



**SUNY Research Seed Grant Program  
2019-20 Request for Proposals  
RFP #20-02-RSG**

Issued: January 6, 2020  
Submission Deadline: Friday, February 21, 2020 at 5:00 p.m.

**RFP Highlights:**

- The Research Seed Grant Program provides seed funding to catalyze and support SUNY faculty in the pursuit of large extramural grants in strategic priority areas.
- Three award tracks under this RFP: (1) Center-Scale Planning and Development Program Award (2) Multidisciplinary Small Team Award and (3) NIH Resubmission Support Award.
- Focus on SUNY strategic priority areas.
- Selected faculty teams will be awarded up to:
  - \$50K for Center-Scale Planning and Development Program Awards
  - \$10K per faculty member for a total up to \$40K for Multidisciplinary Small Team Awards
  - \$15K for NIH Resubmission Support Awards
- Award recipients are required to submit at least one extramural grant proposal to an external funding agency within 18 months of receiving any of the above SUNY awards.

**I. INTRODUCTION AND PROGRAM GOALS**

In FY2017-18, the SUNY Office of Research and Economic Development (“ORED”) launched a seed grant program, the Center-Scale Planning and Development Program (“CSP”), to assist SUNY teams in the development and submission of center-scale funding proposals to external agencies. Two rounds of competitive solicitations were met with strong enthusiasm from SUNY faculty and have yielded positive results in increasing external grant submissions and attracting external funding.

The SUNY Research Seed Grant Program leverages the successes and lessons learned from CSP and further expands the scope of seed funding provided by ORED to enable faculty to pursue and win competitive external grants in SUNY strategic priority research areas (as listed in in Section II below).

The SUNY Research Seed Grant Program is intended to augment and complement various seed funding programs offered and administered by SUNY campuses in order to create a broader portfolio of options for faculty while emphasizing SUNY strategic priority research areas.

## **II. SUNY STRATEGIC PRIORITY RESEARCH AREAS**

Based on SUNY's current research strengths and capacity, the potential to advance science, drive strong economic growth and enable societal impact, as well as federal and state funding priorities, the following strategic priority areas have been identified collectively by SUNY campuses.

1. Artificial Intelligence (AI) including, but not limited to, fundamental AI and machine learning, AI applications in healthcare, education, energy transportation, business, and security, and AI ethics and trustworthy AI
2. Next-generation computing and communication including, but not limited to, quantum materials and devices, quantum information science and engineering, cognitive computing, and wireless communication
3. Clean energy including renewable energy harvesting, energy storage, energy efficiency, smart grid and forecasted energy management
4. Medicine and biomedical research including, but not limited to, engineering driven medicine, novel imaging modalities in healthcare, and health disparities
5. Aging research including, but not limited to, science of aging, technologies for elder care and healthy aging, and Alzheimer's disease diagnosis and treatment
6. Substance addiction research especially research to address opioid crisis
7. Environmental health and medicine
8. Resilient communities and critical infrastructure

## **III. PROGRAM TRACKS**

The SUNY Research Seed Grant Program is designed to catalyze and facilitate the development and preparation of extramural grant applications that require extensive planning, exchange of ideas, collaboration, team building, partnering, and other activities demanding significant investments of faculty's time and effort. This RFP, in furtherance of the above goals, comprises of three tracks for the extramural funding opportunities that applicants will pursue.

### **A. Track 1 - Center-Scale Planning and Development Program ("CSP")**

Nationally funded research centers provide considerable resources in support of broad, interdisciplinary research; promoting enduring partnerships; positively impacting science, technology and the economy; and bringing significant prestige

to the institutions. The intent of the CSP is to help build and establish more interdisciplinary, multi-institutional, research centers at our campuses in SUNY strategic priority research areas by supporting faculty in their efforts to develop competitive center-scale proposals.

Examples of large, interdisciplinary, center-scale, extramural funding programs that are within the scope of the CSP include DOE's Energy Frontiers Research Centers; NSF's Engineering Research Centers, Science and Technology Centers, Materials Research Science and Engineering Centers, Expeditions in Computing, and Physics Frontier Research Centers; DoD's Multidisciplinary University Research Initiatives (MURI); NIH's P30 and P50 Project Grants; DoD's University Affiliated Research Centers; CDC's Occupational Safety and Health Education and Research Centers; NOAA's Collaborative Institutes; and multi-institutional grants, institutional training grants, and infrastructure-building grants sponsored by federal and state agencies.

Proposals submitted in this track should target the creation of new research centers and should not be aimed at supporting or expanding existing ones.

## **B. Track 2 – Multidisciplinary Small Team Awards**

Most, if not all, pressing, complex societal challenges of today require innovative approaches that bring together experts from multiple, intellectually diverse scientific, engineering and humanity domains who work together with a “shared purpose”, integrating their individual knowledge, expertise, theories, data and research methodologies to explore new frontiers, advance knowledge and further technologies.

SUNY Multidisciplinary Small Team awards are designed to promote team science by supporting faculty in developing mid-scale, extramural funding proposals (typically in the \$500K to \$2M award range) that call for multidisciplinary approaches in one or more of SUNY strategic research priority areas. Teams should include faculty members from at least three different departments/schools who will apply their combined expertise to address complex problems requiring multi-disciplinary skills and approaches.

