

Washington State Wine Commission Research Grant Program 2027-28 Request for Proposals

All applications will be submitted and uploaded through the [Washington Wine Research Portal](#). You will need to create a profile before submitting. The portal will open for submissions on September 15.

All new projects must go through a pre-proposal process – **deadline is October 23, 2026**.

Continuing proposals – **deadline is January 29, 2027**.

Contact Research Program Manager, Julie Tarara [jtaraa@washingtonwine.org](mailto:jtarara@washingtonwine.org) with questions.

	Washington State Wine Commission Research Grant Program
About	- Competitive grant program of the Washington State Wine Commission. - Funds one-year demonstration and intermediate projects (up to four years if a Ph.D. student is justified). - Funding originates from assessments paid by all Washington wine grape growers and wineries. - New projects must apply as pre-proposal. Pre-proposal deadline: October 23, 2026. Successful pre-proposals will be invited to submit full proposal. - Continuing and new full proposal deadline: January 23, 2027. - Proposals are reviewed by the Wine Research Advisory Committee, a subcommittee of the Washington State Wine Commission; Committee funding recommendations approved by Washington State Wine Commission Board of Directors. - Principal investigator can be located within or outside Washington State, but not with Washington State University.
Eligible Projects	- Research must be relevant to Washington viticulture and enology, with an overall goal of improving Washington wine quality. Research priority categories include: Fermentation Management Aroma and Flavor Compounds in Wine Winery Sustainability Viticulture Production Efficiency and Profitability Pest Management (including sustainable and organic) Climate Effects on Site/Viticulture Mechanization/Precision Technology for Viticulture and Enology <i>Refer to full priority list at end of this RFP.</i> - Research partnerships and collaborative projects between Washington scientists and researchers elsewhere are highly encouraged. - Proposals will be held by Wine Commission and will not be returned. - No limit to number of proposals submitted by each PI.
Review Process	Pre-proposal is required for new projects. Full proposals are by invitation only. Full proposals determined to be complete and meeting research criteria will be invited for presentation at the Research Review on February 24-25, 2027. Teleconferencing is available for those unable to attend. Industry members attending the Review will rank proposals for importance; Wine Research Advisory Committee will make funding recommendations for approval by Wine Commission Board. - All proposals will be held confidential. - Funding announcement will be made in April.
Grant Criteria	Evaluation criteria for new applications include: <u>Relevance and importance</u> to Washington wine industry. - Compliance with application format, length, and completeness.

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	• Budget is appropriate to meet objectives. • Scientific merit. • Outreach plan brings research findings to Washington wine industry. • Consideration of continuing proposals will be contingent on receipt of mid-year report plus annual reports from investigators funded the previous year(s) and based on progress documented, as well as the continuing merit and promise of accomplishment.
Funding	The Washington State Wine Commission is program administrator and handles grant accounting. A signed private contractor/institution agreement is required. Funds will be disbursed in two installments over a 12-month period: • First installment - upon receipt of signed agreement (after July 1) • Second installment - receipt of satisfactory progress or final report (progress report to be included in application for continuing support) Projects may be funded for a maximum of four years if a Ph.D. candidate is required. Funding for multi-year projects is approved year by year.
Budget Request	Prepare sufficiently detailed budget that reflects request for first year and projection for entire project. Continuation of projects must be justified annually. Indicate budget allocation (percentage) for each proposed objective.
Budget Limitations	Indirect costs/overhead charges are not covered. Awards cannot be used for: • Tuition or tuition reimbursement. • Travel not related to project; travel to Research Review.
Reporting	Wine Research Advisory Committee member(s) assigned as Lead for each funded project will serve as industry liaison for the PI. Share mid-year updates with WRAC Lead. Key reporting dates are: • Mid-year interim update (paragraph summary of progress) due October 1. • For continued funding of ongoing projects, annual reports are due January 29, 2027 and must be submitted with the continuing proposal. • Final report due June 30 of the project's last year. The annual progress and final report will include: • Approximately 500-word summary (in lay terms) of the project (overview, key findings, specific accomplishments, how results may be used in the vineyard or winery, etc.). Final summary due at final report deadline. Report will include a summary of results. Submit mid-year, continuing, and final reports to the research grant portal. https://wrac-portal.vercel.app/
Outreach	<i>Industry outreach and education plan is critical for PIs outside Washington to share how research results will be brought to the Washington wine industry.</i> Plan should include presentation by PI (or designee), conducted in person or remotely, at Washington wine industry at events such as WAVE research seminar, WA Winegrowers annual convention. • Report summaries will be used to communicate progress with stakeholders and may be posted on the Wine Commission's website or in newsletters.
Publicity	All publicity/media/posters, etc. produced related to this project must appropriately acknowledge the Washington State Wine Commission: <i>This research was funded in whole/or part by all Washington State wine grape growers and wineries through the Washington State Wine Commission.</i>

Enology

- **Wine Aroma and Flavor Compounds** – Optimize sensory compounds in wine; management of environmental issues impacting wine quality (smoke exposure, frost exposure); management of vineyard derived sulfur off aromas.
- **Winery Sustainability** – Reduce winery energy usage. Develop methods for large and small wineries to recycle, reuse, reduce, repurpose harvest biomass, winery wastewater and winery waste, including glass wine bottles.
- **Fermentation Management** – Yeast and bacteria impacts on fermentation, sensory properties; control of microbiological spoilage; nutrient management practices; management at winery of diseased/disordered fruit; fermentation monitoring practices (cap extraction, process control, real-time monitoring methods), phenolic management, rapid analysis of juice, must, wine chemistries.
- **Wine Maturation and Stabilization** – Improve protein and cold stabilization to minimize flavor scalping, color loss and reduce energy usage; microbial stabilization, impact of filtration options on wine sensory qualities, fining methods, calcium instability, sulfur dioxide minimalization and management.

Viticulture

- **Vineyard Sustainability** — Improve vineyard floor management practices; soil fertility and carbon sequestration in vineyard soils, nutrient management, biochar for optimal vine and soil health; grafting and rootstock management and selection.
- **Pest Management** – Detect and manage grapevine viruses and vectors; sustainable management strategies for all pests of economic importance (grape mealybug, spider mites, phylloxera, fungal diseases, nematodes, crown gall, weeds, vertebrate); management of trunk diseases.
- **Vineyard Production, Efficiency and Profitability** – Improve water use efficiency/water savings and water quality to optimize wine quality; canopy management for mechanization; management of berry/sour shrivel.
- **Climate Impacts on Site/Viticulture** – Develop optimum guidelines for light and heat exposure on fruit; understand impact of climate variability on viticulture (phenology, ripening, pest and diseases); winter trunk injury and secondary infections (crown gall); develop decision support system for inversion, frost protection.
- **Mechanization/Precision** – Develop, evaluate mechanized/precision tools that reduce reliance on hand labor in vineyard or winery (crop estimation tool, canopy and crop management, pest management, sorting, MOG removal, cellar tasks).

Emerging Issues

- Unforeseen viticulture and enology threats, problems or research opportunities
- Industry education needs (extension bulletins, etc.)
- Comparative analysis of Washington State viticulture practices to other regions