

U.S. Forest Service Wood Innovations Fiscal Year 2021 Request for Proposals & Instructions

I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

A. Background

The U.S. Forest Service (Forest Service) requests proposals for projects that will substantially expand and accelerate wood products and wood energy markets throughout the United States to support forest management needs on National Forest System and other forest lands.

The grants and agreements awarded under this announcement will support the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 ([Pub. L. 115-334](#)), Rural Revitalization Technologies ([7 U.S.C. 6601](#)), and the nationwide challenge of disposing of hazardous fuels and other wood residues from the National Forest System and other U.S. forest lands in a manner that supports wood products and wood energy markets.

B. Dates

The application deadline is **Wednesday, January 20, 2021** at 5:00 p.m. local time in the region where you submit an application (see [Section III, Part C](#)). The Forest Service will hold an informational **Pre-Application Webinar on this and another related grant opportunity on Tuesday, November 10, 2020 at 2:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time** to provide information and answer questions. The webinar can be accessed at: <https://usfs.adobeconnect.com/wood-innovations/>. To call in by phone, dial: 888-844-9904 and use access code 9780832.

Individuals who use telecommunication devices for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Relay Service (FRS) at 800-877-8339, 24 hours a day, every day of the year, including holidays.

C. For More Information

Additional information about application requirements, eligibility, and prerequisites is available at the [Wood Innovations website](#).

Please direct all questions regarding this announcement to the appropriate [Forest Service Regional Coordinator](#) listed in Section V of these instructions. **Applicants are strongly encouraged to work with their designated Regional Coordinator early in the application process to determine whether project ideas will be competitive and to improve proposal quality.** Regional Coordinators may have additional tools and resources to help with your application development process.

A link to [Frequently Asked Questions and Definitions](#) is on the 2021 Wood Innovations Program Request for Proposals link.

D. Available Funding

The Forest Service plans to award up to \$8 million under this announcement.

E. Goals

The Forest Service seeks proposals that significantly stimulate or expand wood products markets and wood energy markets to support the long-term management of National Forest System and other forest lands.

This Request for Proposals focuses on the Wood Innovations program goals:

1. Reduce hazardous fuels and improve forest health on National Forest System and other forest lands.
2. Reduce the costs of forest management on all land types.
3. Promote economic and environmental health of communities.

F. Intent and Examples

The intent of the Wood Innovations funding opportunity is to stimulate, expand, and support U.S. wood products markets and wood energy markets.

Examples of eligible projects include, *but are not limited to*:

1. Completing requirements, such as architectural and engineering designs, cost analyses, and permitting necessary for 1) commercial construction projects that use wood as a primary building material, and 2) wood energy project development to secure financing. Early phase project development proposals and feasibility studies will not be competitive.
2. Establishing or increasing wood products manufacturing capacity and/or markets that support forest ecosystem restoration
3. Showcasing quantifiable environmental and economic benefits of using wood as a sustainable building material in a constructed commercial building to increase acceptance and encourage growth in the construction industry.
4. Establishing statewide wood utilization teams or statewide wood energy teams. Only proposals from States without an existing or former team will be considered. Current teams are found on this [map](#).
5. Developing a cluster of wood energy projects in a geographic area or specific sector; or installing a wood energy system at a facility (e.g., prisons, hospitals, universities, manufacturing or industrial sector) that will use forest woody biomass or forest products manufacturing residues.
6. Developing commercial wood biomass and wood product utilization industrial parks.
7. Overcoming market barriers and stimulating expansion of wood energy in the institutional, commercial, or industrial sectors.
8. Implementing applied research projects that engage with or involve industry partners to resolve gaps in practical knowledge that can lead to readily applied advances in the wood products or wood energy market.
9. Stationary wood energy equipment.

[View examples of projects funded in prior years.](#) Click on “Search by Region, State, Project Type, and/or Fiscal Year” after entering the appropriate search criteria and then click “View Results.”

G. Preferences

Preference will be given to proposals that:

- Create or expand markets for wood and biomass generated by forest health and hazardous fuels reduction projects on National Forest System and other U.S. forested lands.
- Involve wood products or wood industry partners
- Support commercial building markets or other markets that use innovative wood products.
- Bundle or address multiple wood energy or wood products projects.
- Commit to utilizing domestically sourced timber for mass timber construction projects.
- Support development of domestically sourced timber and U.S. manufacturing of mass timber and other wood products.
- Purchase, acquisition, or use of goods, products, or materials produced in the United States pursuant to 2 CFR § 200.322.

