NC State University
Office of Research, Innovation & Economic Development
Kenan Institute for Engineering, Technology and Sciences

Research and Innovation Seed Funding Program

PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENT

Announcement Date: Friday, August 28, 2015

The Research and Innovation Seed Funding (RISF) Program is now accepting proposals from NC State faculty and staff professionals.

Due Date: Proposals are due Friday, October 2, 2015, 5:00 P.M.

INTRODUCTION

Background

NC State's Office of Research, Innovation & Economic Development (ORIED), in partnership with the Kenan Institute for Engineering, Technology and Science (KIETS), established the Strategic Research Initiatives Program (SRI) in 2010 to augment and replace the multi-disciplinary component of the Faculty Research and Professional Development (FRPD) program. The individual faculty component of the FRPD program remained unchanged and can be found at http://research.ncsu.edu/rdo/funding/internal-funding/frpd/. The SRI program was renamed Research and Innovation Seed Funding (RISF) Program later that same year.

Program Description

The primary goal of the RISF program is to assist NC State researchers in developing innovative interdisciplinary programs that have strong potential for significant future support from government agencies, corporations, industrial consortia or foundations. Encouraged are projects that align with NC State's strategic research areas of health and well-being, energy and environment, safety and security, or advanced materials and advanced manufacturing. Proposals should be of high risk/high gain and describe how the project will initiate new areas of research or enhance existing areas at NC State. Proposals which seek funds to enhance scholarship or faculty professional development are not eligible for this program. See http://research.ncsu.edu/rdo/funding/internal-funding/ for internal funding opportunities that address these topics.

Proposals must emphasize and promote interdisciplinary research across multiple colleges and/or departments with the goal of developing research initiatives with high potential for significant external funding from government, corporate, and foundation partners. When describing external funding possibilities, be as specific as possible, including agency names, programs, dates and potential amounts.

Projects Supported

Project activities may include, but are not limited to:

- Workshops on emerging multidisciplinary research areas;
- Support of a high-level seminar series to promote networking to form an innovation program;
- Development of concepts and white papers for large-scale centers, institutes or cluster hires;
- Travel to establish partnerships and to interact with program officers;
- Identification and recruitment of industrial, academic and/or government partnerships in support of initiatives;
- Support for release time, travel, workshops, and other expenses associated with conceptualization and preparation of large grants;
- Development of plans to promote industrial research collaborations;

- Creation and support of resources such as websites, research collaboration sites or social networking tools to facilitate large-scale research programs;
- Collection of preliminary data needed for external proposal submission;
- *NEW for FY2016 – International collaborations.*

AWARD INFORMATION

Type of Award

Solicitations will be open semi-annually in the Fall and Spring semesters. Awards will be effective for projects lasting twelve calendar months or less, beginning on the fiscal year (July 1) following Spring solicitations and calendar year (January 1) following Fall solicitations. Awards are typically distributed as a combination F&A and 7-account funding. Note that awards in the Fall cycle are transferred to the PI's project number(s) in the middle of the fiscal year. While project budget considerations are taken into account when determining the distribution, it is up to the PI to arrange with the receiving department or college business office to ensure the funds carry over to the next fiscal year.

Estimated Number of Awards and Anticipated Funding Amount

Approximately $175,000 will be available annually for awards. Awards typically range between $10,000 and $25,000, with an average of 4 – 6 awards per solicitation. Extension of the award period to complete proposed activities is at the discretion of the Office of Research, Innovation, and Economic Development (ORIED).

Cost Match

A minimum 25% cost match is required from internal or external sources and should be included in the total project budget. Internal sources may be college and/or department support, including salary release time. A clear distinction between a request for RISF funding for release time and release time used as a source of matching funds must be indicated in the budget.

Eligibility

All NC State faculty and EPA professionals are eligible to submit as a Principal Investigator (PI) or Co-PI. There is no limit on the number of proposals in which a single researcher may participate. There is no limit on the number of proposals a single PI may submit. While not eligible to submit on their own, support for student and postdoctoral researchers may be included in the budget.

PROPOSAL CONTENT AND SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Proposal Content

RISF proposals must include the following sections:

- **Cover page (please use the cover page template):** The cover page includes the title of the proposed project, contact information of the submitting principal investigator, list of Co-PIs and other key personnel, duration of project (1 day to 1 year), total budget amount (requested amount and matching funds), five (5) keywords, and a 1,000-character synopsis of the proposed project. (Depending on the number of personnel listed, the cover page may extend beyond a single page.)
- **Project description (3 pages max):** The project description must address how the proposed activities are consistent with the goals of the program, especially interdisciplinarity and potential for external funding. The description should include sufficient detail such that reviewers can evaluate the appropriateness and feasibility of the proposed plans. Please keep in mind that *not all reviewers will be experts in every proposed field of study*, and thus project descriptions should be written for a broad audience.
- **Budget with justification (please use the budget template):** The budget and justification should include funds requested from the RISF program *and* a minimum 25% cost match, indicating how funds from each source are to be allocated. Indirect costs are not applicable.

