

Center for Engineering Sustainability and Resilience

Fall 2022 Seed Funding Call for Proposals

<https://www.engineeringsustainability.northwestern.edu/>

To: McCormick faculty members

From: Jennifer Dunn, Center for Engineering Sustainability and Resilience Director

Date: October 2022

Through the generosity of a McCormick donor, \$400,000 in funds are available for innovative, high-risk, and/or enabling collaborative research seed funding in Fall 2022. Key aspects of the proposed funding mechanism are as follows:

Eligibility and Allowable Costs

- At least one faculty member on each proposal must have at least a 25% paid appointment in McCormick.
- Each faculty member may serve as PI for only one proposal in each call. Faculty members who received support as PI in one seed funding call will not be eligible to serve as PI for a proposal in the next funding call.
- Each faculty member may be included (as a PI or co-PI) in up to two distinct proposals for each seed funding call for proposals. Faculty members who received support as PI in one funding call will be eligible to serve as a co-PI for a proposal in the next call as long as the project is clearly distinct from the previously funded project and involves a new faculty collaboration.
- Funding is available in any area of research related to engineering sustainability or resilience, but priority will be given to:
 - Proposals that involve at least two investigators from different departments that bring complementary areas of expertise to the project;
 - Proposals that request support for postdoctoral fellows or graduate students;
 - Projects that are too risky for federal funding;
 - Projects that may not be a clear fit for existing funding mechanisms;
 - Projects for which preliminary data is necessary before applying for federal funding;
 - Projects for which innovative collaborations are necessary and thus are unlikely to be eligible for federal funding mechanisms;
 - Projects that represent new collaborations between investigators;
- Award amounts for this program will be up to \$80,000 per project.
 - Funds will typically be used for graduate student or postdoc support, materials, supplies, user fees, lab services, and publication fees;
 - Funds must be completely expended within 18 months of funding notification; no-cost extensions will not be allowed;
 - Award funds may not be used for faculty salary, travel (except for data collection or project implementation), conferences, entertainment of visitors, alcohol, capital equipment, teaching activities or outreach activities (symposia, academic visitors, etc.).
 - Indirect costs are not applicable.
- Direct questions regarding eligibility, research topics, or funding guidelines to Jennifer Dunn (jennifer.dunn1@northwestern.edu).

Submission Instructions

- The proposal should include the following items only:
 - Cover sheet with budget (see below);
 - 2-page research plan (see below);
 - One page for references cited in the research plan (optional)
 - NSF style biosketch (old or new version) for each of the faculty investigators.
- The cover sheet should include the following items:
 - The names, academic rank, and departments of the investigators;
 - The proposal title;
 - A one-paragraph, non-technical executive summary of the research goals (the summaries from all proposals submitted will be shared with the donor);
 - Budget: List trainees that will be supported by this award and for how long, their salaries, other budget requests, and the total funding being requested.
- The 2-page research plan should include the following items:
 - **Scientific Question:** What scientific question does this proposal address? Why is it important? What will be learned through the proposed research? Why is the project too risky and/or not well suited for established funding mechanisms?
 - **Research Plan:** Provide a compelling and well justified research plan that can be completed within 18 months.
 - **Research Team:** Summarize the expertise that each team member brings to the project. Also, briefly discuss whether/how this represents a new collaboration, an expanded collaboration, and/or a new research direction for an existing collaboration.
 - **Measures of Success:** Discuss the ways in which this proposal will (i) affect future research directions for the PIs, (ii) increase the likelihood of obtaining external funding (identify at least one funding agency), and/or (iii) increase Northwestern's external visibility in engineering sustainability and resilience.
 - **Figures.**
- One page may be used to list **references** cited in the research plan (optional)
- Submit the application materials using the Competitions platform <https://competitions.fsm.northwestern.edu/> under *Center for Engineering Sustainability and Resilience Research Support*.
- **The deadline for proposal submission is December 16, 2022 at 11:59 PM CDT.**

Review and Post-Award Requirements

- **By submitting a proposal, each PI agrees to serve as a reviewer** for three (3) proposals in this competition. Any PI who does not submit their reviews will be ineligible for funding.
- Each proposal will be reviewed by three (3) of the submitting PIs in a round-robin system (see Excel file); reviewer assignments will be designed to minimize conflicts of interest. The CESR directors will also review all of the proposals.
- We expect to make award decisions by January 11, 2023.
- Deliverables are expected to include:
 - A one-paragraph, non-technical executive summary of the research accomplishments;
 - A short (2-3 page) final report at the end of the grant describing the research results including a list of resulting submitted/accepted publications and proposals;
 - A poster presentation at the Center for Engineering Sustainability and Resilience annual poster session.

- *Either* an InfoEd record of proposal submission to an external funding entity (federal, industrial, foundation) *OR* a one-page written summary of a meeting with a potential funding entity in which a proposal concept is discussed. The summary should describe the proposal concept, the program manager's feedback, and the project team's resulting plan for proposal submission in the coming 6-12 months.