

# SC EPSCoR/IDeA

## 2017 Stimulus Research Program

*SC EPSCoR/IDeA Solicitation Number 4-2017*

*Revised August 9, 2017*

The mission of SC EPSCoR/IDeA Program is to advance excellence in science and engineering research and education to achieve sustainable increases in research, education, training capacity, and competitiveness in South Carolina. The Stimulus Research Program aims to advance this mission and is tailored after the NSF proposal content requirements and proposal review process.

### **Program Objectives**

The Stimulus Research Program was developed to strengthen South Carolina's research capacity and research competitiveness by funding projects that have strong scientific bases to solve complex problems through collaboration among South Carolina colleges and universities and through the integration of life science, physical science, engineering, and mathematics. The specific Program objectives are:

- Increase the research capacity of the investigators and their institutions
- Increase research collaboration and inclusion among colleges and universities,
- Position collaborative teams to pursue large-scale national funding for research

Therefore, successful proposals will have strong scientific bases, a clear collaboration and inclusion plan; and a demonstration of the potential to attract major research funding to the State (e.g., NSF centers, large-scale EPSCoR and/or Non-EPSCoR grants, etc.).

Each proposing team must be a collaboration that includes at least two comprehensive research universities and two predominately undergraduate institutions, including HBCUs in South Carolina. The SC EPSCoR/IDeA office will facilitate collaboration meetings for team-building upon request.

### **Proposal Topics**

Proposers are strongly encouraged to address topics consistent with South Carolina Vision 2025 - *Advancing South Carolina's Capacity and Expertise in Science and Technology* and the research themes of the NSF Big Ideas.

### **Award Information**

Award Type: Grant

Estimated Number of Awards: Four (4)

Award Duration: 2 Years

Anticipated Funding Amount: \$1,200,000

Maximum Funding Amount per Project: \$300,000 (\$150,000 per project year) – Direct Cost only

### **Who May Apply**

Faculty members from any South Carolina university, college or research institution. A Principal Investigator can only serve on one proposal.

### **Deadlines**

Letter of Intent – Friday, June 2, 2017

Full Proposal – Friday, September 1, 2017

## Letters of Intent

A Letter of Intent (LOI) is required to compete in the Stimulus Research Program. A LOI is required from Principal Investigators who plan to lead the research effort. The LOI is not binding. However, proposals received without LOI submission will not be considered or reviewed. The LOI should provide the Principal Investigator's name (and if known, potential Co-Investigators' names, title, institution or organization), preliminary proposal title, list of possible participating organizations, and a brief description of the proposed work to aid in identifying potential external reviewers.

## Full Proposal Content

The sections below represent the body of the proposal. Failure to submit the required sections will result in the proposal not being accepted, or being returned without review. *Note: Where indicated, the number of pages refers to the maximum number of pages allowed and must not be exceeded.*

### 1. Cover Page (2 pages)

Use the Cover Page form in Appendix A.

### 2. Project Summary (1 page)

Each proposal must contain an NSF compliant summary of the proposed project not more than one page in length. The Project Summary consists of an overview of the activities that would result if the stimulus proposal were funded, and a brief description of long-term plans for sustainability of the team. The Summary must also include a statement of objectives and methods to be employed, a statement on the intellectual merit of the proposed activity, and a statement on the broader impacts of the proposed activity.

### 3. List of Collaborators (2 pages)

A table listing of the collaborators. This list must include the PI and all Co-PIs and investigators who will be involved in the project. Use the Collaborators Form in Appendix B.

### 4. Project Description (12 pages limit)

The Project Description should provide a clear statement of the work to be undertaken, and must include the best scientific and strategic (long-term) objectives of the proposed work and expected significance, the relationship of this work to the present state of knowledge in the field, and the work plan. The Project Description section should have the following:

#### a. Objectives of the Proposed Work and Relevance

State the objectives of the proposed work and explain how it relates to South Carolina Vision 2025 - *Advancing South Carolina's Capacity and Expertise in Science and Technology* and/or the research themes of the NSF Big Ideas.

#### b. Prior Relevant Research

Describe the proposed research project including significance of research, research topic, relevant literature related to the proposed work. Highlight the work of the team members in the field and its relevance to the proposed research.

#### c. General Research Plan of Work

Describe the research framework, hypothesis, research questions, methods and procedures, potential outcomes, etc. Describe the broad design of activities to be undertaken (such as experimental methods and procedures). Proposers should address what they want to do, why

they want to do it, how they plan to do it, how they will know if they succeed, and what benefits could accrue if the project is successful. The research activities may be based on previously established and/or innovative methods and approaches, but in either case must be well justified. These issues apply to both the technical aspects of the proposal and the way in which the project may make broader contributions. Proposers must clearly identify the accomplishments to be expected at the end the first year and the second year of funding. Renewal of funding depends on the achievement of these expectations. Therefore, specific milestones must be carefully stated to aid in proposal evaluation.