- **Team Description:** The team description should describe the role of each PI, Co-PI, and other key personnel mentioned in the proposal.
- **References (no limit).**
- **Appendices:**
  - **Biosketch (up to 1 page each):** Biosketches of each PI, Co-PI, and other key personnel that should include information relevant to the proposed project.
  - **Letter(s) of support (no limit):** Letters from source(s) of matching funds must be included. Other letters of support may be included.

Submission Instructions

Submission process is two-part: NC State PINS system and electronic submission to the RISF program administrator.

1. **PINS submission**: Submit through your college research administrator at http://research.ncsu.edu/sparcs/systems-portal/pins/. Note that PINS routing does not have to be complete at time of submission. However, PINS must have been initiated and the number must appear on the proposal cover page to be accepted for review.
2. **Electronic submission through CompetitionSpace:** Proposals must be submitted individually by the PI or Co-PI through the CompetitionSpace (https://ncsu.infoready4.com/). Follow the link for the RISF opportunity under "Internal Funding Programs" and click "Apply." Before uploading a proposal, users must log in using an NC State unity login. The system only allows one submission per user. In the case of multiple submissions by a single PI, the PI should request that a Co-PI or other team member submit the proposal. In the case of errors in a submitted proposal, contact the RISF Coordinator at research-development@ncsu.edu for instructions on submitting a revision.

Due Date

Proposals for the Fall 2015 solicitation are due on Friday, October 2, 2015 by 5:00 P.M.

REVIEW

Timeline for Fall 2015 Solicitation

August 28, 2015	Request for Proposals announcement sent to URC, ROC, RSC members and Funding list; posted to website at go.ncsu.edu/risf and CompetitionSpace.
October 2, 2015	**Proposals due no later than 5:00 P.M. Electronic submission with PINS number through CompetitionSpace** (https://ncsu.infoready4.com).
October 9, 2015	Proposals delivered to reviewers.
October 30, 2015	Review process ends; all reviews completed through CompetitionSpace
November 6, 2015	On or after, Principal Investigators notified of award status; summary of reviewer comments emailed to submitting PIs; abstracts of awarded proposals posted to the RISF Past Awards website.
January 4, 2016	Award period begins;
January 31, 2017	First report describing the accomplishments to date due to the Research Development Office.
January 31, 2018	Second report describing the accomplishments to date due to the Research Development Office.

Review Criteria

Each proposal will undergo an internal peer review based on the following criteria:

- **Potential for future funding:** The potential for follow-up funding for the project is high and clearly defined;

- **Integration of multiple colleges and disciplines:** Diversity in disciplines is contributory to the objectives of the project;
- **Description and feasibility of the project:** Goals and objectives are clearly defined and aligned with the specific purposes of the RISF program; project does not duplicate former efforts surrounding the proposed problem area; plan of work is clearly articulated and adequately meets the goals of the project; the project is feasible;
- **Budget:** Appropriate and justified budget includes a documented cost match of at least 25%; and
- **Team qualifications:** PI and team are qualified and appropriate for the project; roles for team members are clearly defined.

Review and Selection Process

Peer review is managed by the University Research Committee (URC) and may be reviewed by colleagues outside of the project discipline. In order to be ranked highly, *proposals must use language that can be understood by persons lacking expertise in the discipline*. Highly ranked proposals will clearly state the:

- Problem or need to be addressed;
- Innovativeness of the solution;
- Specifics of activities;
- Appropriateness and contribution of the named team members;
- Cross-disciplinarity of the approach;
- Expected outcomes from one year (or less) of work;
- Long-term implications for the work; and
- Specific agencies and programs likely to fund ongoing proposals generated from this effort.

Following the peer review, proposals and reviews are presented to a separate selection committee. The selection committee decides the number of awards and the amount of each award.

NOTIFICATION OF AWARD

The submitting PI(s) for the awarded proposals will be notified within one (1) business day of the award selection. The submitting PI(s) for non-awarded proposals will be notified within three (3) business days of the award selection. A synopsis of reviewer comments will be provided to the submitting PI(s) for all proposals after all PI(s) have been notified of their award status.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The principal investigator will be required to report on measurable outcomes of their seed funding effort (i.e. continued funding for the project, published reports, graduate students funded, etc.). The first report will be due approximately one month after the close of the grant period (see schedule below). Periodic status updates on the progress of the project may be requested at the discretion of the program administration.

Reporting Schedule (First Report Due)

January 31, 2017   First report describing the accomplishments to date due to the Research Development Office

January 31, 2018   Second report describing the accomplishments to date due to the Research Development Office

PROGRAM CONTACT:

Questions regarding this solicitation may be directed to:
        Bonnie Aldridge, Internal Funding Coordinator

        (919) 513-0942
        research-development@ncsu.edu