Call for Pre-proposals: Discovery Challenge Seed Grants

Building on substantial effort the past five years to develop a strategic plan for ESF, there is now an opportunity to synthesize the best ideas into seed grant proposals to initiate highly significant research/scholarship, teaching, and outreach programs that demonstrate viability beyond the seed grant-period through extramural grants, programmatic development, and philanthropic donations. These seed grants for cross-cutting challenges/initiatives should take advantage of the people, partnerships, and facilities already in place and leverage these investments for a sizeable and sustained return to ESF. Additionally, these seed grants must raise the prominence of ESF nationally and internationally and promote new academic, industry, and government partnerships.

Three to five seed grants, each up to $200,000 per year for three years (up to $600,000 maximum per grant) will be recommended by the Discovery Advisory Group to President Amberg for funding from the SUNY Chancellor’s Office. Pre-proposals are due December 1, 2018 to Dr. Chris Nomura, c/o Linda McNamara (llmcnama@esf.edu), Office of Research Programs. By December 10, teams of the top pre-proposals will be invited to give a 12 to 15 minute campus presentation on December 18. Full proposals will be invited by December 19, to be submitted by January 31, 2019. On February 15 the Discovery Advisory Group will make recommendations to President Amberg for funding of three to five proposals.

To be invited by the Discovery Advisory Group for submission of full proposal, pre-proposals must be highly collaborative (majority of team must be ESF-based but may include non ESF partners), be transdisciplinary, and highly likely to attract significant external funding including philanthropic gifts so the programs will continue for many more years. Co-chairs of the Discovery Advisory Group will manage potential conflicts of interest when members of the Discovery Advisory Group are also instrumental for specific initiatives.

Pre-proposals are limited to three pages (12 pt., single spaced, 1” margins) and must include the following:

1. A description of the discovery opportunity.
2. A description of undergraduate and graduate programs that will be impacted including new degree programs, and how these new programs will better position ESF students for career advancement and leadership in environmental science, practice and policy.
3. A list of agencies, partners, and funding entities either currently or anticipated to be interested in funding research, education, and outreach projects in the initiative area.
4. A description of how the initiative will expand current or create new partnerships with other academic, government, and private organizations.
5. A description of how the initiative will increase the use of ESF assets especially properties beyond the Syracuse main campus.
6. How the initiative will inform policy decisions, enhance ESF’s reputation, and have a global impact.
A description of new investments (including new faculty hires and support) required to move the initiative forward over a three-year period leading to financial sustainability by year four.

Teams representing the strongest pre-proposals will be invited by December 10 to give a 12 to 15 minute campus presentation on December 18 on their initiative as part of the evaluation process to determine which pre-proposals are selected for full proposal submission. Full proposals (seven pages maximum length, 12 pt., single spaced, 1” margins) will be invited by December 19 and are due January 31, 2019. Full proposals should address all of the points above, and include:

8) A description of how each faculty member listed will contribute to the opportunity, how the team will function effectively together, and how each member is likely to succeed based on past performance, including metrics.

9) Project management structure (i.e., who is doing what).

10) Budget approved by the Office of Research Programs.

11) Deliverables and products as appropriate.

12) Time table.

Questions about this request for pre-proposals and remaining process should be directed to any of the three co-chairs.

Note: All ESF strategic planning documents from the past five years are posted at: [website: coming soon]

**Discovery Advisory Group membership:**

Co-chairs (alphabetical): Don Leopold (djleopold@esf.edu), Chris Nomura (ctnomura@esf.edu), Tim Volk (tavolk@esf.edu)

Colin Beier (FNRM)
Mary Collins (EST)
Doug Daley (ERE/AG)
Dave Kieber (CHE)
Maren King (LSA)
Karin Limburg (EFB)
Shijie Liu (PBE)
Lee Newman (EFB/AG)
Steve Shaw (ERE)
Matt Smith (Library)
Doug Johnston (LSA)
Grace Leman (USA rep)
James Quinn (USA rep)
Rea Manderino (GSA rep)
Alex Poisson (GSA rep)
Steve Darcangelo (Alumni Board)
Scott Shannon (Dean Graduate Program, non-voting member)
Linda McNamara (staff support, non-voting member)