A few examples of programs that fall under this track include NSF Future of Work, NIH Collaborative Program Grant for Multidisciplinary Teams (RM1), NIH P20, NSF Focused Research Groups, ADVANCE, NRT, and Partnership for Innovation (PFI).

## **C. Track 3 – NIH Resubmission Support Awards**

With increasingly selective award processes, the reality is that some competitive grant proposals have to be submitted several times before they are funded and persistence is key to success. The SUNY Resubmission grant is designed to help PIs

in this often challenging process. As a pilot, the Track 3 of this RFP will focus on National Institutes of Health (NIH) grant resubmission; other extramural funding agencies and programs may be considered for future RFPs.

NIH Resubmission Support Awards are designed to support PIs/teams who have received highly favorable ratings on their prior, unfunded NIH grant proposals in their resubmission efforts. The funds are to be utilized to explicitly address concerns and gaps in the original submissions as indicated by the reviewers.

This track (only) will accept applications on a rolling basis immediately following the RFP announcement.

#### **IV. PROGRAM GUIDELINES**

##### **A. Funding**

Selected faculty teams will be awarded up to:

1. \$50K for Track 1 - Center-Scale Planning and Development Program (CSP)
2. \$10K per faculty member for a total up to \$40K for Track 2 - Multidisciplinary Small Team Awards
3. \$15K for Track 3 - NIH Resubmission Support Awards

Awarded teams are required to use these funds for preliminary research and related activities enabling the development, preparation and submission of proposals to federal or other extramural funding sources. It is expected that teams will have a reasonably well-defined plan for an extramural grant proposal, a core team in place, and a well-thought through list of potential funding agencies to which they will be eligible to submit proposals.

Awarded teams must begin to implement their stated plans and begin to use the funding within three months of the start date of the grant.

##### **B. Award Duration and Requirement**

The award duration is 18 months. Awarded teams are required to submit at least one proposal to an extramural funding agency (federal, state) or other extramural sponsor within 18 months of receipt of a SUNY Research Seed Grant award.

##### **C. Eligibility**

**Campus:** All SUNY four-year, state-operated campuses are eligible to submit proposals under this RFP. There is no limit on the number of proposals a campus may submit, as long as eligibility criteria outlined above are met, and each proposal is accompanied by a letter of commitment from the Office of the Vice President for Research (the Office of the Provost where the campus does not have an Office of the VPR).

**Individuals:** A faculty member or researcher may submit/be a team member on

only one SUNY Research Seed Grant proposal at any given time. In addition, the research outlined in the proposal cannot be already funded through any campus-level seed grant program.

Faculty members or researchers who receive a SUNY Research Seed Grant award and are successful in receiving at least one extramural grant from an external funding agency based on that SUNY award may apply again for another SUNY Research Seed Grant award subject to the other eligibility guidelines stated above.

All members of a team that receive a SUNY Research Seed Grant award and fail to submit at least one extramural grant proposal to an external funding agency within the specified time frame of 18 months may not be eligible to apply for any future SUNY Research Seed Grant funding.

## **V. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION GUIDELINES**

Proposals must be developed *using the templates provided* for each of the tracks and submitted by the Office of Vice President for Research (the Office of the Provost where the campus does not have an Office of the VPR) as one PDF file via e-mail to: [Center-scaleproposalgrantprogram@suny.edu](mailto:Center-scaleproposalgrantprogram@suny.edu) no later than 5:00 p.m. EST on Friday, February 21, 2020.

Each proposal package must contain the following sections in the below order:

1. Cover Sheet
2. Narrative
3. Budget and Budget Justification
4. Two-page biographical sketches of each core team member
5. Letter of support from the Office of the Vice President for Research (the Office of the Provost where the campus does not have an Office of the VPR)
6. Authorization to release proposal for review (Track 1 and Track 2 only)
7. Copy of the NIH Reviewer Feedback Report (Track 3 only)

## **VI. PROPOSAL REVIEW CRITERIA AND PROCESS**

Proposals will be evaluated based on a number of factors that capture significance, impact and feasibility of success, including but not limited to: the vision; intellectual strength of the proposed idea; scope of the proposed effort; uniqueness of the idea, qualifications of the PI/project lead and the core team; partnerships; and a realistic plan to pursue external funding.

Proposals may be reviewed by members of the Scientific Advisory Panel that has been appointed by the ORED. Necessary measures will be taken to avoid any potential conflicts of interest. Reviewers will be required to sign a Conflict of Interest Form and Confidentiality Statement.

Selected teams may be requested to present their proposals to the Senior Vice Chancellor for Research and Economic Development and/or ORED staff prior to funding decision. Final decisions will be made by the ORED.

ORED will make every effort to announce the awards within three months of the receipt of the proposals, and funds will be made available to the PIs upon receipt of the award acceptance agreement duly accepted by campus administration.

## **VII. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

PIs/project leads will be required to submit progress reports once every six months for the duration of the grant period using the template provided by the ORED. It is expected that PIs respond in a timely manner when requested by the ORED for updates and/or other information throughout the grant period.

Funding may be terminated at any time if it is determined by the ORED that the team has not made sufficient progress towards its stated goals or has not been responsive to ORED's request for progress reports.

## **VIII. CONTACT INFORMATION**

Please submit questions regarding this RFP to center-scaleproposalgrantprogram@suny.edu. Reference "RFP 20-02-RSG" in the subject line.