Note:

1. Proposals incorporating commercially viable technologies will be competitive.
2. Basic research, construction, and equipment will NOT be funded under this funding opportunity with one exception: **Stationary wood energy equipment is the only equipment eligible for grant funds and is subject to the regulations at 2 CFR §200.310, 200.313, and 200.316. These 2 CFR §200 regulations are available at: <https://www.law.cornell.edu/cfr/text/2/part-200/subpart-D>.**
3. Applied research and demonstrations projects will be considered.
4. Expenses for self-marketing or self-promotion are not eligible expenses (e.g., company brochures, company business cards, company display materials, etc.).
5. Proposals should align with Forest Service Regional priorities and State Forest Action Plans.

H. Award Information

The Forest Service plans to award up to \$8 million under this announcement. The maximum for each award is generally \$250,000; however, the Forest Service may consider awarding more to a proposal that demonstrates the ability to have a significant and sizeable impact on wood product or energy markets. All awards are based on funding availability.

Awards under this announcement are typically 2 to 3 years in length. Projects of greater complexity may be awarded for a longer period of time, not to exceed 5 years. The Forest Service will notify a recipient if their proposal is selected for an award and indicate whether any additional forms or information are required, and an estimate of when the recipient may proceed. The Federal government will incur no legal obligation until appropriated

funds are available and a Forest Service Grant Officer returns a fully executed award letter to a successful applicant.

If your proposal is selected for an award, ten percent of the Federal funds may be held by the administrator until final reporting is completed and approved.

Note: An award to a for-profit entity will generate an Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Form 1099 Miscellaneous Income that will be filed with the IRS and provided to the awardee. The Forest Service expresses no opinion on the taxability, if any, of the awarded grant funds.

II. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants are for-profit entities; state, local, and tribal governments; school districts; community, not-for-profit organizations; institutions of higher education; and special purpose districts (e.g., public utilities districts, fire districts, conservation districts, and ports).

Your agency, business, or organization must have an active registration in the [System for Award Management \(SAM\)](#) to apply. **You must include a screenshot of the SAM registration page in the application appendices to be eligible for an award.** There is no charge for registration. Active registration must be maintained throughout the life of the award. **Note:** The approval process for a new or renewal SAM's registration can take several months.

B. Cost Sharing/Matching

Applicants must contribute matching funds equal to at least 100% of the Forest Service requested funds. This means for every \$1 of Federal funding requested applicants must provide at least \$1 in match. For example, if the requested Federal amount is \$100,000, the applicant match must be at least \$100,000 or more. Applicant match must come from non-Federal sources. The match may include cash or in-kind contributions. All matching funds must be directly related to the proposed project. **Applicants must submit letters of support from third-party organizations confirming the amount of cash or in-kind services to be provided, up to the minimum required match.** Additional funds beyond the matching requirement can be shown as leverage, but letters of financial commitment are not required. However, **applicants who commit to a match beyond the required 1:1 match are obligated to meet the match amount listed in the grant.**

The match must be met using eligible and allowable costs and is subject to the match requirements in Federal regulations. For information about Federal cost principles and related topics, go to the [Government Publishing Office website](#).

Forest Service funds cannot be used to fund Forest Service involvement in the project. Applicants must list all other funds (e.g., Federal, State, private) received for this project and closely related projects within the last 5 years (include agency, program name, and dollar amount) in the application appendices

Applicants may use this [budget detail worksheet](#) as a guide to determine project costs.

III. APPLICATION SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. Eligible Applicants

This announcement contains all instructions to complete an application package and includes web links to required financial forms. In addition, this information and related web links can be viewed and downloaded by visiting the [Wood Innovations website](#).

B. Content and Form of Application Submission

The proposal package must include all of the materials listed below. Each submittal must consist of two separate, searchable PDF (or Word) files, as follows:

- Part 1: Cooperator Contact Information, Narrative, and any Appendices
- Part 2: Required Financial Forms

Applicants must e-mail all parts of the application at one time, including letters of support and appendices. Separate letters of support, appendices, etc., will not be accepted. No proposals will be accepted by fax machine or hard copy.

