**VI. PROJECT MANAGER QUALIFICATIONS AND ORGANIZATION DESCRIPTION**

**Project Manager Qualifications:**

**Dr. Kathryn Bushley (PI)** will serve as the project manager and coordinate the research project. She isa fungal biologist specializing in secondary metabolite compounds produced by nematode and insect pathogenic fungi and an Assistant Professor in the Department of Plant and Microbial Biology at the University of Minnesota. She earned a master’s degree in Environmental Management from Duke University and a Ph.D. from Cornell University in Plant-Pathology. Her research program at the University of Minnesota focuses on characterizing the diversity and metabolic potential of fungi associated with nematodes and insects and their potential uses as biocontrol agents or sources of biopesticides against agricultural pathogens. She has received funding from both federal (United States Department of Agriculture, National Science Foundation) and local (Minnesota Soybean Research and Production Council, [Minnesota Invasive Terrestrial Plants and Pests Center](https://mitppc.umn.edu/), and USDA-HATCH). Her laboratory is equipped for fungal growth and bioassay testing, and has access to greenhouse space.

**Dr. Christine Salomon (Co-PI)** is an Associate Professor at the Center for Drug Design and a faculty member in the Biotechnology Institute at the University of Minnesota. Dr. Salomon earned her Ph.D. at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, UCSD, in the area of natural products chemistry from invertebrates and microbes. Dr. Salomon’s current research program is focused on the discovery and utilization of novel microbes that can be used for biological control of agricultural pathogens and production of unique compounds for biomedical and biotechnological applications. She has secured both internal (Academic Health Center, Masonic Cancer Center, Healthy Foods Healthy Lives Institute) and external (United States Department of Agriculture and US Fish and Wildlife) support for her research program. Her laboratory is well-equipped for standard chemical analyses (HPLC) and she has access to more specialized chemistry equipment (NMR spectroscopy, LC-MS) through the Center for Drug Design.

**Dr. Senyu Chen (Co-PI)** is a Professor in the Department of Plant Pathology at the University of Minnesota and a researcher at the University’s Southern Outreach and Research Station in Waseca, MN. He is a nematologist with over thirty years experience in both field and laboratory based studies of nematodes and characterization of microbial biocontrol agents of nematodes. He leads a nematology laboratory at the Waseca Experimental Station and maintains experimental plots for field trials testing microbial biocontrol agents.

**Organizational Description:**

The Department of Plant and Microbial Biology and Departments of Plant Pathology at University of Minnesota have strengths in studying the plant associated microorganisms. Both Dr. Bushley and Dr. Chen are members of the Stakeman-Borlaug Center, an institute focused on developing sustainable cutting-edge solutions to plant disease problems. Dr. Chen works at the Southern Outreach and Extension Center, which is an exceptional resource for agricultural research. Dr. Salomon is at the Center for Drug Design at the University of Minnesota and a member of the Biotechnology Institute, a research center decidated to finding practical solutions to challenging problems in environment, agriculture, and health sciences.