



**California Walnut Commission Health Research Program
2022 Call for Letters of Intent**

Who We Are

Did you know that more than 99% of the walnuts in U.S. are grown in the fertile soils of California’s Central Valley? It’s true! The California Walnut Commission (CWC), established in 1987, is funded by mandatory assessments of these California growers and works in concurrence with the Secretary of the California Department of Food and Agriculture to support and promote walnut consumption across the globe.

Put simply, our job is to support cutting edge health-related research examining the beneficial health effects of walnut consumption. Since the late 80’s, we’ve supported research yielding more than 200 peer-reviewed publications conducted by independent researchers all over the world. CWC-funded research supports consumption of delicious walnuts, advances science, and follows the highest standards of ethics in industry-funded research.

Types of Support

The CWC supports domestic and international health-related research on walnuts through grants and the provision of walnuts. We support early career and well-established researchers meeting the requirements.

Research Priorities for 2022

This cycle we are currently soliciting Letters of Intent (LOI) supporting human clinical and observational studies in three priority areas:

| Priority Area | Example Research Questions |
|---|--|
| 1. Impact of walnuts on <u>human health outcomes across the lifespan.</u> | <i>How does consumption of walnuts impact outcomes relate to fertility, breastfeeding, infant/child development, or aging-related outcomes?</i> <i>How do specific nutrients (i.e. omega-3-fatty acids) or compounds (polyphenols, etc.) in walnuts impact health outcomes?</i> |
| 2. Impact of walnuts on <u>gut health outcomes.</u> | <i>How does walnut consumption impact the human microbiome?</i> <i>What impact does walnut consumption have on quality-of-life related measures of gut health?</i> |
| 3. How the inclusion of walnuts in <u>treatment plans</u> may impact common chronic conditions. | <i>Could walnuts be used as a targeted approach to optimize health outcomes or as an addition to existing treatment plans (i.e. immune function, mental health, pain management, post-operative care, etc.)?</i> |

How Do I Know If My Project Is a Good Fit?

To find out more about the type of studies and research areas CWC has funded in the past, please visit the health research section of the [CWC website](#). Unfunded Letters of Intent from previous grant cycles are eligible to be revised and resubmitted, with encouragement to consider current priorities. In addition to addressing our research priorities for 2022, the CWC will prioritize proposals that do the following:

- Measure outcomes in multiples ways (i.e. instead of just BMI, also include waist circumference, % body fat, etc.).
- Conduct research with diverse populations and age groups
- Clearly convey how this research can translate into practical application.

Timeline and Deadlines

| Event | Date |
|---|-----------------------|
| Letter of Intent submission opens | February 14, 2022 |
| Letters of Intent due | March 28, 2022 |
| Invitations to submit full proposals sent | April 18, 2022 |
| Full Applications due | May 23, 2022 |
| Funding decision received | August 26, 2022 |

Evaluation of Submissions

There are two stages to the review process for CWC funding: 1) Letters of Intent (2-page summary) and 2) Full Applications, both of which are submitted online using [proposalCENTRAL](#) (see details below). Letters of Intent will be evaluated by the CWC Health Research Advisory Group, and a limited number of applicants will be invited to submit Full Applications. Reviewer feedback is not provided to the applicant at the Letter of Intent stage. Full Applications will undergo evaluation by the CWC Health Research Advisory Group and a separate Expert Peer Review Panel. The CWC will hold all information provided by the researcher in confidence while the Letter of Intent and Full Application are under consideration.

Eligibility Requirements:

Before submitting the Letter of Intent, please ensure that our pre-eligibility criteria are met:

- The Principal Investigator must have a PhD, MD, or equivalent degree and be a research staff or faculty member at a non-profit academic or research institution.
- The proposed study must adhere to the CWC Research Integrity Guidelines (see below).
- The proposed study must address the effects of whole walnut (walnut kernels) consumption on the above stated priorities.
- The total proposed budget must be no more than \$500,000 for the entire project. Indirect costs of up to 10% of total direct costs will be permitted and should be included in the total proposal budget. Proposals will be considered for single-year and multiple-year projects. Please note that whole walnuts (walnut kernels) must be used for interventional studies and will be provided by the CWC in order to facilitate research efforts.

How To Submit A Letter Of Intent (LOI)

Upload Letter of Intent into the [proposalCENTRAL](#) online form according to the instructions provided there. The Letter of Intent must be limited to 2 pages (excluding list of references and optional letters of support), single-spaced, 11-point font and should include:

- I. Specific Aims
- II. Background and Significance
- III. Project Description/Methodology
- IV. Expected Outcomes and Limitations
- V. Translational Message (Statement that demonstrates the potential public health impact of the project.)
- VI. Budget and Study Timeline
- VII. Expertise/Experience

Upload letters of support if included (limited to 4 pages) and references (limited to 2 pages) as PDF file attachments.

CWC Research Integrity Guidelines

The CWC is dedicated to supporting the scientific process. Engagement within the research community should be purposeful and transparent with meaningful interactions that provide tangible opportunities for learning, collaboration, and advancement of science. The CWC is committed to eliminating research bias based on funding source, therefore CWC requires the following:

- Control of both study design and research is conducted by researchers.
- The research team submit results from all completed studies for publication regardless of outcomes.
- Payment of research is not contingent on the outcome of a research project.
- Supported researchers disclose their relationship with CWC in all relevant publications and conference presentations.
- Only the highest quality research proposals are considered. CWC utilizes its Health Research Advisory Group (external nutrition science experts who provide insight and guidance) as well as Peer Review Panelists (experts in specific areas of research) in its selection of scientifically sound research proposals.
- CWC's Health Research Program issues a formal request for letters of intent that is open to the entire research community.

References:

Institute of Medicine (US) Committee on Standards for Systematic Reviews of Comparative Effectiveness Research; Eden J, Levit L, Berg A, et al., editors. Finding What Works in Health Care: Standards for Systematic Reviews. Washington (DC): National Academies Press (US); 2011. Available from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK209518/> doi: 10.17226/13059

Garza C, Stover PJ, Ohlhorst SD, et al. Best practices in nutrition science to earn and keep the public's trust. Am J Clin Nutr. 2019;109(1):225-243. doi:10.1093/ajcn/nqy337

Kretser A, Murphy D, Bertuzzi S, et al. *Scientific integrity principles and best practices: recommendations from a scientific integrity consortium. Sci Eng Ethics* 2019. 25: 327–355

Rowe S, Alexander N, Clydesdale F, Applebaum R, Atkinson S, Black R, Dwyer J, Hentges E, Higley N, Lefevre M, et al. *Funding food science and nutrition research: financial conflicts and scientific integrity. Nutr Rev.* 2009;67(5):264-272. doi:10.1111/j.1753-4887.2009.00188.x

Need help?

If you have any questions, please contact Carol Sloan RDN, FAND, Health Research Director, California Walnut Commission at csloan@walnuts.org or 562-221-9869.

For technical questions regarding the [proposalCENTRAL](#) online application system please contact their customer support hotline at 800-875-2562 or pccsupport@altum.com.

Non-Discrimination Statement

The CWC prohibits discrimination in all programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, marital/familial/parental status, religion, sexual orientation, political beliefs, reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance programs.

Persons with limited English proficiency or disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (translated materials, braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact the CWC offices at (916) 932-7070.

To file a complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html or write a letter with all information requested in the form and either send to USDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, fax to (202) 690-7442, or email to program.intake@usda.gov. CWC is an equal opportunity employer and provider.