EXPLORATORY RESEARCH PROGRAM

Description

The goal of this grant program is to make resources available to initiate the development of high-risk, high-impact, novel ideas for new research projects. The expectation is that the program will enable a new research area to be sufficiently vetted (enough preliminary data collected or theoretical calculations/simulations made) such that it can be credibly submitted to an external funding agency.

The lead PI should have a T/TT primary appointment in the College of Engineering. Opportunities for interdisciplinary, multi-investigator teams will be favored. Faculty having access to discretionary funds for exploring new ideas, e.g., startup, departmental grants, and/or ISU Foundation support, must justify the need for additional funds.

Submission Information

Applications will be accepted on the following dates:

Applications due: March 26 and September 15

Start date: May 16/August 16 for applications submitted in March (summer/fall) and January 1 (spring/summer) for applications submitted in September. The total project can be up to 7.5 months. The PI(s) and/or the Department are expected to commit 20% cost share. In exceptional cases, COE may fund up to 100%.

Applications should be emailed to Dr. Lori Jarmon, ljjarmon@iastate.edu. The application should contain the following elements:

1. Cover Page – Provided cover page form is required with Department Chair signature.
2. Project Description – maximum 3 pages: An overview of the overall research idea, a discussion of the challenges expected to be overcome by the exploratory project, and the expected agencies/programs to which the idea will be submitted if the project results are favorable. Cited references do not count within the page limit.
3. Budget and justification – budget template provided
4. 2-page CV for the PI (only) that includes the active grants for the last 3 years and pending support.
5. Suggestions for possible reviewers for your proposal.
A typical request will be $10,000 - $30,000. Unspent funds will revert back to the College. Funds to support equipment purchases are not allowable in this program, but materials and supplies necessary to collect preliminary data are allowable.

**Review Criteria**

*Innovation:* The novelty, creativity, and/or riskiness of the question posed or methodology proposed. It is not sufficient for the research proposed to be novel for the researcher him/herself; it must be novel to the disciplinary field(s).

*Potential Impact:* The sheer force of the discovery on discipline(s) of a successful project.

*Fundability:* Title and due date of the external targeted opportunity and the likelihood that the project will receive external, government, industry, or foundation, funding upon completion.

*Application Quality:* The strength of the argument and plan. It is helpful to communicate discipline-specific information to scientific researchers out of the immediately related discipline(s).

*Need:* The PI team should not have access to any other funds to support the proposed research.