1. Part 1 - Project Application: Cooperator Contact Information, Narrative, and Appendices (requirements)

- a. Formatted to print on 8½- by 11-inch plain paper with 1-inch margins.
- b. 11-point font (Arial, Calibri) or larger.
- c. Page numbers.
- d. Each “page” of the application is one side of a single-spaced, typed page.
- e. A maximum of **five pages** per proposal for Part 1 of the Application, not including the Cooperator Contact Information page or appendices.
- f. The following sections (1 through 7 below) are required for Part 1 Narrative (see the Application for more specific instructions):
 1. Basic Project Information
 2. Project Goals and Objectives
 3. Project Description
 4. Project Impact
 5. Qualifications of Team and Partners
 6. Annual Progress Reports and Final Reports
 7. Budget Summary and Justification in Support of SF-424A

Documentation exceeding the maximum five-page limit will not be considered.

- g. Appendices are also included in Part 1 of the application. They should be well

organized and include an index so reviewers can readily find information of interest. The Appendices should only contain relevant information, i.e. information that will help the review panel better understand and evaluate the project. Below are required items that must be included in the Appendices as well as examples of optional information.

Required Information for Appendices:

1. Letters of support from partners, individuals, or organizations, especially those playing a key role or providing matching funds, including Forest Service units if National Forest System lands will directly benefit from the project. Letters of support should display the degree of collaboration occurring between the different entities engaged in the project. **Applicants must submit letters of support from third-party organizations confirming the amount of cash or in-kind services to be provided, up to the minimum required match.**
2. List of all other funds (Federal, State, private) received for this project and closely related projects within the last 5 years (include agency, program name, and dollar amount).
3. Your organization must have an active registration in the System for Award Management to apply (see Section V, Part B1). You must include a screenshot of your registration page to be eligible for an award.
4. Short resume or vitae for key team members.

Optional Information for Appendices:

5. Feasibility Assessments.
6. Woody Biomass Resource Supply Assessment (recommended for larger wood energy proposals).
7. Quotes for professional engineering services and rationale for selection of contractor, if already selected.
8. Miscellaneous items, such as schematics, engineering designs, or executive summaries of reports.
9. Include 1 – 3 photos that best tell the story of your project. Please include a caption for each photo that explains what is shown or happening in the photo. Only include photos that can be used for press releases, public websites, or mass communications if awarded. **Photos are optional at time of proposal submission but required if proposal is selected for award.**

2. Part 2 - Project Application: Required Financial Forms [all]

The following forms need to be completed and submitted with your proposal. Forms a through f below are located at the [Grants.gov website](#). Search the “Form Name” column for the appropriate form. The required Forest Service forms listed for items g and h are available via the respective links at the Forest Service website.

- a. SF-424: Application for Federal Assistance

- b. SF-424A: Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs
- c. SF-424B: Assurances for Non-Construction Programs
- d. USDA AD-1047: Certification Regarding Debarment and Suspension
- e. USDA AD-1049: Certification Regarding Drug-Free Workplace (or USDA AD-1052 for States and State agencies)
- f. USDA AD-3030: Representations Regarding Felony Conviction and Tax Delinquent Status for Corporation Applicants
- g. [FS-1500-35: Certificate Regarding Lobbying Activities](#)
- h. [FS-1500-22: Financial Capability Questionnaire](#)

C. Submission Date and Time

Applications must be *received electronically* at the individual e-mail address for the respective [Forest Service Regional Coordinator](#) listed in the Agency Contacts section of this announcement **by 5:00 p.m. in the region you submit by January 20, 2021** with NO EXCEPTIONS. No proposals will be accepted by fax or hard copy.

Incomplete proposals and those received past the official deadline will not be accepted. If any part of the application is missing, the proposal will not be accepted.

D. Funding Restrictions

To develop an application and budget consistent with Forest Service grants and agreements requirements, use [these guidelines](#).

E. Confidentiality

Materials submitted to the Forest Service, such as grant applications and progress reports, are subject to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Upon request, the Forest Service may be obligated to disclose such records. However, documents or portions of documents will be protected if they satisfy the requirements of one or more FOIA exemptions. FOIA Exemption 4 protects commercial and financial information that constitutes a trade secret, or whose release would cause competitive harm to the organization that provided the information. FOIA Exemption 6 protects information whose release “would reasonably be expected to constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy.”

If the Forest Service receives a FOIA request seeking information provided by your organization, Executive Order 12600 requires the Forest Service to consult with you regarding the potential release of this information. When assembling your Wood Innovations Application, you may wish to highlight any information that constitutes a trade secret, whose release would cause you competitive harm, or whose release would impact personal privacy. For more information about the FOIA and its exemptions, please consult the Department of Justice [Guide to the Freedom of Information Act](#).