**d. Human Subjects**

Describe the use of human subjects and the assurance that human subjects are protected from research risks. All projects involving human subjects must submit documentation of IRB exemption or IRB approval letter prior to award.

**e. Vertebrate Animals**

Describe the use of vertebrate animals to evaluate the choice of species, number of animals, and any potential exposure of animals to discomfort, pain, or injury. Include the IACUC approval date and indicate pending if approval has not been obtained prior to submission. If proposal is selected for funding, IACUC approval letter must be submitted prior to award being issued.

**5. Collaboration, Inclusion, Mentoring and Sustainability Plan (2 pages)**

Describe how the proposed partnerships and collaborations among the South Carolina institutions who are represented in the proposal will lead to achieving project goals. Describe the role of each investigator related to the Research Plan of Section c above, and how the research workflow will be integrated.

Describe strategy to include opportunities for early career faculty and students, and to expand diversity of women, members of underrepresented groups, and persons with disabilities into the STEM workforce pipeline.

Describe the plans for data management and sharing of the products of research, including preservation, documentation, and sharing of data, samples, physical collections, dissemination, and other related products. It is important to clearly establish these important aspects *a priori*.

Describe the plan to periodically assess, and monitor progress toward project goals including milestones and metrics.

**6. Plans to Increase Research Capabilities and Competitiveness (2 pages)**

Description of the plan to increase research capabilities and competitiveness of the institutions and individuals involved. Explicitly address the targets and opportunities for future center/large-scale project funding, and sustainability of the effort. Differentiate objectives of Stimulus funding to objectives of longer-term Center/large-scale funding. Outline a plan for submitting research proposals to national funding agencies to attract major research grants, such as NSF centers and major awards. The plan must include the names of potential agencies and the programs and dates (if known) that will be targeted. For the long-term collaboration efforts, there are no restrictions on involving institutions other than those included in the proposal, but these institutions should not replace members of the team.

## **7. References Cited**

Reference information is required. Each reference must include the names of all authors (in the same sequence in which they appear in the publication), the article and journal title, book title, volume number, page numbers, and year of publication.

## **8. Biographical Sketches (2 pages per person)**

A biographical sketch is required for individuals identified as senior personnel and must include at least one individual from each collaborating institution. NSF Format is required.

## **9. Budget (3 pages per institution) and Budget Justification (2 pages per institution)**

Each proposal must contain a budget sheet for each year and a cumulative project budget. Use budget sheet in Appendix C.

The budget justification must be composed of no more than two pages for each collaborating institution. The lead institution budget justification must include a budget summary table by institution (Use table in Appendix D).

The amounts for each budget line item requested must be justified. The cost-share must be shown on the budget sheets.

## **10. Cost-Share Letter of Commitment (1 Page)**

Include a letter of commitment from an authorized administrator committing to at least a 15% release time for the Principal Investigator for the duration of the project. This release time will be used to manage the project. A letter of Commitment from an authorized administrator (Department Chair/Head, Dean, Provost or Vice President) of the PI's institution is required. The commitment letter should clearly identify the responsibilities from which the PI will be released.

## **11. Facilities, Equipment and other Resources (2 Pages)**

Description of the facilities, equipment, and other resources that will be available to the research project team. Indicate the location of each. Describe any unique aspects of the resources that will position the SC project team to compete for sustainable center-type or large-scale funding.

## **12. Current and Pending Support**

The Principal Investigator and all senior personnel must complete Current and Pending support document in Appendix E.

## **13. List of Conflicts**

Provide conflicts of interest (COI) for all persons in the List of Collaborators (Appendix B). Conflicted individuals to be identified for each project participant include:

- PhD Advisor: PhD Advisor of the participant (a direct advisor, not simply a thesis committee member) at any time in the past
- PhD Advisee: PhD advisee of the participant (a direct advisee, not simply where student is on thesis committee) at any time in the past
- Co-author: a co-author of the participant (includes papers under review and in preparation) within the past 48 months
- Co-PI: a co-investigator of the participant (includes proposals under review and in preparation) within the past 48 months

- Postdoc Advisor: Postdoc Advisor of the participant (a direct advisor, not simply a collaborator) within the past 48 months
- Postdoc Advisee: Postdoc Advisee of the participant (a direct advisee, not simply a collaborator) within the past 48 months
- Collaborator: a collaborator other than those listed above within the past 48 months (do not list individuals who have merely shared or received data, software, or other intellectual property)
- Co-editor: a co-editor of the participant during the past 24 months

## Proposal Guidelines

All proposals must be assembled as a single PDF in the following sequence (the number of pages in parentheses is the maximum number of pages allowed):

