

Interdisciplinary Research Seed (IRS) Fund

College of Engineering



The College of Engineering (COE) will continue its Interdisciplinary Research Seed (IRS) fund that was launched in spring 2015 in order to support exploratory interdisciplinary research. The aim of this fund is to encourage collaborative activities across departments in the college and to bridge traditional disciplinary boundaries. Expanding interdisciplinary research activities, particularly as they align with federal funding initiatives that are targeted to address pressing societal grand challenges, is becoming increasingly important to enhance research growth. Through this seed fund, the idea is to provide the faculty with an opportunity to enable them to gather the critical “preliminary data” and establish working partnerships that may otherwise not be possible, so the team is well-positioned for larger federal (or private) grants in the future. While the university-wide IDR fund can involve faculty across colleges, the IRS fund is specifically targeted to enhance interdisciplinary activities within the College of Engineering.

For the 2015 – 2016 academic year, faculty can pursue their research over the course of approximately 8 – 9 months and all of the funds need to be expended within the 2015 - 2016 fiscal year (no carry over allowed).

Specific requirements for the COE IRS Fund:

Number of Departments in CoE: Minimum of 2 faculty from 2 *different* departments in the college should propose a collaborative research idea.

Length of proposal: approximately 3-5 pages for the technical portion (not including budget justification, bios, etc.).

Submission Deadline: Oct. 5, 2015

Amount: \$14,000 total per award for this year (duration of award is Nov. 16, 2015 – July 31, 2016). We anticipate awarding up to 2 IRS grants for the current competition.

Submission Format: 1 single pdf file sent via email to Professor Anupama Kaul (akaul@utep.edu) with cc to Ms. Mariana Rivera (mirivera@utep.edu), including a budget justification statement of how the funds will be expended.

Fund Usage: Funds can be used to support graduate students over the period of the award for the research described, materials and supplies, etc. Funds will not be allowed for travel.

Proposal Review Process: The proposals will be peer-reviewed.

Review Criteria: Proposals will be reviewed based on technical merit, the interdisciplinary extent of the research, and the likelihood of securing follow-on funding based on the research proposed. The team should clearly identify future targeted funding opportunities (federal or private) they will seek at the end of their IRS fund.

Decisions: Award decisions will be made by Nov. 2, 2015.

Reporting of Outcomes: A final report of up to 5 pages is required identifying how the funds were expended, list of publications that resulted from this support, any IP that was generated, and identification of the follow-on funding opportunities that will be sought out. In addition, the awarded teams are required to present their work at a forum that will be held in May 2016 (date TBD) which will also include participation from prior IRS-funded teams from 2014-15.