

Request for Proposals

Wanger Institute for Sustainable Energy Research (WISER) 2018 Interdisciplinary Seed Funding Grants (ISFG)

[Posted 1/25/2018]

The objective of the WISER Interdisciplinary Seed Funding Grants (ISFG) program is to provide seed funding to initiate innovative programs that will use the results obtained during the project period to develop major proposals seeking external funding in areas of national interest related to energy and sustainability. Proposals based on new and innovative multidisciplinary research concepts that are expected to be promising in attracting major external funding in the area of energy and sustainability are solicited. The proposals should be focused in either: 1) new areas of interdisciplinary research of national interest, or 2) areas that enhance ongoing WISER research activities including climate change, renewable energy and energy storage, smart grid, water treatment, water/energy nexus, carbon capture, sustainable built environment, materials in sustainable energy, natural gas production and storage, biofuels, energy for the next generation of vehicles, and energy efficiency. Proposals that are only marginally related to the energy and sustainability area will be rejected without review.

GUIDELINES FOR SUBMISSION

Only IIT tenured and tenure-track faculty are eligible to serve as Principal Investigator (PI). In order to promote interdisciplinary activities, *both within IIT and with other institutions*, the proposal must be submitted by the IIT PI and at least one other (internal or external) co-PI who must hold an appointment or position in a different discipline. **Proposals that do not include a co-PI from a different discipline will be rejected without review.** No subcontracts are allowed. The allowed funding range: **\$20,000-\$40,000**. Applicants are encouraged to use the format outlined below for their proposal submissions. Each grant will be funded for a maximum of one year.

Recipients are required to submit a progress report at the end of the first half of the project period. Continuation of the second half of the allocated funding will depend on satisfactory demonstration of progress. A final technical report is required three months after completion of the project. The funds awarded will be released at the beginning of the project period (**June 1, 2018**).

Proposals must be submitted via e-mail as a *pdf file* to the **Office of Sponsored Research and Programs** (osrp@iit.edu) by **close of business (5:00 pm) on Tuesday, March 27, 2018**. Proposals that do not meet the formatting requirements or are received after the deadline **will not be accepted**.

All PIs must complete a routing sheet in Cayuse. See the PI Portal on the “[Research: Office of Sponsored Research and Programs](#)” [webpage](#) for further instructions. Contact osrp@iit.edu if you have questions regarding the routing sheet. In the routing sheet “Sponsor” field, search for “WISER” (and select “WISER” - Wanger Institute for Sustainable Energy Research) as the sponsor.

Programmatic or budgetary questions should be directed to Margaret Murphy, Assistant Director and Program Outreach Manager, WISER (murphym@iit.edu, 312.567.6881).

PROPOSAL FORMAT

Typeface, Size, and Page Formatting

Each proposal is limited to **five pages** including figures, tables, and appendices (excluding references cited, budget, budget justification, and biographical sketch). Proposals should be submitted in either **Times New Roman** or **Arial** typeface using **no smaller than size 11 font, with one-inch margins**.

The **title of the proposal** should read as follows: Cayuse#, WISER: Title of Project, PI Name and Department (*i.e.*, Cayuse# 1234, WISER: Sustainable Research Project, PI: NAME, DEPT.).

Note: the Cayuse number is generated from the routing sheet.

REQUIRED CONTENT

Proposals should include the suggested sections described below. **However, proposals that exclude separate responses to the required documentation outlined for Sections 3, 4, and 5 will be rejected without review.**

1) Objectives

List the broad long-term objectives and identify the specific intended accomplishments of the proposed research. Indicate how the work will enhance the interdisciplinary activities of the faculty involved and the specific plan for preparation and submission of interdisciplinary proposals based on the results of the proposed work.

2) Background and Significance

Briefly sketch the background leading to the proposed work, critically evaluate existing knowledge, and specifically identify the gaps that the project is intended to fill. State concisely the importance and relevance of the proposed work by relating the specific aims to the broad long-term objectives.

3) Intellectual Merit of the Proposed Research Work and Proposed Research Tasks

Clearly specify the intellectual merit of the proposed research work and proposed tasks. Describe any new methodology and its advantage over existing methodologies. Discuss the potential difficulties and limitations of the proposed procedures and alternative approaches to achieve the aims. As part of this section, provide a tentative timetable for the project. Point out any procedures, situations, or materials that may be hazardous to personnel and the precautions to be exercised. Any proposals that include human or animal subjects must have the appropriate institutional approvals prior to the issuance of any award.

Note: Proposals that do not include a separate section titled “Intellectual Merit of the Proposed Research Work and Proposed Research Tasks” and a detailed description of the intellectual merit of the proposed research work and proposed research tasks will be rejected without review.

4) Collaborative Team

Explain how the research team has been formed and describe the responsibilities of all team members.

Note: Proposals that do not include a separate section titled “Collaborative Team” and detailed descriptions of the team formation/team member responsibilities will be rejected without review.

5) Plans for Seeking External Funding

Clearly identify how the investigators will use the results of this proposed work to prepare a multi-investigator interdisciplinary proposal, the agency/agencies and division(s) within the agencies and/or industries to which the investigators are planning to submit the proposal, the expected range of the total funding request, the timeframe for the submission, and an assessment of the potential success of the proposal. State how the resources requested from the ISFG will enable the development of these external proposals. **Note: Proposals that do not include a separate section titled “Plans for Seeking External Funding” and a detailed plans for seeking external funding will be rejected without review.**

6) Budget and Budget Justification

Include a budget that **does not exceed \$40,000**. An explanation (budget justification) of how the expenditure of the ISFG funds would lead to results for developing strong proposals for external funding agencies must also be included. **The budget should not include faculty time and salary. Indirect costs are not allowed. Graduate student support must be used only for IIT students. Although external faculty may serve as a Co-PI, no funds may be spent outside of IIT; no subawards are allowed.**

A budget template can be found on the OSRP website at:

<https://research.iit.edu/osrp/developing-budget>

8) Biographical Sketch

Include a two-page (maximum) biographical sketch for each investigator. (Format may be similar to that used for NSF proposal submissions.)

REVIEW CRITERIA

The following general review criteria will be used for the evaluation of the proposals.

Innovation and Technical Merit (30%)

Does the project employ novel concepts, approaches, or methods in a sustainable energy and/or sustainability related area? Are the aims original and innovative? Does the project challenge existing paradigms or develop new methodologies or technologies in a sustainable energy and/or sustainability related area?

Significance of Proposed Work (25%)

Does this study address a significant problem in a sustainable energy and/or sustainability related area? If the aims of the application are achieved, how will scientific knowledge be advanced and used by the multiple investigators in preparing future major research proposals?

External Funding Plan and Potential (25%)

Is the plan for seeking external funding appropriate and clearly defined? How is the proposal's potential to successfully attract external funding assessed?

Interdisciplinary Nature of the Proposal (20%)

Is this an interdisciplinary collaboration in which all investigators are contributing significantly to the proposed research in sustainable energy and/or sustainability?