MCSI Research Seed Grant Program in Sustainability
Application Deadline: Friday, January 31, 2020

Timeline
RFP announcement   September 4, 2019
Proposals due   January 31, 2020
Funding Decisions   March 23, 2020
Funding   July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021

The Mascaro Center for Sustainable Innovation (MCSI) at the University of Pittsburgh is requesting faculty grant proposals for interdisciplinary sustainability education and research initiatives. The goals of the grants are: (1) catalyze the formation of convergent research teams focused on sustainability and associated solutions; (2) fund projects capable of obtaining external funding upon completion; and (3) enhance Pitt's national recognition in sustainability and the visibility of interdisciplinary sustainability research and education on campus.

Over the past 15 years, MCSI has provided over $4.0MM to over 60 individual faculty PIs in support of sustainability research and as a result has secured follow-on funding from federal agencies totaling over $24MM.

To help advance the University's sustainability goals as outlined in the Pitt Sustainability Plan and to facilitate convergent research, we have identified several broad topical areas and project ideas that include:

- Circular economy
- Sustainable urban systems
- Sustainable manufacturing

Should you have another idea that does not fit within the above topical areas, the PI needs to contact Eric Beckman (beckman@pitt.edu) or Melissa Bilec (mbilec@pitt.edu).

Resources:
Sustainable Urban Systems   https://www.nsf.gov/ere/ereweb/ac-ere/sustainable-urban-systems.pdf
Pitt Sustainability Plan   http://issuu.com/upitt/docs/2018_pittsustainabilityplan_final?e=2614445/56117752
What is a circular economy?   https://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/circular-economy
What is Convergent Research? http://www.nap.edu/catalog/24767/a-new-vision-for-center-based-engineering-research
http://nap.edu/18722

Requirements

Eligibility:
A University of Pittsburgh faculty member (tenure or non-tenure stream) must be a Co-PI on the proposal, however, collaborations with Pitt staff and students are encouraged. In addition, due to the interdisciplinary nature of sustainability we highly encourage collaborations between departments and schools especially those topics that connect science and engineering with the social sciences.

Budgets:
A maximum of $50,000 can be requested per grant.   All grants will be funded for a one-year period beginning July 1, 2020. Funds can be used for undergraduate and graduate student support, post-doctoral support and only in the case of new curriculum development can funding be allocated for faculty salary. Funds can also be used to support sustainability projects related to campus improvements and living laboratory projects. Small amounts of funds will be considered for equipment, supplies, and travel.

Proposal Cover page
- 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 with explicit language on how the project will contribute to the Pitt Sustainability Plan.
- 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, $350.37 (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 Submission Instructions:
Proposals are due January 31, 2020
Files should be sent to this BOX email address MCSI_Se.e35lp172vgxmab38@u.box.com to be uploaded to Pitt BOX folder *MCSI Seed Grant Proposals 2020* and should be named PI *LastNameSeedGrants2020*.

For Additional Information:

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