



MCSI's Sustainable Engineering Seed Grant Program

Request for Proposals: Round #11

Application Deadline: Friday, January 27, 2017

The Mascaro Center for Sustainable Innovation (MCSI) at the University of Pittsburgh is requesting proposals for grants for faculty to participate in high-quality research and teaching endeavors in sustainable engineering. The goals of the grants are to: (1) seed funding to develop ideas to the point where external funding can be obtained and (2) engage faculty to work in solving pressing sustainability problems.

Over the past 12 years, MCSI has provided nearly \$3MM to over 45 individual faculty PIs in support for sustainability research and as a result has secured follow-on funding from federal agencies totaling over \$18MM.

To achieve our goals, our team has identified broad areas that include:

- Engineering for the circular economy (<https://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/circular-economy>)
- Connections between the [National Academy of Engineering Grand Challenges](#) and sustainability;
- Impact/management of urban environments on sustainability and health outcomes (e.g., asthma);
- Safe and sustainable by design;
- Research to support the region in the areas of transportation connectivity, energy improvements in buildings, gray water innovations, and ecodistricts;

Seed grant proposals that help to further several of these initiatives are particularly encouraged; however, other ideas will be considered.

**For questions about the areas of focus, help with identifying potential collaborators or other general advice or counsel contact Eric Beckman (Beckman@pitt.edu) or Melissa Bilec (mbilec@pitt.edu)

Proposal Requirements

Eligibility:

A faculty member (tenure or non-tenure stream) at the University of Pittsburgh must be the PI on the proposal. Due to the interdisciplinary nature of the thrust areas we encourage, but do not require, collaborations between departments, schools, universities and organizations.

Budgets:

MCSI has \$225,000 to award this round. A maximum of \$50,000 can be requested per grant. All grants will be funded for a one-year period beginning July 1, 2017. Projects are eligible for renewal. Funds can be used for student (undergraduate and graduate) and post-doctoral support and **only** in the case of new curriculum development can funding be allocated for faculty salary. Travel is not an allowable expense.

Proposal Cover page(s)

- PI's name, department, email address, campus address and phone number.
- Names and contact info of all co-PI's.
- Title of proposal, research challenge being addressed, and a 200-word abstract.

Body of the Proposal

The body of the proposal should not exceed *five single-spaced pages* and should employ a 12-point font size and one-inch margins. The five-page limit excludes references.

The body of the proposal should provide:

- A clear statement of goals and rationale for the work.
- A strong connection to sustainability.
- A detailed work plan.
- A description of the proposed work that describes how it differs from previous approaches.
- If a proposed solution is designed to be more sustainable than current analogs, then a means by which the new solution will be validated (vis-à-vis sustainability) should be included in the proposal.
- A set of milestones that will allow judgment of project success.

Budget

Proposals must include a 1-page budget and 1-page maximum budget justification.

Note regarding graduate tuition rates: In developing your budget please note that graduate students will be supported as Fellows and fringe benefits should not be paid. However, \$344.32 (monthly) should be provided for medical coverage and \$10,000 in tuition should be paid annually.

Appendices (CV's, current support):

The PI and all co-PIs should include their NSF (or NIH) 2-page CVs.

Matching Support

If any matching support is being provided, this should be detailed in a letter of support.

Important Dates:

Proposals are due to Gena Kovalcik (gmk9@pitt.edu) and must be sent within one document in a .pdf format electronically by January 27, 2017. Funding decisions will be announced by March 27, 2017. Proposals are externally reviewed by the MCSI technical advisory board.

Reporting Requirements:

Recipients of a seed grant must fulfill the following requirements:

- A final report of no more than five pages due on June 30, 2018.
- Three to five PowerPoint slides summarizing the goals and outcome of the work due on June 30, 2018.
- Acknowledgement of MCSI funding in any publications resulting from the work.

For Additional Information:

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