to the WHRP Program Manager.
3. **Table of Contents** – Self explanatory.
4. **Research Plan (10 Pages or Less)** – The research plan should clearly detail the steps taken to address the problem statement and scope presented in the request for proposal. Specifically, the research plan should include the following subsections:
 - a. **Background:** In the background section of the proposal the researcher should

demonstrate a clear understanding of the problem provided in the request for proposal and how it relates to WisDOT practices. Awareness of recent work must also be demonstrated through definition of the technological or practical barriers that must be addressed in solving the problem.

- b. Research Approach:**
 - i. Work Plan/Experimental Design:** This section should describe how the scope provided in the RFP will be addressed through presentation of a logical, innovative plan. The plan should include a detailed description of each task related to completion of the overall research. The researcher should also consider Wisconsin conditions, materials, and practices in their approach. If appropriate this section will also include an experimental design identifying key materials properties and test methods used to evaluate them.
 - ii. Expected Contribution from WisDOT Staff:** The proposer should describe any work plan development, database access/training, materials collection, equipment usage, or other research activities in which WisDOT involvement is required or expected. Additions to or deviations from the expected involvement provided in the RFP should be noted and justified.
 - c. Anticipated Research Results and Implementation Plan:** It is expected that the research plan will include specific statements describing anticipated research results and how they can be integrated into practice. Research results will be communicated in terms of a specific deliverable, (i.e. a design/analysis tool, test methods, or change in performance thresholds) and their impact on current WisDOT practice. This section will include an Implementation Plan that addresses how the research will be applied to practice. It is understood the plan may change as the research progresses, however at a minimum it should include:
 - i.** The product expected from the research.
 - ii.** The stakeholder or intended audience that the results of the research will most likely impact.
 - iii.** Potential impediments to implementation
 - iv.** Activities necessary for successful implementation.
- 5. Time Requirement:** The time required to complete the research project is provided by WHP in the request for proposal. Project timelines will be clearly communicated in the proposal in terms of project schedule and distribution of research team hours. The project schedule will be presented using a Gantt chart showing the start and end dates of each task with dates of project milestones and submittal of deliverables clearly indicated. Schedules should be based on the Federal Fiscal Year (October 1 – September 30). The schedule will also include a 3 month timeframe for TOC review, this review period includes a project presentation by the researcher to the committee. In addition the amount of hours by task committed to the project by each member of the research team must be provided in a table. A “Summary of Hours” template is provided in Figure 3.

6. **Budget:**

- a. **Itemized Budget:** The maximum cost of the project is provided by WHRP in the request for proposal. The budget and staffing plan should be based on the Federal Fiscal Year (October – September). Any proposal that submitted with a budget that exceeds the amount posted in the RFP will be considered non-responsive to the RFP requirements and will not be accepted. In addition, matching funds will not be considered in the evaluation process. The researcher is responsible for providing a budget consistent with the scope of work in the proposal. The budget will be organized to reflect the cost associated with each research task in the proposal and should be itemized using the categories provided in Figure 4.
7. **Qualifications of Research Team:** The academic, industrial, and/or research experience for the Principal Investigator and all other research team members and how the experiences relate to the project should be provided. Any past WHRP efforts should be listed in this section. Experience conducting any tests required by the RFP that are not certified by WisDOT should also be noted. This requirement does not extend to graduate students.
8. **Other Commitments of the Research Team:** Proposals will contain a listing of the current organization and personal commitments to other work as an indicator that the PI and the rest of the research team has the time available to accommodate commitments provided in the proposal. The “Summary of Other Commitments” Template is provided in Figure 5.
9. **Facilities and Information Services:** The section will include a description of the information services and facilities available to complete the research project.
- a. **Laboratory Equipment:** The description of the laboratory should include a listing of equipment available considered necessary to complete the scope of the research project. In the instance that required equipment is not on hand, arrangements to borrow or rent the equipment should be communicated in the proposal. Letters of agreement to borrow equipment or quotes obtained for equipment rental are sufficient forms of verification that the equipment is available.
 - b. **Certifications:** National or state laboratory and technician certifications for activities relevant to the research project should be provided in the proposal. In the instance that the request for proposal requires laboratory and/or technician certification that the proposer does not have at the time of submittal, the proposal will communicate the efforts that will be made to obtain certification or committee approval to conduct testing with the proposed technicians and laboratories.
 - c. **Information Services:** The section will also describe the availability of the library and information services for the research team to allow for a thorough literature review and understanding of current practice and research activities.

Appendix – Summary of Figures

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- Figures 1 and 2 are available for download in Word Format on the WHRP Website.
- Figures 3-5 are available to download as a Microsoft Excel Workbook on the WHRP Website.

Figure 1: Cover Sheet

Wisconsin Highway Research Program

Project Title

Wisconsin Highway Research Program
LIMITED USE DOCUMENT

This proposal is for use of the recipient in selection of a research agency to conduct work under the Wisconsin Highway Research Program. If the proposal is unsuccessful, it should be destroyed. Proposals are regarded as fully privileged, and dissemination of the information included therein must be approved by WHRP.

Agency Name

Date

Figure 2: Summary Page

Project Title:

Proposing Agency: (Use name that will appear on contract include address and telephone number)

Person Submitting the Proposal: (Name and Title)

Proposal Written By: (Name and Title)

Proposal Date:

Principal Investigator: (Name and title, address, telephone number, and email address)

Administrative Officer: (Name and title, address, telephone number, and email address)

Proposed Contract Period: (In months)

Total Contract Amount:

Indirect Cost Portion at ____%

Figure 3: Summary of Hours Template

INDIVIDUALS	TASKS				TOTAL HOURS
	1	2	3	4	
Principal Investigator					0
Graduate Students/Senior Staff					0
Hourly Students/Junior Staff					0
Office Staff					0
TOTALS	0	0	0	0	0

Figure 4: Budget Worksheet

BUDGET WORKSHEET

[PROJECT TITLE]

Table 1 Work Effort by Task

INDIVIDUALS	TASKS				TOTAL	Fringes	Total Direct
	1	2	3	4			
Principal Investigator					0		\$0
Graduate Students/Senior Staff					0		\$0
Hourly Students/Junior Staff					0		\$0
Office Staff					0		\$0
TOTALS	0	0	0	0	0		\$0

Table 2 Total Contract Summary by Federal Fiscal Year

					Fiscal Year 1	Fiscal Year 2	TOTALS
Total Salaries and Wages (From Table 1)	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!			#DIV/0!
Other Direct Costs							\$0
Materials & Supplies							\$0
Printing							\$0
Communications (CDs, Reports, Website)							\$0
Travel							\$0
Sub-Contracting (Database & communication development)							\$0
TOTAL DIRECT COSTS	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!			#DIV/0!
Indirect Costs							\$0
Overhead							\$0
TOTAL INDIRECT COSTS	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0			\$0
TOTAL CONTRACT COST	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!			#DIV/0!

NOTES:

Figure 5: Commitments of the Research Team

Research Team Commitments		Percentage of Time	
Team Member	Role	Committed	Available