The Office of Research & Economic Development announces the 2018-2019 Faculty Research Grant program.

The mission of the Faculty Research Grant Program (FRG) is to position LSU as a regional, national and global leader in addressing critical challenges that face society through the development and nurturing of interdisciplinary research teams. Through the FRG program, we expect to increase the number of competitive and successful applications for large center-scale grants, increase the number of applications for collaborative research opportunities, increase the number of effective interdisciplinary research teams, and increase annual research expenditures through increased extramural funding.

The program is expected to leverage FRG funding towards increased extramural funding and research investments, apply academic research to regional, national and global challenges, transform knowledge and research into product and action, identify emerging areas of collaborative and interdisciplinary research, and deliver a compelling message to LSU constituents that “research works” to improve the lives of our state’s residents by communicating the successes of FRG research teams.
Program Information

The Faculty Research Grant initiative is a multi-stage program to identify, train, and support interdisciplinary research teams at LSU through targeted research projects that engage the land-grant, sea-grant and space-grant missions of the university. Proposed projects should be transformative, have broad impact, and be ambitious but achievable within the proposed timeframe, with the goal of producing tangible work products that address real-world challenges.

The FRG will provide up to $100,000 per year per project renewable for up to two/three years. Participating projects will be identified through a rigorous peer-review process. Faculty from selected projects will participate in workshops on effective team development, management and engagement during the month prior to the project start date (July 1).

Proposals for this program will be solicited in three phases: as a letter of intent to gauge interest and assist prospective research teams, a pre-proposal for initial review by a faculty peer-review selection panel, and an in-person presentation before the selection panel. Once the grant period has begun, selected teams will meet quarterly with FRG staff to share project activities, share feedback on project trajectories, and assess how research teams are meeting critical milestones and performance targets. Renewal of the second/third year of funding will be contingent on an end-of-year review by FRG and ORED staff.

Up to three (3) research teams will be selected for each iteration of the FRG program.

Application Requirements

The FRG program is open to tenured and tenure-track LSU faculty whose college participates in the Facilities & Administration rebate program. Faculty in the School of Veterinary Medicine and College of Agriculture may not participate as the Principal Investigator or Co-Principal Investigator, but they can serve as a project team member. Project teams must consist of at least three (3) eligible faculty whose disciplines or research areas are inter- or trans-disciplinary, preferably with representation from multiple departments and colleges.
Eligible Expenses

Program funds may be used for any expenses directly related to the project, including preliminary research activities (e.g., modeling, data collection, analysis), research support, equipment, workshops, travel, and visitors and consultants. At least 10% of the total budget must be used to provide administrative support for the project.

Limitations

Equipment purchases will only be supported up to 50% of its cost. Participating colleges, departments or research centers must provide the remaining 50% of the purchase cost.

Program funds may not be used for faculty salaries, graduate assistantships, equipment that will be used outside of the proposed project, and expenses not directly related to the goals of the project.

Matching Funds

Matching funds are not required. However, colleges and departments may provide non-cash matching funds through the use of faculty or staff time, or other appropriate sources. As stated above, equipment purchases using FRG funds must be matched 1:1 by departmental or college funds and should be identified as matching funds for this project.

Any matching funds must come from state or foundation accounts under the direct control of a department chair, center director or dean. Funds from faculty-controlled foundation accounts (i.e. professorships) may not be used as match without direct approval by the dean.

Application & Review Process

Phase 1 – Letter of Intent

ORED will solicit letters of intent (LOI) to be submitted by interested parties to the FRG program. The purpose of the LOI is to gauge interest in specific research areas, identify prospective research teams, help us identify qualified peer-reviewers for the program and work with faculty on refining
their proposals. The call for LOI will also include ORED organized workshops for faculty interested in the program. While an LOI is not required to participate in the program, it is strongly encouraged.

Phase 2 – Request for Proposals

An RFP will be issued to LSU faculty for the creation of interdisciplinary research teams, with specific guidelines that will help applicants address the program’s goals and objectives. Proposals will be required to discuss the team’s target area of research, the need and impact of such research, identify team members and their respective responsibilities, and provide a plan of action for the development of external funding (including target goals for applications submitted, dollars requested and dollars awarded).

Phase 3 – Peer Review & Presentation

A team of faculty will be assembled to review proposals and make recommendations to the Vice President of Research & Economic Development (VPR) as to which proposals should be supported. The review process will be in two parts: first, the panelists will review the proposals electronically, and provide initial feedback to the applicants on their projects. Faculty will then present their proposals in person to the review committee, with the opportunity to revise their projects to address concerns from the committee. Once the presentations are complete, the review committee will deliberate and make their recommendations. The VPR will have final approval of all FRG awards.

Phase 4 – Grant Period

During the grant period, teams will be responsible for executing their projects. Teams will meet with ORED/FRG staff quarterly to discuss progress, address challenges, and get feedback. A joint meeting of all the faculty teams will occur once per semester (Summer, Fall, Spring) to share experiences, challenges and solutions.
The faculty team will be responsible for identifying future funding opportunities, developing proposals and submitting them. The Office of Research Advancement group will provide assistance in grant development for each team when requested.

At the end of each academic year, all project teams will be evaluation for funding renewal. Renewal decisions will be at the discretion of the VPR.

**Proposals**

Proposals should be concise and direct, readable by both domain specialists and general faculty. Narratives be structured to address the following questions:

- What are you trying to do? Describe your project objectives using absolutely no jargon.
- How is it done today, and what are the limits of current practice?
- What is new in your approach and why do you think it will be successful?
- Who cares? If you are successful, what difference will it make?
- What are the risks?
- How much will it cost?
- How long will it take?
- What are the mid-term and final “exams” to check for success?

**Format**

All proposals must contain the following elements:

- Project Title
- Project Abstract (no more than 250 words)
- Program Narrative (5 pages max)

Questions are from the Heilmeier Catechism, a DARPA criteria model for the evaluation of cutting edge research proposals.
• Project Deliverables and Metrics of Success (1 page max)
• Budget for each proposed year of activity
• List of Participating faculty (with departmental affiliations) including
  o 2-page biographical sketch or vita
  o Current & Pending Funding report
• Bibliography

Proposals should conform to the following specifications: 12-point Times or Times New Roman font, 1.5x-spaced, 1” margins. Final proposal should be in a single PDF file to be uploaded to the Internal Grants Portal. Proposals which do not conform to the above specifications will not be reviewed.

A proposal template in Word format will be available.

**Review Criteria**

The following questions will be used as primary review criteria for all proposals.

1. Is the proposed project transformative?
2. Does the proposal have a broad impact?
3. Does the proposal align itself with the priorities of the home department(s), college(s), university or the state?
4. Are the deliverables appropriate and achievable in the time frame proposed?
5. Is the faculty team qualified for the proposed activities?
6. Does the proposal have enough institutional support systems to be successful?
7. Does the proposal articulate clear targets for future funding?
8. What are the prospects for a successful project?

**Program Timeline**

Letters of intent for this program will be announced in early September. Workshops for this program will be held in mid-October and mid-November. Letters of intent will be due November
1, with an initial screening of submissions completed by November 15. The formal RFP will be announced then with a submission deadline of February 1. The Review Panel will complete its review by March 1. Feedback will be distributed then, and presentations will be scheduled for some time near the beginning of April. Recommendations for the program will be delivered to the VPR after the final panel review, with a final decision announced by April 15.

Training sessions for the selected teams will occur between mid-May and mid-June, depending on the availability of the selected teams.

**Calendar**

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<td>Mid-November</td>
<td>Program Workshop 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 15</td>
<td>Request for Proposals is announced</td>
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