Office of the Vice President for Research (OVPR)

FY18 OVPR-Sponsored Graduate Research Assistantships and Postdoctoral Research Associate Support

Request for Proposals

The Office of the Vice President for Research (OVPR) will award Tier III graduate research assistantships (GRAs) and partial postdoctoral research associate salary funding to support faculty research projects that have the potential to make a significant impact in their field and have strong potential to attract external funding. Examples include gathering pilot data necessary for a federal grant proposal or for a publication that would enhance the PI's competitiveness. For GRA proposals, faculty must demonstrate that they have an external funding objective and present a clear and logical plan linking the proposed research to one or more external funding opportunities. GRA-supported students must be in a research-based, thesis master's program. They must also integrate the proposed assistantship to the graduate student's plan of study and demonstrate substantial benefit to the student. For postdoctoral positions, PIs must be externally funded and able to commit 25-50% of the salary from those funds. Postdoctoral associates must be integrated into graduate research training and be integral to the pursuit of grant renewal or new funding.

GRA PRIORITY DEADLINE: April 28, 2017. Proposals for GRAs received by 5 PM on April 28, 2017 will receive priority consideration (we anticipate awarding up to 6 GRAs from this pool). Proposals will be accepted until funding has been allocated.

POSTDOCTORAL PRIORITY DEADLINE: None. Postdoctoral salary support proposals will be accepted at any time until funding has been allocated.

The full proposal should be submitted as a single pdf to sponprog2@kennesaw.edu. The subject line should be: OVPR FY18 GRA. Name your file with your last name_first initial_OVPRGRA18.

See the Proposal Components section for instructions on how to prepare a proposal.

ELIGIBILITY. KSU tenured or tenure-track graduate faculty are eligible to apply for GRAs. Externally-funded PIs who will commit 25-50% of postdoctoral associate salary from those funds and meet the conditions described below are eligible to apply for postdoctoral salary support.

FUNDING AVAILABILITY

The OVPR has committed to fund a combination of GRAs and postdocs. GRAs must meet the qualifications of the Graduate College. GRAs include full tuition waivers.

AWARDS

Tier III GRAs of $12,000 total may be disbursed in FY 2018 in Fall and Spring or Spring and Summer. Funds must be encumbered by April 15, 2018. Postdoctoral salaries and timelines will depend on specific circumstances (see Budget, below).

Proposals will be reviewed on the primary criterion of how likely they are to lead to external funding. Other components, e.g. quality of training plans, will also be evaluated.

PROPOSAL COMPONENTS

All documents should be double spaced, 11 point Arial font, with at least 1/2 inch margins.

1. **Current or prior internal support** – **one page maximum.**
   a. **Results of Prior OVPR Support (last 3 years, if applicable)** Provide the following information for any prior OVPR Pilot Grant support:

   - The title of the project;
   - A summary of the results of the completed work, including accomplishments;
   - Publications or other products (data, samples, software, etc.) resulting from the grant;
   - Proposals for external funding submitted as a result of the grant; proposals from former or current recipients of OVPRs who have not submitted external proposals are unlikely to be funded.

   b. **Other internal support (last 3 years).** List any other internal support you have had as an investigator (not necessarily on the proposed project). This could include departmental or college support, start-up funds, GRAs, CETL funding, etc.

2. **Project Description** – **five pages maximum** – GRAs and postdocs must work on long-term research projects. The project description should provide a clear statement of the work to be undertaken and the student/postdoc's role as well as anticipated results and contingency plans. Charts, graphs, maps, photographs and other pictorial presentations are counted in the 5-page limitation.

   A. PROJECT OBJECTIVES AND LONGER-TERM GOALS : This section should include objectives for the period of the proposed work, expected significance of the work, and an explanation about how this pilot project relates to the PI's longer-term research goals;
   B. EXTERNAL FUNDING POTENTIAL: an explanation how this activity would better position the PI to compete for external funding;
   C. BENEFIT TO THE STUDENT OR POSTDOC: Description of how the research efforts will benefit the student or postdoc with respect to training, career plans, etc. It is not necessary to identify the specific student in the case of a GRA, but postdocs must be named.

3. **Targeted External Funding Opportunities** – **one page maximum** – Include the following information for all targeted proposals:

   - Funding agency, program or solicitation, target proposal date. If the solicitation requires a preproposal, please note that.

4. **References Cited** – **no page limit**
5. **Budget (only necessary for postdoc proposals)** – **one page maximum for budget and justification** –

   - Postdoctoral salaries must meet appropriate scale for the field (e.g. NIH, see: https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-16-131.html). Up to 50% contribution from OVPR must be met with 25-50% contribution from a funded grant or contract. As teaching postdocs are encouraged when appropriate, 25-50% may come from college or department teaching assignments. In no case may the PI contribute less than 25% from a funded grant or contract. How teaching is assigned and

budgeted (part-time lecturer, temporary faculty, etc.) is up to the department or college but must be justified with appropriate documentation included as an appendix (e.g. letter from the chair).

- Budget justifications should include a timeline for postdoctoral salary disbursement. Temporal factors may include grant start or end dates (in which case contributions from the grant might be 'back-loaded' or 'front-loaded'), teaching schedules, hire dates, etc.

6. **Biosketch(es) and Individual Development Plans** – Biosketches for PIs, identified GRAs, and postdocs must be included in a format appropriate to a targeted funding agency. Postdocs must complete a draft individual development plan (IDP)(e.g. http://myidp.sciencecareers.org/), a copy of which must be included with the application. IDPs are also encouraged, but not required, for GRA applications.

   PIs and postdocs are encouraged to include links to a Google Scholar profile, NCBI My Bibliography, Digital Commons or other online reference tool to ease evaluation of publication records.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND CERTIFICATIONS

By submitting a proposal, the PI(s) certifies that: (1) the information submitted within the application is true, complete, and accurate to the best of her/his knowledge; (2) any false, fictitious, or fraudulent statements or claims may subject her/him to criminal, civil, or administrative penalties; (3) she/he agrees to accept responsibility for the scientific conduct of the project and to provide the required progress report if a grant is awarded as a result of the application; (4) she/he agrees to accept the obligation to comply with award terms and conditions and University's policies and procedures if an award is made as a result of this application; (5) she/he acknowledges the obligation to assign inventions and patents to KSURSF that are conceived or developed in connection with the use of OVPR GRA/Postdoc support; and (6) she/he acknowledges the obligation to promptly report and fully disclose the conception and/or reduction to practice of potentially patentable inventions to the Kennesaw State University Office of Research. Such inventions shall be examined by KSURSF to determine rights and equities therein in accordance with the Policy.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS AND NOTES FOR POSTDOCTORAL SUPPORT:

By submitting an application for postdoctoral salary support, PIs agree to:

1. Supervise and mentor the postdoctoral associate, including occasional but at least annual updates of the IDP. Keep an up-to-date IDP on file with the OVPR.
2. Have the postdoc engage in research training and mentorship of graduate students where appropriate.
3. Vigorously pursue external funding that is budgeted to support graduate student assistantships.
4. Allow and encourage the postdoc to have an assignment to the Graduate College (details TBD, but we anticipate creating a formal postdoctoral community and additional support structures).

Postdoctoral salary support will be competitively renewable for an additional year for a total of two years. Support beyond the second year is entirely the responsibility of the PI. (OVPR would love to help develop postdoctoral fellowship applications, transition awards, etc. Plans to this effect should be described in the IDP.)

Questions or requests for assistance in developing postdoctoral associate applications should be directed to Jonathan McMurry, jmcmurr1@kennesaw.edu.