IV. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

A. Evaluation Criteria

Reviewers will assign points to each proposal based on its ability to meet the following criteria. Each proposal can earn a maximum of 100 total points.

1. Project Goals and Objectives (15 points total)

- a. Alignment with goals of the Wood Innovations Program. (5 points)
- b. Alignment with preferences and the intent of the Wood Innovations funding opportunity (10 points)

2. Project Description (35 points total)

- a. Project is well defined, timeline is reasonable, and steps required for project completion are clear. (30 points)
- b. Reporting requirements addressed. (5 points)

3. Project Impact (35 points total)

- a. Clear and reasonable deliverables and outcomes given funds requested. (15 points)
- b. Extent and significance of impact. Impacts are well defined and must include a realistic presentation of impacts (including assumptions) on forest health and wood products or wood energy markets. (15 points)
- c. Leveraged activities or leveraged funds above the minimum required match that maximize proposed project benefits. (5 points)

4. Qualifications of Staff, Organization, and Partners (15 points)

- a. Team member(s) qualifications, experience and past performance are relevant to the project. (15 points)

B. Review and Selection Process

Applications will be evaluated against the criteria listed in [Section IV, Part A](#). All applications will be screened to ensure compliance with the administrative requirements as set forth in this Request for Proposals. **Applications that do not follow the directions for submission or incomplete applications will be disqualified without appeal.**

Forest Service Regional Foresters will rank proposals according to regional priorities. A panel of Federal experts or their designees will perform a thorough technical review of eligible proposals and evaluate the proposals according to the criteria outlined in this announcement. Reviewers independently evaluate proposals for merit and assign a score using the criteria listed in [Section IV, Part A](#). Both the Regional Foresters rankings and the review panel evaluations will be submitted to the Forest Service national leadership for a final decision. In addition, the Forest Service may consider performance and status of previous or ongoing Wood Innovations grants and other Federal grants and awards in making awards under this program and authority.

C. Anticipated Announcement and Award Date

October 20 2020	Issuance of Request for Proposals
January 20, 2021	Proposal submission deadline
May 2021	Approximate date for award announcement
August 2021	Approximate date of award

V. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

A. Award Notices

It is expected that applicants will be notified by email about funding decisions on or around **May 2021**. Successful applicants will receive notification from the appropriate Forest Service Grants and Agreements Office.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements Financial Checklist

This checklist will help recipients in the processing of an award.

1. Register in the System for Award Management

Your organization must have an active registration in the System for Award Management to apply for funding. Please go to www.sam.gov. This process can take time; please ensure your registration is up to date.

2. Dun & Bradstreet (DUNS) Number

Do you have a DUNS number that identifies your organization as listed on your application, or do you "share" this number with other parts of a larger organization? Do you have more than one DUNS number? If so, please use the DUNS number that matches the Employer Identification Number (EIN) assigned by the IRS.

3. Employer Identification Number (EIN)

Do you have an EIN that is specifically assigned to your organization, or do you "share" this number with other parts of a larger organization? Do you have more than one EIN? If so, please provide the one EIN that matches the IRS letter required in Part 1 of this section showing your current not-for-profit or for-profit tax status.

4. Indirect Costs

- a. Do you have a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) with your cognizant agency if you intend to show indirect costs for reimbursement with Federal funds or as a component of your match? If not, you can use the de minimis rate of 10% and avoid the negotiation process.
2. For university applications, indirect costs should be at the **non-research rate** (if one is assigned). This grant does not support basic research.

C. Reporting

1. Annual Progress Report

Annual Progress Reports are required on a calendar-year basis. An [Annual Progress](#)

[Report template](#) is provided as a guide. The reports provide an overview of accomplishments of the goals and objectives listed in the approved project narrative, success stories, and documentation of media events or activities generated by the award.

2. Annual Financial Report

Federal Financial Reports ([SF-425](#)) are required. Specific requirements will be provided in the official Award letter if your proposal is selected for funding.

3. Final Progress Report

A Final Progress Report is required. Suggested templates for the Final Progress Report are on the [reporting requirements page](#) of the [Wood Innovations website](#). The Final Progress Report has two parts:

- a. Summary – A brief overview of accomplishments by goals and objectives included in the approved agreement. This document includes outcomes, such as impact to National Forest System and other forest lands, jobs created, impacts to the local and/or national economy and markets, and any other notable successes deemed significant to this project. Final summaries will be added to the [Wood Innovations website](#).
- b. Detailed Report – A detailed report that includes a project overview; goals and objectives; methodology; results, discussion, and findings; summary, conclusion, and recommendations; and photographs (if appropriate). This report can include various assessments, reports, success stories, case studies, and related documents that resulted from the project's activities.

