August 2018

THE OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR RESEARCH

BRIDGING the DIVIDE:

An experimental interdisciplinary research seed program to holistically address wicked problems through new integrative collaborations among researchers in DESIGN, ARTS & HUMANITIES, SOCIAL SCIENCE and STEM disciplines

SPRING 2019 CALL FOR PROPOSALS

The ongoing national conversation about Convergence has inspired efforts to develop collaborative interdisciplinary teams that integrate researchers from the arts, humanities, design and social sciences with researchers in science, engineering and data science (STEM). The goal is to engage in holistic consideration of a research problem in conceiving the ensuing investigations.

Past efforts to promote such collaborations at Iowa State have primarily resulted in STEM-based initiatives with auxiliary goals that incorporate social scientists to explore broader impacts. While laudable in their own right, these efforts do not fully embrace the emerging focus on convergence of seemingly unrelated disciples that arise from considering all aspects of a research problem.

In an effort to reframe how collaborations among diverse disciplines are developed at Iowa State, the Office of the Vice President for Research (VPR) has received approval to use Presidential Interdisciplinary Research funding to support an experimental interdisciplinary research seed funding program called *Bridging the Divide*. The program is being offered in partnership with the Center for Excellence in the Arts and Humanities (CEAH).

Program Description

The *Bridging the Divide* seed funding program seeks proposals to form a diverse team of faculty drawing from design, arts, humanities, and social science disciplines and from science, engineering and data science disciplines. The team should aim to establish a high functioning integrated collaboration to pursue innovative, ambitious, interdisciplinary research with strong potential to generate significant scholarly and creative activity. Teams should rely on the substantive contributions from the different disciplines and develop research projects that are framed by a holistic and comprehensive perspective.

Seed grants will be awarded to small groups of tenured and tenure-eligible faculty that bring together expertise for projects that can be completed within one or two fiscal years. Successful projects will identify specific outcomes and milestones within the funding period, with anticipated additional scholarly products (e.g., publications, creative works, funding proposals) after a period normative for the scholarly area. *Bridging the Divide* seed grants are expected to initiate transdisciplinary teams of researchers who will be positioned to develop long-term collaborations that address new intellectual pursuits at the interface between these disciplines.

Funded Research Activities

Projects funded by the *Bridging the Divide* seed funding program may take a variety of forms, ranging from 1-year planning grants to nucleate a new team, to 1 or 2-year research projects to make substantive progress via the collaboration. Project activities may include, but are not limited to:

- Supporting preliminary data collection (e.g., traveling to visit archives, museums, and other collections; conducting lab or field work, surveys and/or interviews; acquisition costs for administrative data sets);

- Hosting symposia, workshops, or bringing visitors to campus who are critical to supporting the development of the collaboration;
- Hiring graduate research assistants to support the project team;
- Traveling to meet potential collaborators or partners outside of Iowa State University;
- Purchasing supplies and equipment to support project development; and/or
- Creating and supporting resources such as websites, research collaboration sites or social networking tools to facilitate larger-scale collaborative research programs.

Funds may not be used to complete a project previously funded by CEAH or other OVPR or College grants, nor may they be used to fund curriculum development, preparation or revision of textbooks, development of teaching methods/theories, or educational and technical impact assessments. Applicants are encouraged to contact Associate VPR Surya Mallapragada or the CEAH Director Carlton Basmajian for guidance prior to submitting proposals.

Eligibility and Team Requirements

Tenured or tenure-eligible faculty may apply for the *Bridging the Divide* seed program. Applicants must be full-time faculty members. Faculty may not be on more than one proposal in a given funding cycle.

Interdisciplinary research teams must include at least one faculty member from the arts, humanities, design and social sciences and at least one faculty member from the sciences, engineering or data sciences. Team composition must reflect the nature of the proposed research, which is expected to be framed by a holistic and comprehensive perspective that relies on multiple disciplines.

Review Criteria: The goal of these grants is to support innovative projects that have an interdisciplinary focus and involve collaborations between faculty in the design, arts, humanities, and social sciences with faculty in the STEM disciplines. The following criteria will be used when evaluating proposals:

- Is the intellectual merit of the research clearly documented?
- Does the proposal present an integrated collaborative activity between the different disciplines to lead to new knowledge?
- Are the goals and objectives clearly stated and are they reasonable, given the funds and time provided?
- Is the team composed of an appropriate mix of scholars across disciplines and are their roles well specified?
- Is there potential for continued collaboration beyond the duration of the grant?

Budgets

A 1-year planning grant project may request up to $10,000. A research project may request up to $25,000/year for up to two years.

Applications

Applications completed in 11-point Calibri or Times New Roman font (with one-inch margins on all sides) should include the following:

1. **Applicant Information**: The proposal should include a title page that lists the proposal title and the senior participating investigators, along with their organizational or departmental affiliation and a brief, 300-word abstract/summary of the proposal.

2. **Project Information**: Research projects should have a proposal narrative of no more than 3 single space pages of text that provides the details of the project including the approach and expected outcomes. The narrative should highlight the interdisciplinary, innovative, novel, and intellectual merits of the proposed work, and describe how the proposed work will lead to new intellectual pursuits.

The applicants should clearly describe the goals of the research, the activities to be carried out to achieve those goals, a timetable for completing these activities, and an assessment of the potential for continued collaborations. A short (2-page maximum) list of references/bibliography may be appended and is not included in the 3-page proposal limit.

For planning grants, the project information section will not exceed 2 pages, and will focus on details of proposed interdisciplinary activities to build and grow the nascent teams to explore new directions, and a timeline for these activities.

3. **Current and Pending Funding**: As pertains to this research or planning project, a list of the applicants' current and pending funding for external research support, as well as any current or pending funding for grants internal to the University.

4. **Curriculum Vita**: A current two-page CV for each investigator listed on the title page.

5. **Budget and Budget Justification**: A budget that itemizes general categories of expenses for which award funds will be used and a brief justification for these expenses. **Budget template here.**

Award Conditions

Awards may be used to support any allowable expense that furthers the collaborative research project, as specified earlier. Expenditures for faculty salaries (either summer or academic year) are not permitted. Please refer to Iowa State's IP policy for questions regarding intellectual property.

Reporting Requirement

For the research projects, the team must submit an interim report during the last month of the first year of funding that provides the basis for a continuing funding decision. For both research projects and planning grants, the recipients must provide a final report to the Vice President for Research within 60 days of the end of the approved award period. The report should outline the work that was accomplished and describe next steps. The report should also describe any significant deviations from or extensions to the project described in the original proposal. Reports should be submitted as a single PDF with the names of the co-leads in the title via email to vprfunding@iastate.edu.

Application Process

Please submit your application as a single, complete PDF file at the link below. The deadline for applications is **February 28, 2019**

Submit here

The VPR office and CEAH will appoint, in consultation with the colleges, an Evaluation Committee with broad representation across Colleges. The Committee makes funding recommendations to the VPR.

Announcement of awards will be made in May 2019. If you have any questions about this program, please contact Surya Mallapragada, Office of the Vice President for Research, (suryakm@iastate.edu) or CEAH Director Carlton Basmajian (carlton@iastate.edu).