



## Empire Innovation Program 2017-18 Request for Proposals

*Strategic investments to establish SUNY as the leader in emerging and high-impact research areas that address state and global challenges*

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### **I. Introduction and Program Goals**

The Empire Innovation Program (SUNY EIP) is a state-funded grant program dedicated to recruiting and retaining world-class faculty at the State University of New York (SUNY). EIP Faculty members bring SUNY's research mission to life through cutting-edge research activities, experiential research opportunities for students, cross-disciplinary collaborations, dynamic entrepreneurial activities, and contribute to the health and economic vitality of New York State.

This 2017-18 request for proposals (RFP) aims to expand SUNY's research enterprise by **building on existing research strengths** in areas that SUNY already has established capacity and **realizing significant growth through additional investments in human capital** to establish SUNY as a leader in those areas, which will strengthen SUNY's research leadership overall.

The SUNY EIP program is designed to leverage existing campus research strengths to grow SUNY's capacity as the go-to partner for state, federal, industrial and philanthropic research support in areas that address pressing societal challenges.

- Successful proposals will focus on high-impact research areas where campuses have established strengths and capacity, and where an influx of cluster hires will advance existing work to a level where the campus is recognized as leading the area.
- Selected areas of focus should advance SUNY's role in addressing state, national and global challenges and better position SUNY for large-scale funding opportunities.
- Study of existing capacity across SUNY has identified the following as priority areas where specific investment could increase SUNY capacity to emerge as leaders.
  - artificial intelligence and machine learning;
  - cybersecurity;
  - data and data analytics;
  - life sciences;
  - translational medical research;
  - public health;
  - clean energy and environmental sustainability; and
  - advanced manufacturing.

- Proposals that leverage expertise and existing facilities across campuses are encouraged.
- The hiring of clusters of leading research faculty, on one campus or across campuses, coupled with retention of existing outstanding faculty is of particular interest.
- Proposals for retention of existing faculty without a vision for significant growth will not be considered.

## II. Program Guidelines

All SUNY four-year campuses, including statutory colleges and those currently receiving SUNY EIP funding, are eligible to submit a proposal under this RFP. Program guidelines are as follows:

- Approximately \$9M of university-wide funding is allocated to SUNY EIP each fiscal year, subject to approval of SUNY's University-wide budget by the Governor and legislature.
- This RFP supports the recruitment and retention of leading research faculty and acquisition of necessary research instruments/equipment. Maximum requested funding per SUNY EIP faculty member may not exceed \$500K.
- Successful applicants will be granted a three-year award period. The award period begins on the award effective date which is July 1, 2018.
- Prior success in recruiting EIP faculty who have been very effective in attracting external sponsored research funding will be a key consideration in proposal review.
- Qualifications of existing faculty and facilities related to the area of interest will be a key consideration in proposal review.
- EIP faculty must be **leaders** in their field who have an established track record of scholarly achievement. EIP hires must be seasoned researchers with strong academic credentials and have a strong track record in attracting external funding and in collaborating with other researchers.
- EIP faculty should have at least several years of research experience after completion of their doctorate/post-doctorate; recent Ph.Ds. are unlikely to have the depth of research experience and professional accomplishments necessary to qualify for the EIP Program. Recent Ph.Ds. in an emerging new field of research or with exceptional research accomplishments may be considered.
- Proposals seeking to retain existing outstanding faculty should be limited to instances where a campus is in imminent danger of losing a faculty member whose research record and field of study strongly align with EIP program goals. In general, the faculty retention is deemed a campus activity and should be minimized through EIP program.
- Proposals can focus on the development of research capabilities, through instrumentation or personnel.
- Each campus may submit no more than **two individual** proposals and no more than **one joint** proposal.
- Project leads/proposers must serve as primary contact on the proposal. All proposals must be submitted through the Office of the Campus Provost and/or Vice President for Research (VPR).
- Proposals may include plans for cluster hires. Each cluster faculty member is eligible for the maximum support.
- All proposals must be aligned with the program goals outlined above.

- Annual reporting requirements will be part of award acceptance.
- All proposals will be reviewed by a panel appointed by the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Economic Development. The panel will consist of members from SUNY campuses as well as SUNY System Administration. Necessary measures will be taken to avoid any conflicts of interest.
- A webinar will be scheduled before submission deadline to answer any questions concerning the EIP Program and the current RFP.

### III. **Proposal Submission Guidelines**

In order to allow campuses maximum time to recruit faculty the 2017-18 EIP RFP is being conducted in a single phase. To ensure timely review of proposals campuses must follow the submission guidelines below.

