

The Duke Climate Research Innovation Seed Program (CRISP)

2024 Request for Proposals

Proposal Deadline: February 26, 2024

Open to all Duke faculty and research staff, the 2024 round of CRISP grants will include two types of support:

- **Research Awards (up to \$100,000)** for projects addressing **Climate and Community Resilience**, and
- **Ideation Awards (up to \$20,000)** for projects addressing any of the four Duke Climate Commitment areas of focus: **Energy Transformation, Climate and Community Resilience, Environmental and Climate Justice, and Data-Driven Climate Solutions**.

Revised January 29, 2024: CRISP grants may now be used to support **the salaries of Duke faculty and research staff members**. The maximum total project budgets for salary support of faculty and staff are \$6,000 + fringe for Ideation Awards and \$30,000 + fringe for Research Awards. For more information, see section **5.2. Funding Restrictions** below.

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1. Grant Snapshot

Research Awards

Area(s) of Focus	1
Maximum Amount	\$100,000
Performance Period	12 months
Anticipated Funding	\$500,000
Estimated Number	5

Ideation Awards

Area(s) of Focus	4
Maximum Amount	\$20,000
Performance Period	12 months
Anticipated Funding	\$100,000
Estimated Number	5

2. Program Description

The Nicholas Institute for Energy, Environment & Sustainability (NIEES), supported by funding from the Duke University Office of Climate & Sustainability, is accepting proposals for Climate Research Innovation Seed Program (CRISP) grants until Monday, February 26, 2024, 5:30 p.m. Eastern Time. Open to all Duke faculty and research staff, CRISP grants support promising research projects targeting the four Duke Climate Commitment areas of focus: **Energy Transformation, Climate and Community Resilience, Environmental and Climate Justice**, and **Data-Driven Climate Solutions**. For more detailed descriptions of these areas, visit the Duke Climate Commitment [website](#). Projects may approach these areas from any disciplinary or interdisciplinary perspective and should aim for tangible, measurable, and durable results.

3. Award Information

3.1. Overview

CRISP grants come in two forms: **Research Awards** of up to \$100,000 and **Ideation Awards** of up to \$20,000. ***This year, Research Awards will support projects in the area of Climate and Community Resilience.*** Ideation Awards, by contrast, will support projects in any of the four Duke Climate Commitment areas of focus: **Energy Transformation, Climate and Community Resilience, Environmental and Climate Justice**, or **Data-Driven Climate Solutions**. The performance period for all CRISP awards is twelve months.

3.2. Research Awards

Each year, CRISP issues **Research Awards** that provide up to \$100,000 for research and development on a specific Duke Climate Commitment area of focus. This year's

Research Awards will focus on the area of **Climate and Community Resilience**. To advance work on Climate and Community Resilience, a combination of curiosity-based, user-inspired, and action-oriented research is needed. Major knowledge gaps include (1) dynamics, commonalities, and interactions of human and natural systems on different spatiotemporal scales, particularly for climate hazard mitigation; (2) standardized metrics for measuring climate and community resilience with accuracy and reproducibility across the natural, social, and physical sciences; and (3) climate impacts and solutions in underserved communities, including the differing needs of rural and urban communities.

3.3. Ideation Awards

Ideation Awards provide grants of up to \$20,000 for research in any of the four Duke Climate Commitment areas of focus: **Energy Transformation, Climate and Community Resilience, Environmental and Climate Justice, and Data-Driven Climate Solutions**.

4. Eligibility Information

4.1. Eligible Applicants

To be eligible to apply, you must be a full-time member of Duke's regular rank faculty, modified rank faculty, or research personnel in good standing with the University. For a list of positions in the regular and modified rank faculty, see [Appendix E](#) in the [Duke Faculty Handbook](#). For a general description of research personnel, see [Chapter 2](#) in the [Research Policy Manual](#). You may apply as either a single researcher or a member of a larger research team.

4.2. External Collaborators

You may name individuals and organizations external to Duke as collaborators on your application so long as you adhere to the University's policies on research collaborations. For complete information on these policies, see [Chapter 4](#) in the [Research Policy Manual](#). In addition, note that funding for external collaborators may only be used to cover travel costs or similar logistical expenses. For more information on these budget restrictions, see [Section 5.2](#) of this RFP.

4.3. Other Eligibility Information

You may submit multiple applications for separate and distinct projects under this notice. Collaborating organizations may participate in multiple proposals.

5. Application Information

5.1. Principal Investigator

Each application must identify one, and only one, applicant as the Principal Investigator (PI). The PI will oversee the fiscal, programmatic, and administrative aspects of a sponsored project. In general, members of the Duke regular rank faculty in good standing with the University are eligible to serve as PIs on sponsored projects at Duke as a matter of privilege. Individuals who are not regular rank faculty members may be granted eligibility to serve as PIs with the prior approval of the appropriate institutional official or office. For more information, see [Chapter 2](#) in the [Research Policy Manual](#).

5.2. Funding Restrictions

The budget may include research support, tuition remission for graduate students, and supplies and materials, as well as general operating costs, among other justifiable expenses. Note that travel expenses are allowable only if they are essential to conducting the proposed research activities; travel to scholarly conferences is not allowed.

The salaries of Duke faculty and research staff members can also be supported by the grant for contributing their disciplinary expertise to a project. The maximum total project budgets for salary support of faculty and staff are \$6,000 + fringe for Ideation Awards and \$30,000 + fringe for Research Awards. For teams that receive a Research Award, an individual faculty or research staff member may receive no more than \$10,000 in salary support + fringe.

5.3. Application Package

Your application will include a cover page, abstract, narrative, budget, and select appendix materials. All these components are required for a complete application. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

5.3.1. Cover Page

The cover page may follow any legible format but must contain the project title and the application type (either Research Award or Ideation Award), as well as the name and title of the Principal Investigator.

