CALL FOR PROPOSALS

SUMMARY
Clemson University recognizes that in order to secure funding in large center competitions, teams need to begin planning their work and solidifying relationships well in advance of the official release of the RFP and deadlines. Therefore, with the anticipation of the next National Science Foundation (NSF) Engineering Research Centers (ERC) call in 2017, and the goal of providing some seed support to Clemson scholars, the purpose of the National Science Foundation Engineering Research Centers (NSF ERC) internal program is to award small grants to assist eligible Clemson faculty teams in their pursuit of funding from the NSF ERC program. Successful proposals will bring together multiple partners engaged in large-scale, long-term projects that are innovative, transformative, and complex. The outcomes of the program are the successful submission of pre-proposals and full proposals, if invited, to NSF by the required deadlines.

If the new RFP content to be released soon by NSF is significantly different from the last RFP (NSF 15-589), the Research Division may change the rules and requirements of the internal NSF ERC competition.

ELIGIBILITY
Faculty eligibility will follow the requirements established in the last NSF solicitation (NSF 15-589).

FUNDING AND REQUIREMENTS
- In Phase I, up to three (3) proposal teams will be selected to receive up to $10,000 each.
- In Phase II, the pre-proposal teams invited by NSF for full proposal development will be eligible to receive up to an additional $20,000 each.
- Funds may be used to provide a course release for the lead PI to allow time to focus on the ERC proposal.
- Funds may be used to collect baseline data, conduct experiments, organize meetings/workshops, travel to NSF or partner institutions for proposal development and partnership building, or complete other tasks necessary to make the ERC proposal more competitive.
- Partnerships with other institutions are expected, but no funds can be provided to other institutions.
- Using funds to pay the wages of undergraduate or graduate students or postdocs will require strong justification.
- Expenditure of the funds must follow state procurement guidelines.
- No facilities and administrative (F&A) expenses should be included in the budget.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PROPOSAL PREPARATION
Phase I Applications

The cover page must include a clear and concise title. The names and titles of the PI, all co-PIs, and any other senior personnel or key collaborators, including those from other institutions and industrial partners, should be listed, along with their titles, departments, and any center affiliations.

Proposals should follow the preliminary proposal format outlined in the NSF solicitation (currently NSF 15-589, Section V) and should include:

- Project Summary
- Project Description
- References Cited
- Biographical Sketches
- Budget and Budget Justification (internal for a maximum of $10,000)

Do not include an NSF budget for preliminary proposals.

Format all documents using 12 pt. Times New Roman Font, one-inch margins, single line spacing, and 8 ½ x 11inch paper size.

Submit the proposal as a single PDF file.

Phase I applicant teams may be invited to make brief (5 slides/8 minutes maximum) presentations to the evaluation panel on the vision and goals of the proposed effort and to answer questions.

Phase II Applications

Any team invited by NSF to submit a full proposal will be eligible to receive additional Clemson funding of up to $20,000. Full proposals should follow the NSF solicitation guidelines as outlined in the Invited Full Proposal Preparation Instructions. For requesting Phase II funding, teams will submit: (1) the NSF review of the pre-proposal and invitation letter/email and (2) an internal budget for a maximum of $20,000 and justification for how funds will be spent toward proposal development efforts along with addressing the comments in the NSF review of the pre-proposal.

SUBMISSION PROCEDURES AND DEADLINE

Proposals must be submitted by 4:30pm on April 7, 2017 using the InfoEd Proposal Development Module. PIs will contact their OSP Support Centers as they would normally do for an external submission. Only those proposals having completed the InfoEd routing process by the deadline will be reviewed.

TIMELINE

January 17, 2017   Announcement of internal solicitation
April 7, 2017     Phase I preliminary proposals submission deadline
May 12, 2017     Announcement of selected proposal teams for Phase I
October 2017 (approximate)   Preliminary proposals due to NSF
June 2018 (approximate)   Invited full proposal(s) due to NSF

QUESTIONS

Questions should be directed to Sarah Jaeschke at sjaesch@clemson.edu or 864-656-0260.