



REQUEST FOR
proposals

MASTER'S GROUP PROJECTS: REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS 2021-22

OBJECTIVES

Bren School Group Projects help clients solve a pressing environmental problem facing their organization. Serving as the program's Master's thesis, Group Projects are nine-month collaborations between a client and a team of highly dedicated Master's students.

Throughout the project, clients receive high-quality consulting work that is approximately equivalent to one full-time employee engaged for a year. This work helps students develop skills in project management, teamwork, leadership, financial management, organization and data presentation, and effective stakeholder communication. The projects also serve to expand both parties' professional networks by connecting future and current environmental leaders.

The Bren School encourages creative, interdisciplinary proposals, and has supported a variety of projects, including (but not limited to): cost benefit analyses, life cycle assessments, spatial planning, carbon accounting,

fisheries management, pollution remediation, supply chain efficiencies, strategic communication, and assessing community attitudes toward environmental problems.

DESIRABLE PROJECT ATTRIBUTES

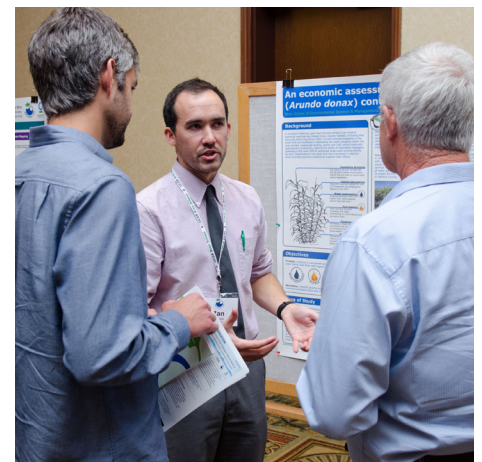
Solution-Oriented. Group Projects prepare students to produce meaningful solutions to today's environmental problems. To this end, projects should yield a specific policy or management recommendation, contain multidisciplinary elements, and align with student and faculty interest.

Data-Driven. Projects should also provide an existing dataset for students to analyze; projects that require extensive data collection or fieldwork are not desirable and will not be considered. Surveys or data collection can be a component of a project but should not be the primary focus.

Funding Support. External funding for the project (e.g., for summer

internships, travel, or supplies, sampling and analysis) is one of several factors considered in project selection. If the proposal requires substantial resources, the client will need to include a clear commitment of financial support for the proposed project.

Collaborative, Yet Flexible. A spirit of trust and collaboration by all parties is expected; client involvement should support students while allowing them to develop their own ideas and approaches.



PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

A successful project proposal will meet the following criteria:

- **Represent a significant environmental problem that requires the group to produce a solution**
- **Focus on a clear science and policy or management question**
- **Provide data for analysis**
- **Match the interests, expertise and capabilities of students and faculty**
- **Present a feasible project scope, given student experience and availability (must propose a manageable scope of work for a group of 4-5 master's students spending about 25% of their time during three academic quarters, or 9 months)**
- **Anticipate financial needs and provide adequate support**
- **Support and prioritize open and professional communication among all parties; proposals should outline a clear client point of contact**

**Projects that require completion before March 2022 are not feasible and will not be considered.*

SUBMITTING A PROPOSAL

Any organization looking to solve an environmental problem is welcome to submit a Group Project Proposal. Past clients have included local, state, and federal agencies; corporations; think tanks; non-profits and NGOs.

Proposals will be reviewed during Winter Quarter (January – March) by the Bren School Group Project Committee. The Committee will evaluate proposals on the criteria outlined in the *Project Requirements* section above. Approximately 18 Group Project proposals will be selected for 2021-22.

Given that projects must align with student interest to be selected, clients are encouraged to work with current Bren students and faculty on proposal development. Project proposals are limited to three pages (excluding references, budget and justification, and client letter of support). For a complete description of proposal requirements, please see the full proposal guidelines.

Examples of successful proposals are available for viewing on the Bren School website: bren.ucsb.edu/research/masters-research/current-masters-projects

**PROJECT PROPOSALS
ARE DUE VIA EMAIL
JANUARY 22, 2021
BY 5:00 P.M. TO
PROJECTS@BREN.UCSB.EDU**

TIMELINE

YEAR 1

Fall: Client works independently or with students to identify an environmental problem and write a Group Project proposal.

Winter: Submit projects by 1/22/21. Projects are selected in late March; students and faculty advisors are assigned, clients are notified by end of March.

Spring: Client meets the team; students refine project objectives, gather data, review literature, and develop a work plan.

Summer: Students often continue Group Project work through internships.

YEAR 2

Fall: Students work on analysis and produce an outline for their Group Project.

Winter: Students complete an academic defense and their final reports.

Spring: Students present findings to the public, produce a policy brief and poster, and additional deliverables as needed by the client.



THINKING ABOUT SUBMITTING A PROPOSAL?

To register your interest in submitting a proposal, please contact Bren School Group Project Coordinator, Sean Kerr (sean@bren.ucsb.edu). Sean answers questions and provides guidance regarding proposal format. He also connects proposal authors with Bren faculty, staff, and students who can provide additional guidance and assistance in writing the proposal, as needed.