5.3.2. Abstract

The abstract should describe in no more than 250 words the project's design, methods, specific aims, and long-term objectives. It should also omit proprietary or confidential information, as well as descriptions of past accomplishments.

5.3.3. Narrative

The narrative should be succinct, well organized, and, as far as possible, free of technical terms and jargon so that peer reviewers can understand the proposed project. Limit the narrative for Research Awards to 1,500 words, and limit the narrative for Ideation Awards to 1,000 words. Count all captions, footnotes, and endnotes toward these word limits.

You may include up to three non-textual visualizations, including images, charts, or diagrams. Do not include an executive summary or table of contents.

Organize your narrative using the following subheadings:

- **Significance:** Justify the project's importance based on its benefits to research, education, or public engagement with the Duke Climate Commitment. Discuss the central themes, questions, or disciplines it would address. Identify the audience(s) that the project would serve.
- **History, Scope & Duration:** Summarize the project's history, including information about preliminary research and planning, prior financial support, and available resources or research facilities. If relevant, describe the goals of the larger initiative of which this project is a part. Note any project-specific products or publications to date in print or digital form.
- **Work Plan, Methodology & Standards:** Provide an overview of what you would accomplish at each stage of the project. Describe activities for each stage and specify the project team members involved, including external collaborators (if applicable). Explain how the project would conform to appropriate national standards and accepted professional practices.
- **Outreach:** Describe your plans to bring the project to the attention of relevant communities. In many cases, the outreach components accomplished during the performance period would be preparatory and developmental. Larger-scale dissemination work would more likely occur after the project concludes.
- **Sustainability of Project Results:** Describe how you would maintain the project's results beyond the performance period. Highlight any work toward the receipt of external funding.

5.3.4. Budget

All proposal budgets must be submitted using the [template](#) provided.

5.3.5. Appendix Materials

- **Research Schedule with Milestones:** Your schedule should reflect the major activities you describe in your narrative and your budget. Explain how outcomes from one activity will carry over into the next. Limit your schedule to 500 words.
- **List of Project Personnel:** Identify project personnel and external collaborators. Provide titles, mailing addresses, email addresses, and phone numbers for each.
- **Curriculum Vitae for Key Personnel:** Include CVs for key personnel (suggested length is no more than four pages per person). In place of CVs, you may substitute National Science Foundation/National Institutes of Health biosketches, including current grant support.

5.4. Application Drafts

Nicholas Institute staff will not review drafts of any application components ahead of the final submission deadline.

5.5. Application Submission

- Combine all application components into a single PDF file.
- Name your single PDF file according to the following convention: Principal Investigator Last Name_Award Type. For example, a hypothetical Principal Investigator named Fulana AlFulaniyya would name her application for a CRISP Research Award as follows: AlFulaniyya_Research.pdf.
- Submit your single PDF file as an email attachment to Dr. Tom J. Cinq-Mars (tom.cinq.mars@duke.edu), Assistant Director for Research Development, NIEES, by **5:30 p.m. Eastern Time on Monday, February 26, 2024.**

6. Application Review Information

6.1. Review Criteria

In ranking applications, reviewers will consider: (1) significance and potential impact; (2) degree of innovation; (3) scope of collaboration; (4) feasibility; and (5) sustainability, including potential to receive external funding.

6.2. Review and Selection Process

Proposals will be reviewed by an *ad hoc* review committee consisting of faculty and research staff with a broad range of expertise in climate-related fields.

As CRISP represents one rung on a large scaffold of climate-related funding opportunities at Duke, the reviewers will prioritize research projects that demonstrate potential to grow over time. They will examine all proposals on an equal footing regardless of project maturity.

In making final selections, the review committee will work closely with other stakeholders to apply a grand total of \$600,000 toward a diverse group of projects with a strong likelihood of success.

7. Award Administration Information

7.1. Quarterly Reports

For the first three quarters of the performance period, all CRISP grantees will provide NIEES with a brief report, including a one-paragraph summary of the research project and a statement of funds expended to date. Relevant photographs suitable for public sharing (e.g., events, “action shots” of research in progress, etc.) are highly appreciated but not required.

7.2. Summary Reports

Within 30 days of the performance period’s end date, all CRISP grantees will provide NIEES with a Summary Report. Summary Reports must be approximately 1,000 words long and cover the following topics: 1) milestones reached; 2) funding expended; and 3) anticipated next steps or outcomes. In addition, they will highlight any related outputs, including journal articles, conference presentations, external grants, etc. Relevant photographs suitable for public sharing (e.g., events, “action shots” of research in progress, etc.) are highly appreciated but not required.

7.3. Duke Research Policies

All CRISP grantees must adhere to Duke's [Research Policy Manual](#) throughout their awards' performance periods. The responsibility addressing issues of data management ([Chapter 5](#)), intellectual property ([Chapter 6](#)), and human and vertebrate animal subjects ([Chapter 7](#)), among others, will be vested with PIs. Applicants should direct any questions of University-wide research policies to the [Office for Research & Innovation](#).

8. Institute Contacts

If you have any questions about the program, contact:

Tom J. Cinq-Mars
Assistant Director for Research Development
Nicholas Institute for Energy, Environment & Sustainability
140 Science Drive, Gross Hall, Suite 101, Durham, NC 27708
tom.cinq.mars@duke.edu
(919) 681-6255

9. Timeline

Request for Proposals released	November 16, 2023
RFP and webinar publicized	November 28, 2023
Webinar hosted	December 12, 2023
Request for Proposals closed	February 26, 2024
Recipients notified	April 1, 2024
Award announcement	April 15, 2024
Funds distributed	June 1, 2024
Funding accounts closed	May 31, 2025