

Evaluating Tools for Integrating Land Use and Water Management

A Request for Proposals from the Babbitt Center for Land and Water Policy
Issued April 15, 2022

Summary

The Babbitt Center for Land and Water Policy, a center of the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, invites proposals for original research in the United States that evaluates the suite of tools, practices, and processes the Babbitt Center [has identified](#) as crucial to water sustainability and to connecting land use and water management. This evaluation may assess a category of tools or rigorously evaluate a specific tool.

Context

The Babbitt Center is interested in expanding the evaluation of tools for integrating land use into water management to advance water sustainability. Integrated land use and water management—through planning, policy, or community programs—is of increasing interest to communities across the country that struggle with a variety of land- and water-related challenges. More rigorous research is needed to quantify the costs and benefits and identify the most effective tools in different contexts. Future research in this area should include quantitative assessment that speaks to water savings, water recharge and infiltration, cost-benefit analysis, life-cycle assessments, and returns on investment, as well as qualitative analyses and case studies examining various factors (such as conditions for adoption and implementation) that bolster the effectiveness of policies and programs for land and water integration.

Research Themes

Research proposals should address at least one of these subjects:

- the effectiveness and impact of water supply adequacy statutes and ordinances in the western United States
- the land use planning mechanisms most applicable and effective in drought management, planning, and response
- the role and function of rural land use authorities in supporting or enhancing the water security and sustainability of residents who are on individual wells/water systems
- comprehensive and comparative studies examining the water use impacts of different zoning designations and land use densities
- assessment of water efficiency provisions (or lack thereof) in standard building and plumbing codes, as well as voluntary programs like LEED, and how such codes and programs could be strengthened for water efficiency and resiliency
- evaluation of the efficacy and impacts of municipal green infrastructure ordinances and programs, such as developer compliance, water savings of individual projects, or the positive or negative equity dimensions of green infrastructure projects
- assessment of rain or graywater harvesting and direct water reuse programs, barriers to implementation, and seeding further uptake of direct water reuse programs by residents or developers/builders

- assessment of the best approaches for weighing growth decisions against water supply constraints (e.g., water allocation policies, water neutral development, service area extension policies, growth boundaries, etc.)
- assessment of practices enumerated in the Babbitt Center’s [toolbox matrix](#) of land and water integration practices:
 - quantitative assessment of water savings, water recharge and infiltration, cost-benefit analyses, life-cycle assessments, and return on investment;
 - qualitative analyses and case studies examining various factors that lead to successful adoption and implementation;
 - equity impacts and potential unintended consequences of different tools; or
 - stakeholder/cross-sector dynamics that may include collaboration, cooperation, or participation in tool development, implementation, and/or assessment.

Proposal Evaluation

The Babbitt Center will evaluate proposals based on five equally weighted criteria:

- relevance of the project to the RFP’s theme of evaluating tools for land and water integration;
- rigor of research methodology;
- capacity and expertise of the researcher(s) and relevant analytical and/or practice-based experience;
- potential impact and usefulness of the project for practitioners integrating land and water management; and
- potential for results to transfer to a wide variety of contexts, even if the proposal focuses on one community.

The geographic focus of this RFP is U.S. communities. Preference will be given to submissions relevant to arid- and semi-arid regions of the United States. International scopes will be considered if they include a component of U.S. research, such as a comparative study of a U.S. community and an international community.

Deliverable Types

Selected projects will build on the Babbitt Center’s existing body of work and produce valuable research and tools for academics and practitioners interested in land and water integration. Proposals may include more than one deliverable and applicants may propose the form(s) of the final deliverable. Possible deliverable forms include, but are not limited to:

- academic working papers and literature reviews;
- descriptive case studies;
- analyses and prioritizations of future additional research; and
- online mapping or decision support systems.

Award Amount

Awards for selected working papers and how-to guides will be \$5,000–\$10,000. Awards for selected case studies will be \$2,500–\$5,000. Other deliverable types will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Award recipients are required to complete the proposed project within one year of selection, although projects may be completed in less time.

RFP Schedule

- Prior to May 15: Applicants are strongly encouraged to complete a pre-bid informal consultation (contact Erin Rugland at 480-323-0778 or erugland@lincolninst.edu)
- May 15, 2022: RFP submission due at 11:59 p.m. PDT through [this form](#)
- June 1, 2022: Selected applicants notified of award
- November 30, 2022: Intermediate summary/progress report due*
- May 1, 2023: Final deliverable due*

*This date is flexible and projects can operate on a shorter timeline.

Submission Requirements

This RFP is open to any individual, agency, practitioner, or researcher interested in helping the Babbitt Center and our partners expand knowledge and resources related to this topic. Proposals should include the following:

- 1) **Cover Page:** Include the title of the project and the contact information of applicant(s), including affiliation, address, phone number, and email.
- 2) **Project Abstract:** Convey the core topic and proposed contribution of the research or tool. It should clearly express the context, purpose, relevance, and methods of the proposed research topic (300 words maximum).
- 3) **Project Description:** Describe the research or project objective(s), purpose, relevance, and methodology. Explain how the proposed work will build upon existing research and identify any new contributions (2,000 words maximum).
- 4) **Scope of Work:** Define the specific tasks and deliverables with an estimated schedule for completing the project.
- 5) **Biography:** Include a brief biography and resume/CV for the primary researcher and any other team members (3 pages maximum per team member).
- 6) **Budget:** Provide a detailed estimate of funding needed to complete the project.

The proposal must be written in English and submitted as a Microsoft Word document. Format the application for printing on 8.5x11-inch (letter-size) paper. The application may be single- or double-spaced, but each section must not exceed the maximum word count, as described above. Submit the entire application as a single document using this [Formstack link](#) by May 15, 2022, at 11:59 p.m. PDT.

Questions about this RFP

For questions regarding this request for proposals, please contact Erin Rugland at 480-323-0778 or erugland@lincolninst.edu.

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About the Babbitt Center and Lincoln Institute

The Babbitt Center for Land and Water Policy, a center of the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, seeks to advance the integration of land and water management to meet the current and future water needs of Colorado River Basin communities, economies, and the environment. We develop tools and best practices to guide decisions through research, training, and partnerships for sustainable management of land and water resources in the Basin and beyond.

The Lincoln Institute of Land Policy seeks to improve quality of life through the effective use, taxation, and stewardship of land. A nonprofit private operating foundation whose origins date to 1946, the Lincoln Institute researches and recommends creative approaches to land as a solution to economic, social, and environmental challenges.