4. Required Statements on All Documents, Publications, Audiovisual Material, and Electronic Media

The following statements need to be included on all documents, publications, audiovisual material, electronic media, and related informational pieces for public distribution that result from projects funded by this U.S. Forest Service Wood Innovations Funding Opportunity:

“The work upon which this project is based was funded in whole or in part through a grant awarded by USDA Forest Service Wood Innovations.

In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.)

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call toll free voice (866) 632-9992, TDD (800) 877-8339, or voice relay (866) 377-8642.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.”

If the material is too small to permit the full statement to be included, the material

must, at minimum, include the following statement, in print size no smaller than the text: *"This institution is an equal opportunity provider."*

5. Communication About Publicity

Communication about all press releases, media events, activities, and reports generated by the award should be provided to the [Forest Service Regional Coordinator](#) in advance of the event, media release, or release to the public and also be included in the Annual Progress Report. This ongoing communication about media activity will enable the Forest Service to raise the visibility of the work completed from this award.

D. Agency Contacts

For questions regarding this Request for Proposals or administrative regulations, contact your respective Forest Service Regional Coordinator listed below. **Applicants are strongly encouraged to consult with their designated Coordinator to determine whether a project idea will be competitive, and to help develop proposals that conform to requirements and respond to grant program goals and objectives.** Coordinators may have additional tools and resources to help with your application development process and are the main point of contact for questions, application submittals, final awards, reporting requirements, and ongoing communication about award progress, including any media events or activities generated by the award.

Note: Your Forest Service Region is generally determined by the State where the majority of the proposed work will be conducted. Two Forest Service regions may exist in one State. [Locate your Forest Service region](#). Consult with a Regional Coordinator if you are not certain which Region applies.

Forest Service Region 1 (Northern Region)

(MT, ND, Northern ID, & Northwestern SD)

Attention: Julie Kies

Building 26 Fort Missoula Road Missoula, MT 59807

julie.kies@usda.gov (406) 370-3297

Forest Service Region 2 (Rocky Mountain Region)

(CO, KS, NE, SD, & WY)

Attention: Laura Wolf

1617 Cole Boulevard, Building 17

Lakewood, CO 80401-3305

laura.wolf@usda.gov (720) 830-6407

Forest Service Region 3 (Southwestern Region)

(AZ & NM)

Attention: Buck Sanchez

333 Broadway Boulevard, SE Albuquerque, NM 87102

buck.sanchez@usda.gov (505) 717-5673

Forest Service Region 4 (Intermountain Region)

(Southern ID, NV, UT, & Western WY)

Attention: Julie Kies

Building 26 Fort Missoula Road Missoula, MT 59807

julie.kies@usda.gov (406) 370-3297

Forest Service Region 5 (Pacific Southwest Region)

(CA, HI, Guam, and Trust Territories of the Pacific Islands)

Attention: Larry Swan

1323 Club Drive

Vallejo, CA 95492-1110

larry.swan@usda.gov (541) 891-7752

Forest Service Region 6 (Pacific Northwest Region) (OR & WA)

Attention: Jim Archuleta

1220 SW 3rd Avenue Portland, OR 97204

SM.FS.spfr6-wig@usda.gov (503) 680-6870

Forest Service Region 8 (Southern Region)

(AL, AR, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, OK, SC, TN, TX, VA, Virgin Islands, & Puerto Rico)

Attention: Kevin Naranjo

1720 Peachtree Road NW

Atlanta, GA 30309

kevin.naranjo@usda.gov (404) 673-3482

Forest Service Region 9 (Eastern Region)

(CT, DE, DC, IL, IN, IA, ME, MD, MA, MI, MN, MO, NH, NJ, NY, OH, PA, RI, VT, WV, WI)

Attention: Lew McCreery

180 Canfield Street

Morgantown, WV 26505

lew.mccreery@usda.gov (304) 285-1538

Forest Service Region 10 (Alaska Region)

(AK)

Attention: Priscilla Morris

161 East 1st Avenue, Door 8

Anchorage, AK 99501

priscilla.morris@usda.gov (907) 743-9467