



**California Walnut Commission
Global Health & Nutrition Research Program
2026 Call for Letters of Intent**

Who We Are

More than 99% of the walnuts in the U.S. are grown in California's Central Valley. The California Walnut Commission (CWC), established in 1987, is funded by mandatory assessments of these California growers and complements the Secretary of the California Department of Food and Agriculture's efforts to support walnut consumption globally, including global health research initiatives.

For nearly four decades, CWC has been dedicated to supporting innovative research to better understand the potential health effects of walnut consumption and the role of walnuts in healthy lifestyles. As part of this long-standing commitment, the **CWC seeks proposals to support human clinical trials and observational studies on priority topics**. Importantly, CWC encourages researchers from academic centers around the globe to consider participating in this Request for Proposals (RFP). You can learn more about CWC's Global Health Research Program [here](#) and the 2026 Request for Proposals [here](#).

Types of Support

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

Research Priorities for 2026

The priority topics for this year's RFP address the role of walnuts in nourishing wellbeing and seek to understand the impact of walnut consumption on:

- Skin health;
- Healthy aging;
- Sleep quality, including impact on cognitive health and/or physical performance;
- Mental wellness (e.g., mental wellbeing, cognitive health, and mental acuity); and
- Maternal health during pregnancy.

In addition to addressing one or more of the priority topics, meritorious applications will address the following in their proposals:

- 1) Specific life stages – adolescents ages 12-19, young adults ages 20-35, or women of childbearing age;
- 2) Dietary behaviors and diet quality;
- 3) Sociodemographic data (i.e., race, gender, age, socioeconomic status, cultural background); and
- 4) How dietary walnut intake would be validated using biomarkers or other assessments.

Importantly, CWC supports and communicates nutrition research in global markets, and is particularly interested in supporting studies among populations in the U.S., Canada, Japan, Korea, Germany, the United Kingdom/Nordics, Spain, Portugal, Turkey, India, and the Middle East.

Timeline and Deadlines

Event	Date
Letter of Intent submission opens	December 18, 2025
Letters of Intent due	February 2, 2026
CWC notifies all researchers of next steps	March 5, 2026
Full Proposals due	April 13, 2026
Proposals under review	April – July 2026
Researchers notified of funding decisions	September 2026

Evaluation of Submissions

There are two stages to the review process for CWC funding: 1) Letters of Intent and 2) Full Proposals, both of which are submitted online using [ProposalCentral](#) (see details below). Letters of Intent will be thoroughly evaluated by the CWC Global Health and Nutrition Research team, and a limited number of applicants will be invited to submit Full Proposals. Reviewer feedback is not provided to the applicant at the Letter of Intent stage. Full Proposals will be evaluated by expert peer reviewers, as well as members of the CWC Scientific Advisory Board. CWC will hold all information provided by researchers in confidence while Letters of Intent and Full Proposals 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 walnuts or walnut butter consumption on the above-stated priority topics.
- CWC is aiming to fund 2-4 studies as part of this RFP, with an approximate limit of \$100,000 – \$150,000 per observational study and an approximate limit of \$400,000 – \$500,000 per clinical trial.

- Indirect costs of up to 10% of total direct costs will be permitted and should be included in the total proposed budget.
- Proposals will be considered for single-year and multi-year projects.

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 include:

- Background and Significance (2000 characters, including spaces)
- Specific Aims (1000 characters, including spaces)
- Project Description and Methodology (2500 characters, including spaces)
- Expected Outcomes and Limitations & Public Health Impact (1500 characters, including spaces)
- Budget Summary and Timeline (800 characters, including spaces)
- Related Experience (800 characters, including spaces)
- Attachments:
 - Required: References (4-page limit)
 - Optional: Study Figure (1-page limit)

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.

Need Help?

Please direct questions regarding the RFP to Rachel Blaine, PhD, RDN, at rblaine@walnuts.org.

For technical questions related to Proposal Central, please contact Chesney Richter, PhD, at chesney@nutritionindemand.com. You can also contact the ProposalCentral customer support hotline at 800-875-2562 or pcsupport@altum.com.

Nondiscrimination Statement

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.