KANSAS NSF EXPERIMENTAL PROGRAM TO STIMULATE COMPETITIVE RESEARCH (EPSCoR)

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS:
FIRST AWARDS
A Research Program for Tenure Track Faculty Early in their Careers

Submission Deadlines:
Letter of Intent: March 19, 2010
Final Proposal: April 23, 2010
Program Name
Kansas NSF EPSCoR (Kansas National Science Foundation Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research) First Awards

Project Director
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Source of Funds
The source of funding for First Awards is Kansas NSF EPSCoR, which receives its funding from the National Science Foundation and Kansas Technology Enterprise Corporation (KTEC).

Purpose
Kansas NSF EPSCoR (KNE) helps Kansas build its research capacity and competitiveness in science and technology. The First Award program helps early career faculty become competitive for funding from the research directorates at the National Science Foundation by: 1) encouraging early career faculty to submit proposals to the NSF as soon as possible after their first faculty appointment, and 2) by accelerating the pace of their research and the quality of their subsequent proposals.

Eligibility
Eligible to apply is any individual tenure track faculty member at Kansas State University, University of Kansas, or Wichita State University who:
- is within the first three years of his/her faculty appointment,
- has not previously received a First Award or similar funding from another EPSCoR or EPSCoR-like (COBRE) program in Kansas,
- is not currently nor has previously been a lead principal investigator of a research grant funded by a federal agency.

In addition, one of the following conditions must apply:
- The principal investigator must have the proposed research pending at NSF or a plan to submit the proposed research to the NSF by July 31, 2011.
- The principal investigator must have had the proposed research declined by the NSF and a plan to re-submit the proposed research to the NSF by July 31, 2011.

Only projects with research in areas that are funded by the NSF are eligible for First Awards.

Amount of Award
An individual principal investigator may request up to $100,000 in direct costs from the First Award program. It is expected that KNE will fund three to six First Awards depending upon the size of the requests.
Duration of Award

Individual principal investigators may request funding for up to 15 months to be expended between July 1, 2010 and September 30, 2011. If the Principal Investigator receives federal agency funding during the period of the First Award, he or she must notify the KNE Project Director to discuss reallocating remaining balances to other potential First Awardees.

Application Procedure

1. **Submit a Letter of Intent by March 19, 2010** to the Kansas NSF EPSCoR Project Director. The letter should:
   - state the planned title of the proposal;
   - describe in less than 100 words the research that will be proposed for funding;
   - be followed by a biosketch in NSF format;
   - list the name, title, mailing address, e-mail address, and telephone number of 2-3 potential reviewers outside of Kansas with expertise in the substantive area of the proposed project. Reviewers should not include Ph.D. or postdoctoral advisors or current or past collaborators.

   The letter of intent may be delivered by mail, fax, or email.

2. Prepare the proposal in accordance with the general guidelines contained in the *Grant Proposal Guide (GPG), NSF 10-1.*

   **Exceptions** are noted below.

   a. In the project description, state research goals and objectives that can be accomplished in the time requested.

   b. Prepare the proposal budget using the Kansas NSF EPSCoR Budget Form that appears on the Kansas NSF EPSCoR Web site. The First Award budget **should:**
      - Support research activities that can be accomplished in the time requested
      - Be followed by budget justification of up to two pages in length
      - Be followed by a one-page timeline with milestones for completing the scope of work and expending the funds requested. An example appears on the Kansas NSF EPSCoR Web site.

   The First Award budget **should NOT:**
      - Exceed $100,000 in direct costs
      - Include any indirect costs (F&A will be added when a proposal is awarded.)
      - Include more than two months of summer salary

   c. The proposal should be accompanied by a cover letter from the principal investigator that explains his/her funding status:
      - The proposed research was submitted to the NSF and is pending. Indicate the proposal submission date and title of proposal. When the status of the proposal is determined, it should be reported to the Kansas NSF EPSCoR office.
The proposed research will be submitted to the NSF. State the date when the proposal will be submitted and the program to which it will be submitted. In this case, submission to the NSF must occur by July 31, 2011.

The proposed research was submitted to the NSF and declined. In this case, indicate date and title of proposal, enclose all of the NSF reviews, and describe the activities that are in progress regarding re-submission of this or other proposals to the NSF.

d. Include a cover letter of support from the chair of the principal investigator’s primary department. The letter should contain the following information.

