

Yale Planetary Solutions Seed Grant Program: Request for Proposals

Yale Planetary Solutions invites proposals for the 3rd annual seed grant program.

[Yale Planetary Solutions](#) (YPS) aims to accelerate action and advance solutions to the greatest challenges of our time by utilizing the expansive expertise of our academic community, and mobilizing university resources and capacity to create profound synergies. Notably, the challenge YPS is undertaking is not to “understand planetary problems,” because while that may be an essential prerequisite to the work that we do, it is not sufficient on its own. YPS strives for the transformation of that understanding into action and positive impact.

The YPS Seed Grant Program is intended to provide support to collaborative groups of Yale community members striving to create novel solutions, pilot new projects, or further existing ideas towards solving planetary challenges that are too complex to address within a single discipline.

We send this call to all Yale faculty and staff for interdisciplinary project proposals. We look forward to supporting teams with members from different disciplines, schools, and academic domains. Proposals of two types, Planning Grants and Standard Grants (defined below) will be accepted. We encourage applications from clinicians, engineers, physical and natural scientists, social scientists, and those working in the arts and humanities. We encourage applications that explore collaborations with staff and the operations of the university itself, harnessing the power of the campus as a living laboratory. This call is intended for the entirety of the university community; ideas from all are welcomed. Junior faculty members are especially encouraged to apply. Questions about eligibility should be addressed to planetarysolutions@yale.edu.

Proposals representing the following areas will be given particular consideration:

- New collaborations among faculty and staff from different disciplines or a clearly articulated justification for how the team is establishing new interdisciplinary connections at Yale.
- Proposals that could be transformative in our approach to a challenge or set of problems.
- Proposals that recognize synergies and seek systemic solutions.
- Proposals that generate new knowledge that include a plan to transform it into positive impact.
- Proposals that use our campus and/or the City of New Haven as “living laboratories.”
- Proposals that have a clear pathway to translation and implementation.

Funding Guidelines:

Planning Grants are intended to enable work on potential new, challenging, or high-risk research and scholarship and may include funding for workshops or conferences. Standard Grants are broader projects focused on research and implementation. Budgets are limited to \$25,000 for planning grants and \$100,000 for standard grants. Projects with a substantial international component are eligible for an additional \$20,000 in funding provided by the MacMillan Center for International and Area Studies through this competition. Those seeking these additional funds for international work should submit a budget up to \$120,000 with a detailed budget justification for the additional \$20,000 explaining the substantial international component of the proposed project. The project timeline is 12 months, with the ability to request a no-cost extension.

We anticipate funding twelve or more proposals, depending on the number and quality of applications and the budget requests.

Funding requests may cover a range of activities including, but not limited to: personnel (salary and fringe for post-docs, graduate and undergraduate students, research assistants, but not faculty); data collection and analysis; supplies; software; small instrumentation; syllabus development; dissemination of findings (e.g., symposia, publication fees, policy briefs, curricular materials). General office supplies, attendance at external conferences, and indirect costs will not be supported.

Timeline:

Please submit a proposal by April 5, 2024. Proposals will be reviewed by a committee of faculty and staff from a wide range of disciplines supporting YPS. Applicants will be notified of funding decisions in May of 2024.

Workshops:

A series of themed workshops (“Collaboratories”) to stimulate and support proposal development will be offered during the spring semester. Collaboratories will bring researchers, faculty, and staff together to meet, find connections across disciplines or units, develop new ideas and form interdisciplinary research teams. Details will be posted on the YPS website. Participation is encouraged but not required. If you would like to receive more information about the Collaboratories, please indicate your interest [using this link](#).

Proposal Parameters:

- Proposals should be no longer than four pages, including the budget and budget justification.
- Teams must be composed of two or more Yale faculty or staff who have the freedom to pursue independent research or scholarship. At least one of these must be eligible to serve as the Principal Investigator on grants.
- Teams should be composed of members from different disciplines, departments, schools, and/or academic domains. If team members are from the same unit, they should represent different disciplines with a clearly articulated justification for how the team is establishing new interdisciplinary connections at Yale.
- Proposals may involve third parties (other institutions or agencies); however they must clearly articulate how these connections generate new knowledge and lead to positive impact.
- Applications should be written for an evaluative audience that includes non-experts.

Proposal Elements:

- **Summary statement.** A summary paragraph describing in clear, non-expert terms the work the grant will support. This statement should answer the following key questions: 1) What problem is the project advancing a solution for? 2) What is the project and how does it relate to the work of YPS? 3) How will you know if your project is successful? Note: this statement will be used in YPS communications if your grant is selected for funding.

Elaborating on your response to the summary statement request above, please provide the following details of your proposal:

- **Objective:** Define the challenge being addressed, describe how the proposed work will impact the challenge, and identify the innovative aspects of the proposal.
- **YPS Connection:** Describe how the proposal relates to the work of YPS. Please reference the YPS website if needed.
- **Results and Positive Impact:** Identify the expected outputs/outcomes and positive impacts of the project and provide a description of the strategy for measuring results, evaluation, and demonstration.
- **Project Team and Management:** Please list the names and titles of proposed team members and indicate the collaborative roles that each team member will play.
- **Budget and budget justification:** Include an itemized budget and a synopsis of how the funds will be spent and why they are needed. PIs of funded projects will be expected to be mindful of the award period and account balance throughout the life of the award. If seeking the additional \$20,000 in support from the MacMillan Center, provide justification for these funds by highlighting the substantial international components of the project and the detailed justification described above.
- **Project Durability:** Please indicate plans and sources for likely future funding.
- **Biosketch, CV, or Resume:** Please include a biosketch, CV, or Resume for all PIs and co-PIs (2-page limit per investigator)

Outcomes and Expectations:

Teams must submit a very brief update midway through the year (December 2024) to be used for news items and social media posts and a two-page final report (June 2025) describing the research outcomes (a template will be provided). These interim and final progress updates are in support of YPS's multimedia communication strategy and donor requirements. You may receive additional requests for communication support as needs arise.

Projects selected for the YPS Seed Grant Program may be renewed upon review, but the intent of this funding is for seed stage work only. The expectation is that grantees will seek sustained funding from external sources to continue to scale and expand the impact of their work. Projects may seek additional funding for one year if they have applied for external funding.

Please email questions to planetarysolutions@yale.edu.