Energy Research Seed Fund
Request for Proposals

Since 2014, the Duke University Energy Initiative’s Energy Research Seed Fund has supported new interdisciplinary, collaborative research teams with the larger goal of enabling Duke University investigators to obtain critical preliminary results that have a high likelihood of obtaining external funding. Thanks to generous support from the Office of the Provost, Trinity College of Arts & Sciences, the Pratt School of Engineering, and the Rhodes Information Initiative at Duke (Rhodes iiD), we are pleased to invite proposals to any of the following three grant categories:

**Seed Grants**, which will provide up to $45,000 for new research conducted by teams of Duke faculty members, at least two of which represent different disciplines, schools, or departments. The performance period for Seed Grants is 12 months.

**Stage-Two Grants**, which will provide up to $35,000 to carry projects currently supported by DUEI seed funding into their next research phase. Applications for Stage-Two grants should indicate successful completion of work conducted under the current grant and outline how additional funding will help make the team’s research more compelling to external funders.

**Proposal Development Grants**, which will provide up to $25,000 for past seed fund recipients to develop proposals for external funding. Applicants for these grants should provide a one-page proposal indicating how the funds will be used (acceptable uses include travel to meet with potential sponsors, support for Ph.D. student assistants, etc.), and how those uses will improve the likelihood of external funding.

**Proposals are due Monday, January 14, 2019** (see submission details on the following page).

The Seed Fund program is open to proposals on research topics across the energy spectrum from basic and computational sciences, engineering, social sciences, policy and business. This year, we particularly welcome proposals in the following areas:

- Energy data analytics and big data, especially projects that build on results from previous/existing Data+ teams or that are well positioned to develop data that can be analyzed in a future Data+ project
- Energy materials, advanced alternative fuels and renewables
- Energy markets, regulatory tools and standards
- Grid reliability and resilience
- Energy access and inequality

Research oriented toward solutions, rather than solely problem identification, is especially encouraged. Proposals will be reviewed based on the quality of proposed research and potential to leverage seed grants to secure external funding.
Requirements

Eligible Applicants
The Principal Investigator must be a regular-rank faculty member at Duke University, but other investigators on the proposing team can be Duke faculty, staff, or graduate students.

Budgets
The budget for an Energy Research Seed Fund research team (working group) can include supplies, salary support for research assistants, graduate students, and technicians, and other justifiable research expenses. Faculty salary, tuition remission, and indirect costs are not allowable expenses. Travel expenses are allowable only if essential to conducting the proposed research activities and cannot include travel to scientific conferences. All proposal budgets must be submitted using this template provided or they will not be considered.

Application Content (Seed Grants and Stage-Two Grants)
Cover Page. Must include the following information:
• Proposal title
• Name, title, departmental affiliation, address, e-mail address, and telephone number of all proposed investigators
• Designation of a Principal Investigator or Co-Principal Investigators
Abstract (250 words maximum)
Research plan (3 page maximum – single spaced, 12 point font, 1” margins all the way around)
Must include the following information:
• Statement of research objectives and their significance
• Work already completed related to the proposal, and any relevant preliminary results
• Description of the research team (working group) and research setting
• Proposed methods and plans for data analysis
• Potential for future grant support and specific plans to achieve external funding goals

Appendix materials (1 page maximum each – single spaced, 12 point font, 1” margins all the way around) Must include the following information:
• Research schedule and milestones
• Collaborative nature of the project
• Relevance to mission of the Duke University Energy Initiative (energy.duke.edu/about)

Budget and justification (1 page maximum)
Curriculum vitae OR NSF/NIH biosketch including current grant support limited to 4 pages for each investigator.

Application Content (Proposal Development Grants)
A one-page proposal describing the project and indicating how the funds will be used and how those uses will increase the likelihood of external funding.

Submission Format and Deadline
Selection Process
Proposals will be reviewed by an ad hoc review committee consisting of faculty with a broad range of expertise in energy-related fields. The reviewing committee’s goal is to identify the proposals that best meet the objectives of the Energy Initiative’s Energy Research Seed Fund: interdisciplinary collaborative research projects that will make long-term, significant and original contributions to addressing the major energy challenges identified above. The review process will consider: (1) the significance and potential impact of the research program; (2) the degree of innovation; (3) the scope of the interdisciplinary collaboration and relevance for the goals of the proposed research; (4) feasibility of the research project and (5) likelihood of development into a project that would attract external support. Final selections will be made by the Energy Initiative Director in consultation with the faculty review committee and other stakeholders.

Awards will be announced in March 2019.

Reporting Requirements
Recipients will be expected to report on the project’s status and any related outputs (journal articles, conference presentations, external grants, etc.) at the end of the performance period.

Inquiries
Please direct questions to: Will Niver, Senior Data Technician, Duke University Energy Initiative via email at: will.niver@duke.edu