Guidelines for CWC Seed Grants

Contact Doug Alsdorf, alsdorf.1@osu.edu
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The purpose of this document is to build new CWC seed grants. Seed grants are designed to be opportunistic, responsive to the needs of researchers whose needs are aligned with the CWC goals. Seed grants accept some risk but are low cost and typically last only one year. The PI for a seed grant must be a faculty member or have PI status from the Office of Research. For example, a Research Scientist with PI status may apply for and lead a seed grant. Those without PI Status, such a research assistants, most Post-Doctoral researchers (some do have PI status and thus are eligible), and graduate students may not serve as PIs but are welcome to participate with a senior mentor who qualifies as a PI. For example, a faculty member could serve as the PI on a seed grant that involves a graduate student or post-doctoral researcher.

Seed Grant Guidelines:

Seed grant descriptions should be no more than 3 pages in length and address the following four points. The appendix of this document contains a format for seed grant proposals whereas the CWC web page (http://cwc.osu.edu/projects/seedgrants/) provides detailed descriptions of existing CWC seed grants.

(1) Describe the project. The project is expected to directly address one or more of the three founding questions (questions are noted in the appendix). Identify the question(s) and name the leader responsible for project completion. Given the expected modest budgets, cross-campus integration is not required.

(2) Describe the product(s) or deliverable(s) as they relate to the selected question(s).

(3) Describe how the project will lead to new, external funds. For example, the items identified in point 2 (above) could be preliminary findings that support a proposal to a Federal agency.

(4) Give a timeline of expected accomplishments and related CWC costs. These will be used by the CWC to ensure that the project is on schedule. It is unlikely that a seed grant will last longer than one year.

The Selection Process:

The CWC desires to allow all OSU colleagues an opportunity to participate in CWC research. The CWC advisory board will collect all submissions, conduct a review by an independent panel, and make final selections. More than one proposal will likely be funded. The review process will include internal to OSU and perhaps external referees for each submission. Those submitting proposals may contact Doug Alsdorf, CWC Director, for more information. This document will be posted on the CWC web page and emailed to all CWC affiliates. It may be forwarded to any interested OSU researcher thus allowing everyone equal opportunity to seek funding.

Suggested Project Budgets:

Seed grants are expected to be funded at about $50,000 for one year. Exceptions might be made for a maximum funding of two years, but are discouraged. This level of funding allows for one graduate student or a significant portion of a post-doctoral researcher to receive funds under the direction of the project PI. Funds can be used for faculty release time, but would need approval from departments. Combining of seed-grants by proposers is acceptable, but CWC guidance should be sought first. Overhead is not a part of these funds and should not be included in the budgeting. Funds for non-OSU personnel are not encouraged.

Timeline for Implementation:

The new seed grants are expected to be added to the CWC and funds allocated by Summer 2009. Additional seed grants will be added on an annual basis, as funds are available and as projects become clearly needed by the CWC. There is no set number of seed grants, but expectations are that the number in this 2009 call will be about 3. The next call should occur in early 2010. **The due date for seed grant proposals is May 1, 2009.**

Appendix

The Three Founding CWC Questions:

The CWC recognizes that science alone will not provide the greatest impact on society, thus policy is intimately connected with the three science questions.

(1) Does human intervention have the potential to push the climate system such that abrupt changes become more frequent, intense and rapid?
(2) Do we have enough surface water to maintain society; i.e., what is the spatial and temporal variability in terrestrial surface water storage and how can we predict these variations more accurately?
(3) How is the carbon cycle being disrupted by human activities (e.g., fossil fuel combustion) and how can the cycle be re-balanced to mitigate ACC and its adverse effects?

What is a TIE?

The CWC is a Targeted Investment in Excellence. "Targeted" is accomplished by ensuring that all actions are focused on the three founding questions. "Investment" is accomplished by ensuring that every OAA dollar spent leads clearly and obviously to more dollars and hence to a program that is vibrant after the 5-year OAA investment period. "Excellence" is recognition of the past successes of those participating in the CWC, with the expectation of future excellence.

Format for a Seed Grant Proposal Description:

Those submitting proposals are requested to use the following format for describing their seed grant proposal. **No more than 3 single-spaced pages are allowed.** Sections 1, 2, and 3 (below) count toward these three pages whereas section 4, the budget, does not count toward the limitation.

Seed Grant Proposal Title

1. Project Description:

This project is designed to directly address the CWC question of… Please quote one of the three questions noted above. This should be followed by a few paragraphs describing the project. This section is probably most similar to a typical summary section of a proposal submitted to a federal agency such as NSF.

2. Product(s) and Deliverable(s):

Describe in this section the expected outcomes from the seed grant. For example, the team might be building a computer based model designed to assess the water cycle. The model

would be a deliverable. A product might be something of value to industry, foundations, philanthropy, or federal granting agencies. For example, the water cycle model might allow the team to carefully address important questions on drought or flooding, both of which have value leading to potential new funds and, hence, sustained growth of the core project.

3. How the Project Will Lead to New External Moneys:

The seed grants are small and designed to allow single investigators the opportunity to develop a preliminary product or enhance an existing product. This product could then be used to significantly enhance a proposal to a Federal agency, or any other external organization. It is important that seed grants show a clear pathway to this potential new money, for example, by describing an upcoming call by an external granting agency and how the CWC seed grant would provide the investigator the opportunity to more directly address this upcoming external call.

4. Timeline of Expected Accomplishments and Related Costs:

Total Funds = $X

The timeline of expected accomplishments and related costs will be used by the CWC to ensure that the seed grant is operating as expected. The following is only a suggestion that allows the proposer to gain an idea of what this section might entail.

<u>End of First Six Months of Funding, late 2009:</u>
Total first six months funds, $X

1. Hire personnel. Name the people, $X
2. Travel to collect data, $X
3. Develop preliminary version of deliverable or product, $X
4. etc.

<u>End of Second Six Months of Funding, middle 2010:</u>
Total of second six months of funds, $X

1. Continue to fund personnel, $X
2. Publish preliminary results, $X
3. Submit proposal for new, external funds, $X
4. Develop more refined model, $X