



SUNY Empire Innovation Program
2018-19 Request for Proposals (19-02RFP)

Issued: November 30th, 2018
Submission Deadline: January 31st, 2019 at 5:00 p.m.

Important RFP Highlights

- Introduction of tentative awards to increase campus recruiting time.
- Award cycle length changed from three years to four years with award end date of June 30, 2023.
- Updated list of priority research areas.
- Proposal submission in two tracks to support cluster hires building on past EIP successes and faculty hires/retention in strategic priority areas.
- Proposal submission limit changed from three proposals to total four proposals. Campuses may now submit up to three individual proposals and one joint proposal.

I. Introduction

The Empire Innovation Program (“SUNY EIP”) is a state-funded grant program designed to help recruit and retain 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 contributions to the health and economic vitality of New York State.

SUNY EIP aims 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.

II. Program Goals

The 2018-19 Request for Proposals (“RFP”) aims to expand SUNY’s research enterprise by driving significant growth in emerging areas of strategic importance while also strengthening areas where SUNY already has established capacity and a recognized leadership position. This RFP supports the recruitment and retention of leading research faculty and acquisition of necessary research instruments/equipment.

The faculty SUNY is looking to attract must be leaders in their field who have an established track record of scholarly and/or research achievements, collaboration with other researchers, and significant external funding support.

Prospective EIP faculty should have several years of research experience after completion of their doctorate/post-doctorate. Recent Ph.D. graduates are unlikely to have the depth of research experience and professional accomplishments necessary to qualify for the program. However, recent Ph.D. graduates in an emerging new field of research or with exceptional research accomplishments may be considered.

Proposals should be submitted in one or both tracks, as follows:

Track 1 – Cluster Hires: Proposals in Track 1 will emphasize building on past successes in recruiting outstanding faculty who exemplify EIP goals. Intended to further build strong clusters of expertise at SUNY campuses, proposals in this track should clearly demonstrate current critical mass (including both current and past EIP faculty, and non-EIP faculty) in the intended cluster area, and the collective impact of this cluster in advancing research and securing external funding. Proposals should demonstrate how the intended additional hire(s) will augment and significantly strengthen the cluster’s capabilities.

Track 2 – Strategic Area Hires: Proposals in this track will focus on one or more of the following priority areas:

- Artificial Intelligence (AI) including, but not limited to, fundamental AI and machine learning as well as AI applications in healthcare, education, energy, transportation, business, and security.
- Next-generation computing and communication including, but not limited to, cognitive computing, and quantum information science and engineering.
- Clean energy and energy storage.
- Resilient communities and critical infrastructure.
- Aging research including, but not limited to, science of aging, technologies for elder care and healthy aging, and Alzheimer’s disease diagnosis and treatment.
- Substance addiction research.
- Environmental health and medicine.
- Clinical trials and translational biomedical research including, but limited to, engineering medicine, novel imaging modalities in healthcare, and health disparities.

III. Program Guidelines

- **Eligibility:** All SUNY four-year campuses, including those currently receiving SUNY EIP funding, are eligible to submit proposals under this RFP.
- **Funding:** Maximum requested funding per SUNY EIP faculty member may not exceed \$500K.
 - Proposals may include plans for cluster hires. Each cluster faculty member is eligible for the maximum support.
- **Award Duration:** The four-year award period begins on the award effective date of July 1, 2019 and ends on June 30, 2023. The award period includes

hiring time, and all hiring must be completed by the award end date of June 30, 2023.

- Any unused funding will return to EIP after June 30, 2023.
- To allow campuses additional recruiting time, this award cycle will issue “tentative” awards for successful proposals.
- “Tentative” awards are expected to be made in March 2019. Final award letters will be issued after the appropriation of the State Budget, which is expected to be completed in April 2019.
- If the budget is not approved as expected or is delayed, SUNY reserves the right to withdraw “tentative” awards.
- 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 achievements, track record of attracting external funding and field of study strongly align with SUNY strategic priority areas as listed above and with overall EIP goals.
- All EIP hires and retentions must first be approved by the Office of Research and Economic Development.

IV. Proposal Submission Guidelines

General Guidelines:

- Each campus may submit a maximum of three individual proposals and one joint proposal with other SUNY campuses.
- Project leads/proposers must serve as primary contact/PI on the proposal.
- All proposals must be submitted through the Office of the Campus Provost and/or Vice President for Research (VPR).
- Proposal submission deadline: January 31st, 2019, by 5 p.m. Materials should be submitted via e-mail to eip@suny.edu

Proposal Submission Guidelines:

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 Sheet** - The attached cover sheet should be completed to provide the following information:
 - i. Campus name(s)
 - ii. Title of the proposal
 - iii. Proposal Track
 - iv. Proposed Research Area
 - v. Funding amount requested
 - vi. Type and number of hires planned: new hire or retention, across one or multiple campuses

- vii. Name and detailed contact information for the lead applicant (title, mailing address, email address, phone number)
 - viii. Name and detailed contact information for the lead from any partnering campuses
 - ix. Brief abstract of the proposal
2. **Narrative** (maximum 5 pages) – The narrative content should address the following questions:
- i. Vision for growth

Key questions to address include:

 - What would it take to increase current capacity to the point where the campus would become the leader in this field?
 - Why is the selected area important? What significant state, national, and global challenges would be addressed if SUNY has leading research capacity in the area?
 - How does the selected area 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 prospective new hires?
 - What changes are needed to the existing support structure (research assistants, post-docs, 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?
 - For Track 1 proposals only – The narrative should highlight current critical mass (including both EIP and non-EIP faculty) in the cluster area. It should also highlight the impact of this cluster in advancing research, in securing external funding, and how the intended additional hire(s) will augment and strengthen the cluster's capabilities.
 - ii. 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).

- iii. Current Capacity - Summarize the campus' current capacity in the field (at the lead campus and any partner campuses):
 - o Number and qualifications of existing faculty in proposed area (current level of research activity, grants, patents, centers, etc.).
 - o Number of staff, research assistants, graduate students, and fellows.
 - o Physical space devoted to study in this area, including labs, instrument, and equipment.
 - iv. 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. 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 maximum of a **two-page** biographical sketch for each existing faculty to demonstrate current research strength and capacity in the proposed area, clearly identifying which faculty are current or past EIP awardees. 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 and Budget Narrative**
- 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 items such as 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 or to cover fringe benefit costs.
 - Campus match information should be included in the budget. Match should be for the duration of the award cycle and should be at least 1:1.
 - Budget Narrative (maximum one page): Describe and justify overall budget plan, planned expenditures and timing of expenditures. For cluster hire proposals, indicate the hiring timeline, either staggered or sequential hiring, and this should be reflected in both the budget narrative and in the budget itself.

V. Proposal Review Criteria and Process

The proposal review criteria includes, but is not limited to:

- a. Vision for growth and sustainability.
- b. Prior success of the campus in recruiting EIP faculty who have been very effective in attracting external sponsored research funding.
- c. Qualifications of existing faculty.
- d. Facilities related to the area of interest and any campus plans to improve facilities in support of the project.

All proposals will be reviewed by a panel appointed by the Office of 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 potential conflicts of interest.

Curricula Vitae of prospective candidates under consideration should be provided with the proposal for approval. Candidates are eligible for EIP funding only after approval by the Office of Research and Economic Development.

VI. Reporting Requirements

- Annual reporting on the use of EIP funds and progress towards meeting project goals is a requirement of the program. Details of the required reporting will be communicated at a later time.
- PIs will be contacted by the Office of Research and Economic Development for informal updates throughout the year.