



USC
Dornsife
Wrigley Institute
for Environment
and Sustainability

April 20, 2026

CALL FOR PROPOSALS: Wrigley Institute 2026 Faculty Innovation Awards

The USC Wrigley Institute for Environment and Sustainability is pleased to announce the call for applications to our 2026 *Faculty Innovation Awards*. Awards are offered up to \$50,000 each in support of USC faculty research that improves our knowledge about, or offers solutions for, global environmental and sustainability challenges.

The purpose of these awards is to provide funding for established or new and high-potential research activities by tenure-track and RTPC USC faculty members. Research themes should be aligned with the institute's three interdisciplinary and interrelated **research launchpads**: *Earth & Environmental Systems*, focused on projects that investigate natural phenomena and develop scientific insights about our changing planet; *Applied Environmental Solutions*, turning science into action by testing the feasibility of new ideas and converting them to workable practices and technology; and *Social Transformation*, drawing on social and behavioral sciences, arts, and humanities, to better understand how people think, communicate, and behave.

For 2026, we particularly encourage applications that align with the following funded priority areas:

- USC Wrigley Marine Science Center (WMSC): leveraging the institute's distinctive facilities and resources on Catalina Island to enable innovative research and collaboration. [**Note: projects here may also request up to \$10,000 in facility credit to offset costs at the WMSC campus. See the application form for full details.*]
- Climate and Carbon Management: advancing interdisciplinary efforts to accelerate decarbonization and address the impacts of climate change.
- Sustainable Built and Natural Environments: supporting research that enhances the relationship between urban and natural systems and weaves nature's intelligence into the built world.

Applicants can be either single investigators, or a collaborative team (≥ 2) of investigators working within or across USC departments or colleges. Research funded under this program should yield scholarly publications and other forms of high-impact outreach during the 24 months that an award is held. Funds will be directly transferred into faculty research or departmental accounts and must be spent within 24 months of receipt. Allowable expenses include support for graduate students and/or post-doctoral fellows, equipment for collecting or analyzing data (excluding personal computers), and other direct research expenses. Funds may not be used for faculty salaries or conference travel.

Awardees agree to provide short annual reports to the Wrigley Institute in Years 1 and 2 and to present their work at the institute's annual research symposium. Successful candidates will be identified as Wrigley Institute Affiliated Faculty Members. For more information, please contact Wrigley Institute Executive Director Jessica Dutton (jmdutton@usc.edu).

To apply for a *Faculty Innovation Research Award*, please submit a proposal through the Wrigley Institute's application portal here: bit.ly/fia-2026-app

DEADLINE: Proposals are due by May 29, 2026.