THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
SUSTAINABILITY INSTITUTE

FY2021 Sustainability Research
Seed Grant Program: Request for Proposals

The **Sustainability Institute (SI)** is pleased to announce the FY2021 Sustainability Research Seed Grant Program for The Ohio State University research community. This funding opportunity aims to foster sustainability and resilience research at Ohio State by supporting new interdisciplinary research teams and laying a foundation for convergence research.[1]

This funding mechanism will support teams of scholars from two or more distinct disciplines engaged in scholarly work on sustainability topics, including resilience, and relating to one or more of the Sustainability Institute (SI) research program areas:

- healthy air, land, and water systems;
- smart and resilient communities;
- sustainable energy;
- circular economy; and
- sustainable resources.[2]

Proposals that span across SI research program areas are encouraged. Preference will be given to teams that include junior or early career faculty and have potential for external funding.

We anticipate funding 4-6 awards of $25,000 to $35,000, with an average size of $30,000.

Pre-proposals are now being accepted (**due Wednesday, December 16, 2020, 5 pm**). Full proposals will be invited (due Wednesday, February 24, 2021, 5 pm).

See below for proposal instructions and award details.

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[1] As defined by the Office of Research, **interdisciplinary research** combines or applies data, techniques, theories, or approaches from two or more disciplines to advance fundamental understanding or solve a problem(s). **Convergence research** requires integration of knowledge, methods, and expertise from intellectually diverse researchers to form new, shared research frameworks to address vexing problems of science or society.

[2] See http://si.osu.edu for information about SI and its research areas.

Proposal Instructions and Award Details

A. **Scope of Projects:** Grants will support teams who engage in scholarship activities that most clearly build the capacity of interdisciplinary teams at Ohio State. The proposed research must be conducted 1) by a new interdisciplinary team, or 2) by an existing team that has not yet received external funding for the proposed research.

B. **Fund Administration**: Grant funds will be transferred to an account designated by the department of the named Principal Investigator (PI).

C. **Grant Duration:** Grant funds will be issued for up to one year from the effective date of the award. Time extension requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

D. **Mid-project review and final report**: Grantees will receive 60% of the funds at the start and the remaining 40% after providing a satisfactory mid-project progress report. SI will provide templates for submission of these reports. They should be concise, written for a general audience, include appropriate graphics (e.g. photos, charts), and suitable for publication via online or print media.

E. **Eligibility**: The PI must hold an Ohio State appointment as a faculty or research scientist and must be an SI faculty affiliate before any funds are received. Team members' roles must be described on the team roster (see I. below), and each member must provide a **signed commitment.** The size and structure of the teams is open, but we encourage diverse, interdisciplinary teams involving multiple departments or colleges. Here we broaden the definition of "interdisciplinary" beyond involving different academic units and emphasize collaboration over cooperation. External collaboration is permissible, provided it clearly supports Ohio State capacity building.

F. **Funding:** Funds may not be used for capital improvements or faculty time. Any unused funds at time of final report shall be returned to SI.

G. **Matching Funds**: Cost sharing through matching funds, either cash or in-kind, is highly encouraged, and expected for larger grants. Funds may be obtained from internal sources such as other seed grants, new faculty startup funds, colleges, centers, or departments, and other Ohio State grant programs, as well as from external partners. Proposals should identify the potential for securing additional support in order to continue project funding beyond the 2021-2022 academic year.

H. **Required Pre-Proposal**: Proposal teams must submit a brief **pre-proposal** to assure alignment with the RFP and to allow the review panel to select teams for full proposal development. The pre-proposal must be in 12-point font with 1-inch margins, **up to two pages** in length. It should describe how the project fits with the goals of the FY2021 Sustainability Research Seed Grant program, including (a) the innovative concept and rationale, and why an interdisciplinary team is needed to address the stated sustainability or resilience challenge (b) the objectives, approach, and expected outcomes, (c) team qualifications, and (d) estimated total budget and matching funds. A list of references may be provided as an attachment to the 2-page preproposal. Save the filename as follows: "lastname,firstname_SI_Seed_Preproposal". **Upload the pre-proposal** in a single PDF format by **Wednesday, December 16, 2020 at 5 p.m. to**

https://orapps.osu.edu/fundops/opportunity/4517. Send any questions to the SI Program Assistant: **Kathy Jackson** (jackson.2942@osu.edu, 614-688-1177). The pre-proposal will be rapidly reviewed, and the PI will receive word from the review panel as to whether a full proposal is invited by the first week of spring semester.

