

Request for Proposals

Wanger Institute for Sustainable Energy Research (WISER) Interdisciplinary Seed Funding Grants (ISFG)

[Posted 10/26/11]

The objective of the WISER Interdisciplinary Seed Funding Grants (ISFG) program is to provide seed funding to initiate innovative programs that will use the results obtained during the project period to develop major proposals seeking external funding in areas of national interest related to energy and sustainability. Proposals based on new and innovative multidisciplinary research concepts that are expected to be promising in attracting major external funding in the area of energy and sustainability are solicited. The proposals should be focused in either: 1) new areas of interdisciplinary research of national interest, or 2) areas that enhance ongoing WISER research activities including clean coal technology, renewable energy and energy storage, smart grid, water/energy nexus, climate change, sustainable built environment, energy for the next generation of vehicles, and energy efficiency.

GUIDELINES FOR SUBMISSION

Only tenured and tenure-track faculty are eligible to be principal investigators. In order to promote interdisciplinary activities within IIT and with other institutions, the proposal must be submitted by *at least two* faculty members, *at least one* of whom must be an IIT faculty and both of whom cannot hold faculty appointments in the same discipline. The maximum funding amount is **\$25,000**. Applicants are encouraged to use the format outlined below for their proposal submissions. Each grant will be funded for a maximum of one year. Proposals must be submitted by **Nov. 30, 2011**, to the Office of Sponsored Research and Programs (OSRP) by: (1) completing the online IIT Request for Review and Approval of Proposal routing form located at (http://www.iit.edu/research/services/sponsored_research/); and (2) attaching the proposal as a *pdf file* to the routing form. Questions should be directed to Margaret Murphy, WISER Assistant Director (murphym@iit.edu, 312.567.6881).

Recipients are required to submit a progress report at the end of the first half of the project period. Continuation of the second half of the allocated funding will depend on satisfactory demonstration of progress. A final technical report is required 15 months after the start of the project. The funds awarded will be released in two installments: at the beginning of the project period (January 2012) and after the review of the mid-term progress report (June 2012).

PROPOSAL FORMAT

Typeface, Size, and Page Formatting

Each proposal is limited to **five pages** including figures, tables, and appendices (excluding budget, current and pending support, and curriculum vitae). Proposals should be submitted in either **Times New Roman** or **Arial** typeface using **no smaller than size 11 font**. The proposals must include a section (see page 2, "Plans for Seeking External Funding") that clearly identifies how the authors will use the results of this proposed work to prepare a multi-investigator interdisciplinary proposal, the agency/agencies and division(s) within the agencies to which the authors are planning to submit the proposal, the expected total funding request, the timeframe for the submission, and an assessment of the potential success of the proposal.

Objectives

List the broad long-term objectives and identify the specific intended accomplishments of the proposed research. Indicate how the work will enhance the interdisciplinary activities of the faculty involved and the specific plan for preparation and submission of interdisciplinary proposals based on the results of the proposed work.

Background and Significance

Briefly sketch the background leading to the proposed work, critically evaluate existing knowledge, and specifically identify the gaps that the project is intended to fill. State concisely the importance and relevance of the proposed work by relating the specific aims to the broad long-term objectives.

Preliminary Studies/Progress Report (if any)

Research Design and Methods

Describe the research design and the procedures to be used to accomplish the specific aims of the project. Include how the data will be collected, analyzed, and interpreted. Describe any new methodology and its advantage over existing methodologies. Discuss the potential difficulties and limitations of the proposed procedures and alternative approaches to achieve the aims. As part of this section, provide a tentative timetable for the project. Point out any procedures, situations, or materials that may be hazardous to personnel and the precautions to be exercised.

Resources, Facilities, and Collaborations

Identify the office and/or laboratory space and specify the facilities to be used for the conduct of the proposed research. Describe capabilities, support services, and important equipment items. List individuals involved in the development or execution of the project and their qualifications.

Plans for Seeking External Funding

Describe the proposal(s) that will be developed after the conclusion of the ISFG project; list the funding agencies and/or industries targeted; provide an estimate of the expected funding level and the potential for funding. State how the resources requested from the ISFG will enable the development of these external proposals. **Proposals that do not include detailed plans for seeking external funding at the conclusion of the ISFG will be rejected without review.**

Budget and Budget Justification

Include a budget that does not exceed \$25,000. Must provide budget justification and an explanation of how the expenditure of the ISFG funds would lead to results for developing strong proposals for external funding agencies. *The budget should not include faculty time and salary. There is no overhead.*

Other Support

Include a list of current and pending support for all investigators.

Appendix

Include a two-page (maximum) curriculum vitae for each investigator.

REVIEW CRITERIA

The following general review criteria will be used for the evaluation of the proposals.

Significance

Does this study address a significant problem? If the aims of the application are achieved, how will scientific knowledge be advanced? What will be the effect of these studies on the concepts or methods that drive this field?

External Funding Plan and Potential

Is the plan for seeking external funding appropriate and clearly defined? How is the proposal's potential to successfully attract external funding assessed?

Innovation

Does the project employ novel concepts, approaches, or methods? Are the aims original and innovative? Does the project challenge existing paradigms or develop new methodologies or technologies?

Investigators

Are the investigators appropriately trained and well-suited to carry out this work? Is the proposed work appropriate to the experience level of the applicant(s)? Is this an interdisciplinary collaboration in which all investigators are contributing significantly to the effort?

Budget

Is the budget appropriate to carry out the work proposed? Are matching funds being used to enhance the proposed budget by the investigators or the department(s) of the investigators? Matching funds can be in the form of partial student support, faculty release time, or equipment purchase.