

University of Kentucky One Health Initiative accepting seed grant proposals

The University of Kentucky is seeking project proposals to address and provide One Health solutions in the state. The application deadline is April 1.



A collage showing various One Health images. Photo created by Martin-Gatton CAFE.

By Christopher Carney
LEXINGTON, Ky.—The University of Kentucky One Health Initiative (UKOHI) at the Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment is pleased to announce a call for seed grant proposals. Researchers and faculty from Kentucky universities and colleges along with professionals from Kentucky state agencies are invited to apply.

Part of The Bill Gatton Foundation gift, UKOHI plans to provide project funding to support the formation of new research teams and collection of preliminary data aimed at solving major problems in Kentucky through the application of One Health concepts.

Following its launch last year, UKOHI's aim is to be a One Health hub for collaborative research, instruction and Extension programs that promote and advance solutions to improve human, animal and environmental health in Kentucky.

"The UKOHI fosters collaborative partnerships among our facul-

ty, staff and students, as well as members of state agencies and other Kentucky colleges and universities, to identify and resolve significant health threats to humans, animals, and the environment," said S. Reddy Palli, Department of Entomology chair at Martin-Gatton CAFE, state entomologist and one of The Bill Gatton Foundation Distinguished Professors. "We are excited to review new proposals that can help us advance One Health concepts to create healthier communities in Kentucky."

Request for proposals (RFP)

Project proposals must clearly identify a problem and how One Health principles will be applied in a designated research area, such as zoonotic diseases, antibiotic resistance, food safety or environmental health.

Eligibility requires that teams should be composed of researchers from two (or more) colleges or other agencies, or two (or more) disciplines. Additionally, the lead PI must hold a full-

time faculty or senior researcher position for their respective organization.

Grant recipients are expected to meet with the UKOHI committee to discuss progress, present project results at the annual One Health Symposium, and submit a final report on grant activities.

Funding details, timeline and proposal requirements

Award amounts will vary depending on project needs and scope. The project duration is 12 months (non-renewable). Total project awards during this cycle will be up to \$200,000, with a maximum of \$50,000 for each award.

Submissions should include the following sections:

Abstract with a summary of the project and its significance

Project plan with specific aims, methodology and how this data fills a current "gap" for a larger bid

Team synergy with a description of the roles of each investigator and

why this team is uniquely qualified

Plans that briefly describe future extramural funding, identify the specific external agencies, programs and deadlines for submission

Budget and justification with a detailed breakdown of how the funds will be spent

Biosketch in the style of the National Institute of Health or similar Biosketches of up to two pages each for the PI and co-PIs.

Proposals will be evaluated by a peer-review committee based on innovation, feasibility, team integration, impact and return on investment potential.

The RFP application deadline is April 1. Award notifications will begin May 1, and the project start date is July 1, 2026.

Visit the funding tab on the One Health Initiative website for more details and submit RFP proposals. For additional questions, contact Gloria Gellin at ggell2@uky.edu.

Learn more about the One Health Initiative at Martin-Gatton CAFE.

Securing vintages with regenerative farming

The global wine industry is not immune to the effects of climate change and soil degradation. Through a process of regenerative farming, soil health is protected and vintages can be produced with great success.

What is regenerative viticulture?

Regenerative viticulture, also known as regenerative agriculture, is farming that emphasizes the regeneration of soil health, says Eco Terreno Wines & Vineyards. These farming practices are organic and ecologically-driven to enhance the ecosystem through a partnership with nature. Regenerative viticulture focuses heavily on soil health, carbon sequestration and biodiversity.

Components of regenerative viticulture

Five primary principles drive regenerative viticulture: minimizing soil disturbance, keeping the soil covered, maintaining living roots year-round, increasing plant diversity, and integrating livestock. The Regenerative Viticulture Foundation says the goal is to create a "closed-loop" system where the vineyard provides its own nutrients instead of having to use synthetic ones.

Cover crops

The use of cover crops can increase soil organic carbon (SOC), which is vital for mitigating the wine industry's carbon footprint. According to research published in the Journal of Cleaner Production, use of cover

cropping in vineyards can increase SOC by up to 1.5 tons per hectare annually, making processes much more eco-friendly. What's more, cover cropping can improve the water retention capacity of soil. This is essential in regions where drought cycles have been on the rise.


Animal integration

The primary role of animals in regenerative agriculture is "prescriptive grazing." By allowing livestock to graze between rows during the dormant season, vintners can eliminate much of the need for mechanical mowing and herbicide application. Data from the Regenerative Viticulture Foundation found sheep can reduce the need for tractor passes by up to 80 percent, significantly lowering the vineyard's carbon footprint while preventing soil compaction. Animals also convert plant matter into high-quality manure and urine, providing bioavailable sources of nitrogen, phosphorous and potassium.

Chickens and ducks also may be deployed to manage pest populations like mealybugs or snails near vines without the need for synthetic insecticides. Animals also naturally aerate the soil through their beaks, feet and hooves, allowing organic matter to get into the earth more readily.


The future of healthy vineyards may rely on regenerative viticulture, which safeguards the land and ensures successful production cycles.

Grapes are actually berries. On average there are about 100 grapes per bunch.



Hours:
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