- **Cover Page (Appendix A)** (2 pages) for proposal to the SC EPSCoR/IDeA Program
- **IACUC Approval** (if applicable) – Not needed at the proposal stage – required if an award is made
- **IRB Exemption or Approval** (if applicable) – Not needed at the proposal stage – required if an award is made
- **Project Summary** (1 page)
- **List of Collaborators (Appendix B)** (2 page).
- **Project Description** (12 pages)
- **Plans to Increase Research Capabilities and Competitiveness** (2 pages)
- **References Cited** (no page limit) should be in NSF format
- **Biographical Sketches** (2 pages for each) of Principal Investigator and senior personnel.
- **Budget (Appendix C)** (3 pages per institution)
- **Budget Justification** (2 pages per institution)
- **Budget Summary Table by Institution (Appendix D)** (For use by Lead Institution only)
- **Cost-Share Letter of Commitment** (1 Page)
- **Facilities, Equipment, and Other Resources** (2 pages) available to the research team.
- **Current and Pending Support (Appendix E)** (no page limit for each of Principal Investigator and other senior personnel)
- **List of Conflicts (Appendix F)**

## Budget Information

Funding for the Stimulus Research Program is intended to support salaries and fringe benefits, consultants, materials and supplies, domestic travel support, publication costs, animal costs (e.g., purchase of animals, housing, etc.), human subjects' incentives (e.g. gift cards), etc.

Total faculty salaries and fringe benefits should not exceed 30% of SC EPSCoR/IDeA requested funds per project year. Not included in the 30% limit are salaries for post-doctoral fellows, graduate students (advanced), and undergraduate students.

- The budget requested may not exceed \$300,000 (\$150,000/year) per proposal.
- Awardees should ensure that costs claimed under SC EPSCoR/IDeA Program grants are allowable, allocable, and reasonable.
- Cost-share is required. Any other matching contributions from other sources should be listed in the budget and described in the budget justification.
- **Indirect costs are not allowed** under this solicitation; however, they should be used to show a cost-share commitment

## **Proposal Preparation Guidelines**

The proposal must conform to the following requirements:

- Use one of the following typefaces identified below:
  - Arial, Courier New, or Palatino Linotype at a font size of 10 points or larger; or
  - Times New Roman at a font size of 11 points or larger.
- No more than six lines of text within a vertical space of one inch.
- Margins, in all directions, must be at least one inch.

Proposers are strongly encouraged to use only a standard, single-column format for the text.

## **Submission Instructions**

Letters of Intent and proposals will be accepted during the prescribed proposal dates outlined in the Deadlines section. Lead PIs should submit their proposal via the SC EPSCoR/IDeA Proposal Submission Portal located online at <http://scepacoridea.org/Solicitations/proposals/>.

## **Proposal Review Process**

Proposals that meet the eligibility requirements and the guidelines of this solicitation will be evaluated by external reviewers based upon the extent to which they meet specific criteria including:

- Significance, scientific and technical merit, and potential impact of the research;
- Clear, concise description of the opportunity for South Carolina, and the need for funding to enable the team to compete for long-term, center-type/large-scale funding;
- Clear and focused objectives for both the stimulus funding activities and the potential long-term activities;
- Plan of activities that are clearly tied to the proposed research, forming partnerships, etc. that address the objectives;
- Potential for broader impacts and the increase of diversity;
- Potential for success to attract to South Carolina research centers/large-scale grants from federal agencies;
- Reasonableness of budget request and explanation.

Recommendations by the External Reviewers will be used to make awards.

The Lead Principal Investigator and research team members will be required to present to the External Review Panel (dates TBD). Upon award decision, reviews will be provided to the Principal Investigator excluding the identity of the reviewer.

## **Award and Reporting Requirements**

- Principal Investigators will receive notice of the Stimulus Research Program award/declination via e-mail.
- Each award will be made to the Lead Principal Investigator's Institution.
- Research teams will be required to attend and present research progress and results at the 2018 and 2019 SC EPSCoR/IDeA State Conferences. Therefore, travel expenses to these conferences should be included in the budget.
- A copy of all submitted proposals resulting from the Stimulus Research Program are required to be provided to the SC EPSCoR/IDeA State Office.

- All publications (e.g. research publications, press releases, other publications or documents about research that is funded by SC EPSCoR/IDeA Program) and presentations resulting from the Stimulus Research Program must include an acknowledgment of SC EPSCoR/IDeA Program support and a disclaimer. *"Research reported in this [publication, press release, presentation] was supported in part by the SC EPSCoR/IDeA Program under award number (specific SC EPSCoR/IDeA grant number). The views, perspective, and content do not necessarily represent the official views of the SC EPSCoR/IDeA Program."*
- SC EPSCoR/IDeA Program reserves the right to conduct site visits during the project period for evaluation and reporting purposes. Awardees are expected to provide required information and documentation to SC EPSCoR/IDeA Program staff, as needed.
- Progress reports are due every six months after the start date of the award. A template will be provided to the PIs.
- A final report will be due 60 days after the end date of the award.

### **Contact Information**

General inquiries regarding this program should be made to:

**April Heyward, MRA**  
**Program Manager, SC EPSCoR/IDeA Program**  
**1000 Catawba Street**  
**Columbia, South Carolina 29201**  
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