KANSAS NSF ESTABLISHED PROGRAM TO STIMULATE COMPETITIVE RESEARCH (EPSCoR)

REQUEST FOR WHITE PAPERS:

RESEARCH & EDUCATION INNOVATION (REI) AWARDS

In Microbiome Research

Submission Deadline: Thursday, January 31, 2019
Program Name
Kansas National Science Foundation Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (Kansas NSF EPSCoR) Research & Education Innovation (REI) Awards. Kansas NSF EPSCoR is seeking White Papers for impactful initiatives for REI Awards.

Project Director
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Source of Funds
The source of funding for REI Awards is Kansas NSF EPSCoR, which receives its funding from the current National Science Foundation Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR) Research Infrastructure Improvement (RII) Track-1 award (OIA-1656006). Matching support is provided by the Kansas Board of Regents (KBOR) and the participating universities.

Focus Area
The current RII Track-1 award funding REI Awards is titled Microbiomes of Aquatic, Plant and Soil Systems (MAPS) across Kansas. Broadly, MAPS’ mission is to elucidate how microbiomes interact within native and agriculturally dominated aquatic, plant, and soil habitats, leveraging the steep precipitation gradient across Kansas as a means of projecting system response to environmental change. The MAPS project provides a vehicle for education, training, and outreach that includes informing policymakers and managers. Only projects with research in areas that are related to the current Kansas NSF EPSCoR focus of microbiomes as broadly construed to be in aquatic, plant and/or soil systems (http://www.nsfepscor.ku.edu) are eligible for REI Awards.

Purpose
Kansas NSF EPSCoR helps Kansas build its research capacity and competitiveness in science and technology in the RII Track-1 MAPS focus area and is seeking White Papers for impactful initiatives for REI Awards. REI Awards are for small projects that will allow for either networking and planning for larger projects or the immediate pursuit of larger projects for developing new transformational concepts. These awards are provided for either research or education initiatives and are in the same spirit as and share goals with NSF EAGER (Early Concept Grants for Exploratory Research) awards, for high risk/high gain research ideas.

Kansas NSF EPSCoR seeks to:
- add significant and measurable value to the research capability at its participating institutions;
- generate sustained non-EPSCoR funding from federal, state, or private sector sources;
increase multidisciplinary, multi-institutional and multi-sector collaborations that will lead to long term sustainable funding;

• increase diversity by enabling participation in the project’s activities by women and men, underrepresented minorities, and persons with disabilities to the extent possible within the scope of the project; and

• develop stronger linkages between research and education.

Examples of Eligible Activities

Below are examples of Research activities consistent with the Kansas NSF EPSCoR program objectives.

• Exploratory work in its early stages on untested, but potentially transformative, research ideas or approaches in the area of MAPS. This work may be considered especially "high risk-high payoff" in the sense that it, for example, involves radically different approaches, applies new expertise, or engages novel disciplinary or interdisciplinary perspectives.

• Development of large (budgets ≥ $1,000,000), collaborative multi-investigator, multi-disciplinary, research proposals to the NSF by providing opportunities for research collaborators to
  • meet, explore ideas, and plan proposals in areas related to MAPS; and/or
  • organize a symposium for a local, regional or national meeting where collaborators could provide talks and posters in areas related to MAPS. Inclusion of some collaborators from non-university employers, such as National Laboratories or industry, is strongly encouraged.

• Initiatives that expand and add significant value to the specific areas of the MAPS research project in novel ways not previously considered.

Below are examples of Education activities consistent with the Kansas NSF EPSCoR program objectives.

• Innovations in education that will expand student career options and facilitate the entry of members of underrepresented groups within the state (i.e., minorities, women and persons with disabilities) into STEM fields in areas related to MAPS.

• Partnerships with other universities, four-year colleges or community colleges in Kansas that provide educational and/or research opportunities in areas related to MAPS for faculty and/or students.

• Development of materials, collections, presentations, or media in areas related to MAPS that extend STEM educational opportunities to targeted segments of the Kansas population.

• Design and implement programs that overcome barriers to existing educational resources in STEM in areas related to MAPS.

• Professional development programs or other initiatives to enhance K-12 education in STEM in areas related to MAPS.
• Programs that introduce K-12 students to STEM fields, such as a science summer camp in areas related to MAPS.
• Educational exhibits/presentations related to MAPS that reach large numbers of Kansas stakeholders or broaden the engagement of the public.

Eligibility
Eligible to apply is any individual with PI status at Kansas State University, University of Kansas, Wichita State University, Emporia State University, Fort Hays State University, Pittsburg State University or Washburn University.

Award Amount and Duration of Award
An individual Principal Investigator may submit a total project budget of up to $50,000 in direct costs for up to 12 months. It is expected that Kansas NSF EPSCoR will fund as many as four REI Awards depending upon the size of the requests. Awards to PIs at Kansas State University, Wichita State University, Emporia State University, Fort Hays State University, Pittsburg State University and Washburn University will be administered as subcontracts; KUCR accounts will be established for PIs at the University of Kansas. The start date will depend upon the timing of the proposed activities.

Application Procedure
Prepare the REI Award White Paper as a single PDF containing the following components in the order listed:

a. Cover sheet (1 page max) should include:
   i. Proposal Title
   ii. The name, affiliation and email for the PI and each CoPI
   iii. Project duration (in months) and proposed start date (e.g. 12 months starting June 1, 2019)
   iv. Total estimated budget (direct costs only)

b. Project summary (2 pages max) that follows the NSF Proposal Margin and Spacing Requirements (PAPPG NSF 18-1). The description should include the following:
   i. The purpose and rationale for the initiative and its relation to microbiome research.
   ii. The specific goals and expected outcomes.
   iii. A summary of proposed activities and how they will achieve the specific project goals and the purpose of REI Awards (See “Purpose,” page 2)
   iv. The purpose of the meeting or symposium (as appropriate for proposal planning activities only). Describe how the meetings and symposia will facilitate the development of a full proposal to NSF.

c. Bio Sketch (as per PAPPG NSF 18-1) – Include a bio sketch for the Principal Investigator.
To submit a White Paper the PDF described above must be sent as an email attachment to nsfepscor@ku.edu.

White Papers must be submitted via this process by 5:00 pm Thursday, January 31, 2019.

Review Criteria
Kansas NSF EPSCoR will evaluate the initiative described in the White Paper. Projects deemed to that the highest impact and merit will be asked to provide more detailed information and budget.

Contact Information
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Questions
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