The Institute for CyberScience Seed Funding Initiative

The ICS Seed Funding Initiative enables faculty to advance computation-enabled and data-enabled research that can enhance the visibility of Penn State and 1) to facilitate the development of competitive proposals to external funding agencies, 2) to pursue center-scale efforts, or 3) establish centers of excellence. Our priority is to support interdisciplinary faculty groups seeking to pursue large awards from external granting agencies. Projects comprising of collaborative and interdisciplinary efforts in emerging areas along the ICS theme of “building our digital future” (e.g. big data and simulations) will be given special consideration. Principal Investigators (PIs) must be tenured or tenure-track professors with proven standing in their respective fields.

Team leads are encouraged to have a discussion with ICS leadership about proposal projects/concepts prior to the submission deadline. Direct inquiries to ics-seed-grants@ics.psu.edu

Terms
We plan to make 3-5 awards that bring together at least five or more interdisciplinary faculty to develop big ideas centered on data, models, and simulation for deeper insights into the critical problems in science and engineering. We anticipate funding for 1 year, with typical budgets of $25,000 per year, with the ability for follow-on funding based upon performance and success potential. We expect successful awardees to submit at least one significant center-scale external proposal within 3 years of awards.

Infrastructure, such as equipment, is not allowable. A portion of the budget can be used to access hardware, software, and instrumentation for computation and data-enabled research, including the new research cluster deployed by ICS-ACI. A Notice of Intent that includes a tentative title and team composition (PI, Co-PI, and other members) should be submitted by 15 November 2015. All proposals should be submitted no later than 5:00 pm. 30 November 2015.

We will require six month reports that include a description of the progress made, plans for seeking additional funding, and a brief financial accounting. Additionally, we will conduct annual program reviews with non-performance potentially causing award suspension. A final report is also required and should include a discussion of all technical work accomplished and information gained during the performance of the project. This shall include all pertinent observations, nature of problems, positive as well as negative results, and design criteria established, where applicable; also, procedures followed, processes developed, “Lesson Learned,” etc. The details of all technical work shall be documented to permit full understanding of the techniques and procedures used in evolving technology or processes developed.

Proposal Format
i. Summary (1-2 pages)
   • Project/Concept Title
   • PIs, co-PIs and affiliations
   • Total Amount Requested
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- Project Duration
- Abstract or executive summary
- Project outcome or impact
- List of external funding bodies and/or programs of past and current funding, and to which application(s) for further funding will be sought.

ii. Proposed project/concept (up to 5 pages)
- Includes all figures, tables, and citations
- 12 point font with 1 inch margins, double-spaced
- Applicants should focus on addressing the review criteria described below

iii. Itemized budget and budget justification (including cost share)
- Budget calculations should not include the cost of fringe benefits or F&A.

iv. Letters of Support
- Minimum – Department Head
- Industry and sponsor letters are welcome

v. One-page bios of PI(s)
- Awardees will have the funds transferred to their department and will be responsible for explaining how the funds were used.

Review Criteria
Projects/Concepts will be ranked based upon the ability to address the following:

- **Funds Impact**
  - How can the initial seed funds increase the competitiveness of the proposed research?
  - What specific big opportunities will the project enable or target, e.g. ERC or STC?

- **Research Strengths**
  - What impact has the faculty member or team had in this space?
  - Pending/Current/Previous Awards?

- **Scope of Work/Deliverables**
  - What activities and/or research will be performed by the project?
  - What are the outputs and outcomes?

- **Potential/Sustainability**
  - What is the likelihood that the project will lead to further substantial funding from outside the University? Preference will be given to projects that show the capability to become self-supporting.

- **Internal Commitment**
  - What level of funding support exists from department heads to support the project? While there is no minimum cost sharing requirement, preference will be given to projects that demonstrate funding or in-kind commitments, such as course buy-outs, that are not attached to another commitment or employment agreement.

- **Alignment**
  - How does the project align with the vision and priorities of ICS and/or the University?