I. **Full Proposal Format**: Full proposals are invited only and will be selected on the basis of a review of all Pre-proposals. The invited full proposal must be in 12-point font with appropriate spacing and 1-inch margins to ensure readability, and must be submitted as a **complete PDF document.** The proposal narrative **may not exceed 6 pages in length**, including charts, tables, graphs and references, and brevity is encouraged. Narratives should include:

1. **Descriptive Proposal Title**.

2. **Lay Summary** (50-word maximum): A brief description written for a general audience.

3. **Concept and Rationale**: Document the significance of the compelling challenge and describe how the project will address the challenge, engage Ohio State people and partners, build on existing work or partnerships, leverage new resources, and produce useful results.

4. **Objectives, Approach, and Expected Results**: Describe specifically the project objectives, how the team plans to accomplish those objectives, the expected tangible outputs, and the expected short and long term benefits or results, including identifying at least one non-NSF potential source of funding for future related work (in narrative or logic model format).

5. **Team Qualifications**: Describe the qualifications of the key team members, the capacity of the team to succeed, in what aspect this team is interdisciplinary and how the team will achieve effective interdisciplinary collaboration.

6. **Budget Justification**: Describe how the team plans to use the grant funding as well as any matching resources to carry out the project.

7. **References**: No specific citation format is required; however, a list of references should be included as an attachment and in addition to the 6-page proposal narrative.

In addition to the proposal narrative, teams must provide a team roster with roles, responsibilities and signatures and a budget form. **Invited full proposals should be uploaded** in a single PDF format by **Wednesday, February 24, 2021, at 5 P.M**.to https://orapps.osu.edu/fundops/opportunity/4517. Save the filename as follows: "lastname,firstname_SI_Seed_Proposal". **Send questions** to the SI Program Assistant: **Kathy Jackson** (jackson.2942@osu.edu, 614-688-1177).

J. **Review Criteria**: All proposals will be reviewed according to the following criteria:

a. **Team Composition and Integration**: Appropriate representation from multiple disciplines, with clear description of how disciplinary knowledge of team members will be integrated to achieve an interdisciplinary approach.

b. **Capacity Building**: Potential to build capacity of interdisciplinary research teams at Ohio State in the specified area of scholarship, and to lay a foundation for new convergence research in this area.

c. **Feasibility**: Likelihood of meeting or exceeding the stated project objectives;

        evidence that the interdisciplinary team has the capabilities required to perform effectively.

    d. **Expected Impacts:** Potential knowledge or societal benefits resulting from this work; likelihood of generating external funding.

    e. **Breadth of Team:** Scholars from two or more distinct disciplines (e.g., physical sciences, natural or environmental sciences, humanities, behavioral or social sciences, engineering, policy or law, etc.)

    f. **Fit to SI:** Relates to one or more of the Sustainability Institute (SI) research program areas: healthy air, land and water; smart and resilient communities; sustainable energy; circular economy; and sustainable resources.

    g. **Development of Early Career Faculty:** Inclusion of junior or early career faculty.

K. **Notification of Awards:** Applicants will be notified via e-mail about the outcomes of their proposals by **March 31, 2021**. A summary of the successful proposals will be published on the SI website.

L. **Acknowledgment of Support:** Any presentation or publications resulting from this research should appropriately acknowledge source of funding support. The acknowledgement should read as follows: This work was supported in part by the Sustainability Institute at Ohio State.

M. **Official Project Timeline:** Projects will begin May 1, 2021, and conclude April 30, 2022. Mid- project reports will be due on November 1, 2021. A final report must be delivered to SI no later than July 29, 2022.

N. **Proposal attachments:** The following two pages provide templates for the required attachments. These attachments must be completed properly and included with the proposal PDF file for the proposal to be considered.

- **Team Roster**
- **Budget Summary**

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FY2021 Sustainability Research Seed Grant Application
TEAM ROSTER
(attachment to Proposal)

Proposal Title:

Team members, department and/or center/institute affiliations, and e-mail addresses	Team member's discipline(s)	Project roles and responsibilities	Signatures
PI, team lead:			

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FY2021 Sustainability Research Seed Grant Application

BUDGET SUMMARY
(attachment to Proposal)

Proposal Title:

Item (*and brief description*)	Requested Funds	Matching Support
A. Salaries and Fringes		
B. Supplies		
C. Equipment		
D. Outreach		
E. Travel		
F. Services		
G. Other		
Totals	($35,000 maximum)	