

## **INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATIONS ON SUSTAINABLE INNOVATIONS GRANT**

### **Request for Proposals: Round #1**

**Application Deadline: February 28, 2017**

The University Center for International Studies (UCIS) and the Mascaro Center for Sustainable Innovation (MCSI) at the University of Pittsburgh invite faculty to submit grant proposals to support high-quality **research in sustainability through international collaborations**. The goal of the grants is to seed funding to develop new international collaborations that advance work in solving pressing sustainability problems.

This alliance between UCIS and MCSI, with financial support from the Provost's office, represents an innovative approach to encourage interdisciplinary sustainability research, amplify Pitt's national and international recognition in sustainability, create opportunities for enhancing research through international collaborations, and expand international partnerships grounded on strong research collaborations.

To achieve our goals, we are targeting this RFP in two concurrent areas. First, we are aiming to support new partnerships that connect researchers at the University of Pittsburgh with colleagues in different parts of the world to collaborate on cutting-edge research addressing issues in sustainability. Second, we aim to support projects that have the potential to obtain follow-on funding in the U.S. and other countries.

### **Funding Priorities**

To further these efforts and our research goals, we have identified broad areas that include:

- Green supply chains;
- Impact/management of urban environments on sustainability and health outcomes;
- Research in the areas of transportation connectivity, energy improvements in public buildings, gray water innovations, and ecodistricts;
- Food-energy-water connections.

Proposals aren't required to focus on international issues, but they should include international collaboration as a central component of the research enterprise.

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

*\*\*An information session has been scheduled for **January 11, 2017 from Noon – 1 pm in 4130 Wesley W. Posvar Hall** so that interested faculty can share questions, discuss concerns and gain feedback from UCIS and MCSI team members.\*\**

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## **Proposal Requirements**

### **Eligibility**

A faculty member (tenure or non-tenure stream) at the University of Pittsburgh must be the Principal Investigator on the proposal. Due to the interdisciplinary nature of the thrust areas, collaborations between departments, schools, universities and organizations are highly encouraged.

### **Budget**

A maximum of \$65,000 can be requested per grant. All grants will be funded for a 12-month period beginning April 1, 2017. Projects are eligible for renewal (pending available funding). Proposals must include a completed budget spreadsheet.

**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. Tuition scholarships will be based on the financial need of the fellow and may range in value from dissertation status to full tuition per year. Scholarship amounts will be reduced if the student is receiving other scholarships from her/his school or

other programs (i.e. study abroad). GSA/TA/TF appointments are ineligible for the fellowship appointment and tuition scholarship. All fees except the activity fee will be covered.

*\* Based on estimates for FY17 (2016-17) and is subject to increase in future years. Grantees must adjust their budgets to account for any increases to the rate.*

### **Allowable Expenses**

Examples of permitted expenses are:

- Ground and air transportation to and from research site(s) connected to this project
- Visa expenses
- Lodging and meal expenses
- Payment to foreign national *firms* for services provided outside the United States
- Student (undergraduate or graduate) employment and postdoctoral support for on-campus and on-site research assistance
- Student (undergraduate or graduate) travel expenses (ground and air transportation, visa expenses, meals, and lodging)
- Payment for translation services
- Copy and other duplication costs
- Books and subscriptions, if justifiably necessary for the research project

### **Non-allowable Expenses**

- Travel expenses for individuals other than the PI, co-PI or named international collaborators
- Travel expenses for students or faculty who have already secured UCIS-sponsored travel funds (eg. Hewlett Grant, International Studies Fund, Nationality Rooms Scholarships)
- Equipment purchase
- Any conference travel expenses if applicant does not present a paper at conference or workshop
- Membership fees
- Any expenses unrelated to the proposed activity
- Expenses related to the costs of travel and per diem for a faculty leader of a Pitt-sponsored study abroad program

### **Required Contact Information**

- PI's name, department, email address, campus address and phone number.
- Names and contact info of all co-PI's.
- Names and contact info of international collaborator(s)
- Brief description of home institution (eg research center or university) of international collaborator(s)

### **Proposal Abstract and Narrative**

Applicants will be asked to submit the title of proposal, name(s) of international partner(s), and a 200-word abstract explaining the research challenge being addressed.

The body of the proposal should not exceed 2500 words (limit excludes references).

The body of the proposal should provide:

- A clear statement of goals and rationale for the work.
- A description of the international collaboration and the rationale for such collaboration.
- A strong connection to sustainability.
- A detailed work plan, including expectations on how financial support would contribute to develop and enhance the collaboration with international partners.
- 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.

### **Appendices (CV's, current support)**

The PI, co-PIs and international collaborator(s) 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.

### **Institutional Review Board**

All research involving interventions or interactions with individuals or the collection of identifiable private information concerning living individuals requires prospective Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval. Applicants are responsible for obtaining IRB approval when required, and must provide documentation of IRB approval before a grant can be awarded. For further information, check the IRB web site at [www.irb.pitt.edu](http://www.irb.pitt.edu). Priority will be given to applicants who include proof of IRB clearance with application. Applicants who are in some stage of the review process with IRB are also encouraged to provide proof of this process.

### **Application Procedure**

There is an online application process for the International Collaborations on Sustainable Innovations Grant Program. The first time that you access the application form you will be directed to a welcome screen at our partner, Submittable.com, and invited to create a new user account. After completing this simple process, you will be shown the application form. **Please note:** This application requires that you upload multiple pieces of supporting documentation, notably the [budget spreadsheet](#), evidence of matching funds, evidence of Institutional Review Board clearance, a 2500-word proposal narrative, documentation of IRB approval and CV. Preparing those documents in advance will likely simplify the application process for you. You will be able to save your application mid-stream and then return to it before final submission.

### **Important Dates**

**Proposals are due by midnight on February 28, 2017.** Funding decisions will be announced by March 31, 2017. Proposals are reviewed by an external review committee and representatives from UCIS and MCSI.

### **Reporting Requirements**

Recipients of a seed grant must fulfill the following requirements:

- Two page max interim reports due on December 20, 2017.
- A final report of no more than five pages due on June 1, 2018.
- Three to five PowerPoint slides summarizing the goals and outcome of the work due on June 1, 2018.
- Acknowledgement of UCIS, Office of Research, and MCSI funding in any publications resulting from the work.
- Grant recipients may be asked to serve on future application review committees or to present their results or participate in UCIS- or MCSI sponsored events.

### **For Additional Information**

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