To maintain consistency all proposals must be completed in font type Times New Roman, font size 12, with a line spacing of 1 unit and a 1 inch border margin for each page. The proposal must include:

- 1. Cover page** - The attached cover page should be completed to provide the following information
  - Title of the proposal;
  - Campus name(s);
  - Name and detailed contact information for the lead applicant (title, mailing address, email address, phone number);
  - Name and detailed contact information for the lead from any partnering campuses;
  - Type and number of hires planned: new hire or retention, across one or multiple campuses; and
  - Funding amount requested.
  
- 2. Narrative – (maximum 5 pages)** The narrative content should address the following questions:
  - 2.1 Vision for growth** - what would it take to increase current capacity to the point where the campus(es) would become the leader in this field? Key questions to address include:
    - Why the select area is important? What significant state, national, and global challenges would be addressed if SUNY has leading research capacity in the area?
    - How does this align with the campus' overall strategy in research, education and economic development?
    - What is the campus' existing research strength in this area?
    - What specific research expertise, instrument/equipment, and partnerships are critically needed to realize steady, rapid growth in external sponsored program activities in this area?
    - How many new faculty and with what particular expertise are needed?
    - What key qualifications and accomplishments will the campus be seeking in potential new hires?

- What changes are needed to the existing support structure (research assistants, fellows, etc.)?
  - What is the current funding environment in the proposed area, i.e., has this been identified as a priority area for a particular agency, industry, or private foundation?
- 2.2 Sustainability - Describe campus plans for retaining faculty recruited with EIP funding and for supporting EIP faculty member(s) beyond the SUNY EIP award period. Specific items to address include: campus match in new faculty hires, physical capacity of the campus to support EIP faculty, the funding to maintain research-related equipment, and support for graduate students/post-doctoral support/research staff if applicable.
- 2.3 Current Capacity - **Summarize** the campus's **current capacity** in the field (at the lead campus and any partner campuses):
- Number and qualifications of existing faculty in proposed area (current level of research activity, grants, patents, centers, etc.);
  - Number of staff, research assistants, graduate students, and fellows;
  - Physical space devoted to study in this area, including labs, instrument, and equipment.
- 2.4 Evaluation/Assessment - Detail an evaluation plan that will ensure all EIP faculty make progress toward program goals. Please be specific about the process and outcome metrics that will be used to complete such evaluation. Note that annual progress reporting will be required of every award. **External sponsored research funding attracted by EIP faculty will be a key factor in the assessment of campus program performance.**
3. **Current Faculty Expertise** - Please include a **two-page** biographical sketch for **each** existing faculty to demonstrate current research strength and capacity in the proposed area. A biographical sketch should include professional preparation, appointments, a list of up to 5 most recent publications closely related to the proposed area, a list of up to 5 external sponsored research grants in the last 5-7 calendar years that are most closely related to the proposed area (**the external research funding in each grant attributed to the faculty as PI or co-PI must be listed**), collaborative research activities, and other relevant research achievements.
4. **Budget submission guidelines**
- Please use the provided budget template.
  - Expenses should be categorized as PS and OTPS (broken into materials, travel, equipment and "other" categories). The template may be modified to list expenses specific to the campus and project.
  - EIP funds may be used for post-doc research associates, graduate student stipends, tuition (not to exceed 10% of the EIP award), travel, equipment, software, etc.
  - EIP funds may not be used for the salary of the EIP faculty.
  - Include campus match information in the budget. Match should be for the duration of the award cycle and should be at least 1:1.
  - Fringe benefit costs should be excluded from EIP funding request.

- Budget Narrative (one page): Describe and justify overall budget plan, planned expenditures and timing of expenditures. For cluster hire proposals, indicate the hiring timeline if either staggered or sequential hiring and so reflect in the budget narrative.

## 5. Submission Deadline

- Proposal submission deadline: **January 15, 2018**, by 5 p.m. Materials should be submitted via e-mail to [eip@suny.edu](mailto:eip@suny.edu).

## Appendix A: Reporting Requirements

A detailed report of SUNY EIP faculty activities that includes the following shall be submitted annually:

- Brief summaries of research proposals the EIP faculty member submitted as Principal Investigator and co-Principal Investigator;
- Record of scholarly activities;
- Collaborations formed within and outside the campus;
- Economic development activity (examples include but are not limited to disclosures filed, patents granted, start-ups, industry partnerships etc.);
- A detailed description of SUNY EIP grant expenditures (e.g. instrument/equipment purchase, travel to scientific/technical conferences, graduate student salary, etc.); and
- The extent to which original proposal goals and objectives have been achieved.