- The amount and nature of start-up funding provided to the faculty member when he or she was hired
- A description of the research space and any special facilities provided to the faculty member as part of the start-up package
- The faculty member’s teaching load per semester
- The nature of the department’s mentoring program related to research
- Other evidence of departmental efforts to promote the faculty member’s research competitiveness

Proposal Submission
The proposal must be submitted electronically as a PDF attached to an email sent by the institution’s research office. This email should be sent to nsfepscor@ku.edu by 5:00 pm April 23, 2010. **Please note:** Proposals not submitted through the institution’s research office will NOT be accepted.

A signed original and three (3) copies of the proposal and accompanying materials must be submitted by the institution’s research office by 5:00 p.m., April 30, 2010 to the Kansas NSF EPSCoR Office.

Review Criteria
Kansas NSF EPSCoR solicits reviews of proposals from peers with expertise in the substantive area of the proposed project. In reviewing proposals, Kansas NSF EPSCoR uses the general merit review criteria established by the National Science Board. These are discussed in the *Grant Proposal Guide (GPG), NSF 10-1* and listed below. In responding to NSF’s Criterion 2, reviewers will be asked to place special emphasis on the likelihood that the proposed project will enhance research competitiveness and substantially improve the jurisdiction’s ability to generate subsequent, sustained non-EPSCoR funding from federal, jurisdictional, or private sector sources. *(NSF 08-587)* Following each criterion are potential considerations that the reviewer may employ in the evaluation. These are suggestions and not all will apply to any given proposal. Reviewers are asked to address only those considerations that are relevant to the proposal and for which the reviewer feels qualified to make judgments.

**Criterion 1: What is the intellectual merit of the proposed activity?**
How important is the proposed activity to advancing knowledge and understanding within its own field or across different fields? How well qualified is the proposer (individual or team) to conduct the project? *(If appropriate, the reviewer will comment on the quality of
the prior work.) To what extent does the proposed activity suggest and explore creative, original, or potentially transformative concepts? How well conceived and organized is the proposed activity? Is there sufficient access to resources?

**Criterion 2: What are the broader impacts of the proposed activity?**
How well does the activity advance discovery and understanding while promoting teaching, training, and learning? How well does the proposed activity broaden the participation of underrepresented groups (e.g., gender, ethnicity, disability, geographic, etc.)? To what extent will it enhance the infrastructure for research and education, such as facilities, instrumentation, networks, and partnerships? Will the results be disseminated broadly to enhance scientific and technological understanding? What may be the benefits of the proposed activity to society?

**General Conditions of Award**
If a proposal is selected for funding, the Project Director reserves the right to negotiate the budget and the term of the award.

During the term of the award and for five years after the end date, the principal investigator must inform the Project Director of:

- Any proposals submitted and any awards received as a result of the award. Information provided should include the title of the proposal or award, the funding agency, the amount of the proposal or award, and its duration.
- Changes in the principal investigator’s contact information.

Because Kansas NSF EPSCoR is part of the National Science Foundation EPSCoR, it must comply with NSF EPSCoR reporting requirements. Therefore, each First Award principal investigator will be required to submit an annual report identifying the numbers of women and members of other underrepresented groups in STEM fields, faculty and staff positions, and as participants in the activities funded by the award (NSF 08-587). Other required information will include demographics on all project participants, proposals submitted and funded, publications, presentations, patents, degrees granted, and research outcomes. Kansas NSF EPSCoR will request information from award recipients with compliance expected within 30 days of the request.

Any publication resulting from the award must include the following statement of acknowledgment: *This research is based upon work supported by the National Science Foundation under grant no. EPS-0903806 and the State of Kansas through Kansas Technology Enterprise Corporation.*

The principal investigator will be expected to attend the Statewide EPSCoR Conference scheduled during the award period.
Contact Information

Kansas NSF EPSCoR Office
Foley Hall, University of Kansas
2021 Constant Ave.
Lawrence, KS 66047-3729

Telephone: 785-864-3096
Fax: 785-864-3093
E-mail: nsfepscor@ku.edu
Web site: http://www.nsfepscor.ku.edu

Questions
Questions about this RFP may be directed to Doug Byers, Assistant Director, at 785-864-3227 or dbyers@ku.edu.

Kansas NSF EPSCoR Budget Form
See the Kansas NSF EPSCoR Web site: http://www.nsfepscor.ku.edu