Planning Grant Program

CUNY Interdisciplinary Centers and Initiatives

The CUNY Office of Research Planning Grant Program seeks to catalyze collaborative grant-seeking and encourage a culture of multidisciplinary, convergent, team-based science, with potential to transform the University. This program will support multi-college research teams in the preparation and submission of complex, large-scale, center-type proposals to external funding agencies and organizations. Planning Grant funds will strengthen CUNY's capacity to develop large-scale proposals by:

- mobilizing experienced teams of PIs and establishing effective project management strategies
- cultivating academic, industry, and community stakeholder engagement
- creating opportunities to develop applied and translatable research projects with significant scalable societal impacts
- contributing to CUNY's national standing in innovative, high-priority, high-payoff research areas

Developing proposals for competitive, large-scale external grant programs requires significant advance planning, a compelling and well-honed research vision, strong preliminary evidence/pilot data, buy-in from research partners, and a track record of robust teamwork among collaborating investigators that spans multiple disciplines, colleges, universities, and organizations. The Planning Grant Program is designed to build CUNY capacity and provide resources to support the vital work required to develop successful proposals. It is expected that awardee teams will help foster an inclusive research culture at CUNY that empowers discovery and innovation with tangible results for our city, state, region, and nation.

This program aims to invest in teams motivated to apply for large grants across a spectrum of possible funders. Examples include NSF Science and Technology Centers (STCs) and Engineering Research Centers (ERCs); NIH Multiproject Research Grants (P and U mechanisms); DOE Energy Frontier Research Centers; NSA Centers of Excellence; or NEH Institutes, Collections, and Collaborative Research grants.

Funds will support efforts to tackle complex, multi-faced research questions that are better addressed by teams than individuals. Partnerships across departments, colleges, and disciplines are required. Internal program funds are available only to teams of CUNY faculty, but awardees are strongly encouraged to recruit academic and organizational collaborators from beyond CUNY in preparation for developing the full center grant proposal. Teams must be poised to submit a compe
titive proposal to an external funder within one year after the award period ends. Each team is eligible to request up to $20,000 for an award period of up to one year. Up to 5 awards will be made.

Eligibility

1. The lead PI must have a full-time, tenured or tenure-track appointment at a CUNY college/school. PIs and co-PIs can participate in only one proposal.
2. Teams must include at least one co-PI who has a full-time, tenured or tenure-track appointment at a different CUNY college/school from the PI.

3. Proposals must clearly-specify and target efforts toward a new or upcoming large-scale funding opportunity (renewals of existing large-scale/ center grants are not eligible).
4. There are no limits on the number of CUNY colleges/schools, disciplines, or departments that can be represented on the proposal.

Submission Timeline

There will be 2 internal submission deadlines:

1. 1-page Letter of Intent, November 15, 2021
2. Full Submission, by invitation only, January 14, 2022

Period of Performance

The Period of Performance will be March 1, 2022 – April 30, 2023.

Review Criteria

Full submissions will be reviewed using the following criteria:

1. Potential for successful completion of a competitive, large-scale proposal, including:
   o relevant experience/expertise and capacity of project personnel related to the targeted grant opportunity
   o clear and feasible plan to submit a competitive large-scale proposal within one year after the grant period ends
   o appropriateness of budget for proposed planning activities, including a budget justification that clarifies how the funds will be transformational for the proposal team
2. Clearly articulated explanation of interdisciplinary, convergent, and/or team-based science approach(es) that will be incorporated into the resulting proposal's design and execution
3. Game-changing breakthroughs in key theoretical, translational, clinical, methodological, scholarly, and/or creative arenas, as selected and framed by the proposing team
4. Alignment of proposal topic(s) with University-wide and/or college priorities in research, education, career training, and societal impact
5. Potential to unlock entirely new fields of inquiry and tackle grand challenges at the intersection of research and social need, with downstream implications for policymakers, practitioners, entrepreneurs, and activists, etc.

Submission Requirements

Letter of Intent (LOI): Deadline November 15, 2021
The one-page (1 page) LOI must include:
   o Names and affiliations of multidisciplinary team members

- o The name of the targeted large-scale external funding opportunity
- o The proposed title of the center-type project and a one paragraph description of the multidisciplinary research plan and project goals
- o A proposed total budget amount

<u>Full Proposal Submission (by invitation only): Deadline January 14, 2022</u>
The full proposal must include:

1. Proposal narrative (3-page maximum):
   - o Identification of the targeted funding opportunity
   - o Concise discussion of the proposal priorities, significance, and impact, as well as impact on CUNY and/or the region.
   - o Description of roles and justifications for each team member to demonstrate that the interdisciplinary aims and outcomes are greater than the sum of their parts (including primary collaborators, associated faculty, and support staff)
   - o Detailed description and timeline for the proposal development process, from inception to submission
   - o Description of plans to grow the team's grant-seeking capacity, including the specific skills or abilities of the team and the projected need for contractor/consultant services to ensure funding success
   - o Assessment of how the team and its approach (not the proposal itself) will contribute to diversity, equity, and inclusion at CUNY
   - o A plan for ongoing research collaboration and productivity if the initial large-scale proposal is declined.
2. Budget: Detailed budget and budget justification (2-page maximum) see details below. You may use the **proposal template**
3. Biographical sketches: Each participating faculty member must submit a 2-page biosketch in NSF or NIH format, or use the **proposal template**

Budget and Budget Justification Guidelines

Allowable costs are designed to be flexible to meet the needs of different types of teams. Funds may be requested in the following sample categories:

1. Personnel costs: Research Associates and Research Assistants to assist with team facilitation and proposal development work (may include undergraduates, graduate students, and postdoctoral researchers)
2. Contractors or consultants providing research and proposal development services (e.g., proposal project management, grant writing, editing, or mock review, graphic design and scientific illustration, and stakeholder outreach and engagement activities)
3. Summer Salary: Investigators may request summer salary, with appropriate fringe and college approvals in place
4. Course release: faculty may request course release or reassign time with pre-approval from college senior administration

5. Fringe benefits: fringe benefits should be included and calculated at RF rates

Important budgetary notes:

1. Funds will be awarded as both tax levy and Research Foundation monies
2. Funds requested for course release are determined by your college and must include applicable salary and fringe benefit rates
3. Funding levels for successful proposals may vary depending on the Review Committee's assessment of budgetary need and proposal ranking
4. Program awards are subject to the availability of funds and budgetary approvals

The following application materials should be included with the proposal (also see proposal <u>template</u>):

- Project summary
- Signature page
- Project Narrative
- References
- Budget
- Budget justification
- 2-page CV/biosketch
- Current and Pending funding

For more information and to submit proposals, please click <u>HERE</u>.

Please direct any questions to:
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