Request for Seed Grant Proposals

Introduction

The Sustainable and Resilient Economy (SRE) Discovery Themes program seeks to address key challenges of sustainable development by generating new knowledge and guiding solutions that enhance the efficiency of material and energy inputs, reduce adverse environmental and social impacts, and protect critical ecosystem functions and services. Our affiliated faculty are contributing to key knowledge domains related to the science of sustainability and resilience and developing holistic approaches that apply this knowledge to guide sustainable innovations in technologies, policies, and practices. SRE fosters this work by building collaborative teams, attracting world class faculty, and actively developing partnerships with industry and government. (See [https://SRE.osu.edu](https://SRE.osu.edu))

**Figure 1: SCOPE OF THE SUSTAINABLE AND RESILIENT ECONOMY PROGRAM**

The intent of this Seed Grant program is to build capacity in sustainability science at Ohio State by supporting Ohio State teams engaged in scholarly activities relating to one or more of the **SRE knowledge domains** and applied to an **SRE thematic area** (Figure 1). We seek to fund projects that forge interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary collaborations among OSU faculty, staff, students and external partners. These seed grants are intended to generate new research activities or novel extensions of existing activities, rather than simply providing supplementary project funding. **Emphasis will be placed on funding proposals likely to produce tangible outputs that result in capacity building or extramural funding for Ohio State.** SRE has awarded close to $600,000 in seed grants to 22 interdisciplinary teams, with a similar total in matching cost-share funds, and many of the resulting projects are expanding Ohio State’s research capacity. (See [Seed Grants](#)).
SRE 2018 Seed Grants at a Glance

**Eligibility:** Faculty-student teams, preferably from multiple departments and colleges

**Due dates:**
- Letter of intent due: Dec. 8, 2017
- Full proposal due: Jan. 31, 2017
- Awards announced: May 15, 2017

**Total funding:** 4 to 6 awards of $25,000 to $50,000

**Matching:** Cost sharing from external or internal sources is highly recommended

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**Proposal Instructions**

Proposals are encouraged in any areas of interest to faculty teams and their partners that relate to the SRE program mission and stated intent of the Seed Grant program, as described above. For additional information about the primary research areas of the SRE program, see [http://sre.osu.edu](http://sre.osu.edu).

Proposal teams must submit a brief **letter of intent** as described below to assure the relevance of the chosen topic, and to provide an opportunity for feedback on the concept and potential collaborators.

**A. Scope of Projects:** Grants will support teams of university collaborators and external partners who engage in scholarship activities that most clearly meet the goals of the Seed Grant program, namely to build capacity in sustainability science at Ohio State by supporting team projects focused on one or more of the **SRE knowledge domains** and applied to an **SRE thematic area** (Figure 1).

**B. Funding Available:** The total funding available is approximately $250,000. The amount of funding for each grant may vary from $25,000 or less to a maximum of $50,000. For larger grants, we expect more leveraging of matching funds (see H. below).

**C. Fund Administration:** Grant funds will be transferred to an account designated by the department of the named Principal Investigator (P.I.), who will be responsible for administering this account.

**D. Grant Duration:** Grant funds will be issued for a period of up to one year from the effective date of the award. Time extension requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

**E. Mid-project review and final report:** Grantees will receive 60% of the funds at the start, and the remaining 40% after providing a satisfactory mid-project progress report. SRE will provide templates for submission of these reports. They should be concise, written for a general audience, include appropriate graphics (e.g. photos, charts), and suitable for publication via online or print media.

**F. Eligibility:** Teams of faculty, staff, students, and/or external partners may apply. The P.I. must hold an OSU appointment or be an enrolled student with a faculty or staff advisor who will help to manage the project. Team members’ roles must be described on the team roster (see M. below), and each member must provide a **signed commitment**. The size and structure of the teams is open, but we encourage diverse, interdisciplinary teams involving multiple OSU departments and colleges. External collaboration is permissible, provided that it clearly supports OSU capacity building.
G. **Use of Funds:** There are no restrictions on use of funds, except that funds may not be used for capital improvements. The use of funds for faculty salaries is allowable, but must be clearly justified.

H. **Matching Funds:** Cost sharing through matching funds, either cash or in-kind, is highly encouraged. Funds may be obtained from internal sources such as the Office of Energy and the Environment, new faculty startup funds, colleges, centers, or departments, and other OSU grant programs, as well as from external partners. Proposals should identify the potential for securing additional support in order to continue project funding beyond the 2019-2020 academic year.

I. **Required Letter of Intent:** Teams must submit a letter of intent (LOI), in 12-point font with 1-inch margins, **up to two pages** in length. The LOI should describe how the project fits with the goals of the Seed Grant program, including (a) the innovative concept and rationale, (b) the objectives, approach, and expected outcomes, (c) team qualifications, and (d) estimated total budget and matching funds. The LOI will be reviewed within **two weeks**, and must be approved before full proposal submission. The LOI may be returned to the P.I. with suggestions for revision and resubmission.

Please e-mail the LOI in PDF format by **Dec. 8, 2017** to the SRE Program Coordinator:

Melissa Amos (amos.126@osu.edu, 614-292-3732)

J. **Full Proposal Format:** The proposal must be in 12-point font with appropriate spacing and 1-inch margins to ensure readability, and must be submitted as a **complete PDF document.** The proposal narrative **may not exceed 6 pages in length,** including charts, tables, graphs, and references, and brevity is encouraged. The narrative must document a compelling challenge and describe how the team will address this challenge. Narratives should include:

1. **Descriptive Proposal Title.**
2. **Lay Summary** (50-word maximum): A brief description written for a general audience.
3. **Concept and Rationale:** Document the significance of the compelling challenge and describe how the project will address the challenge, engage OSU people and partners, build on existing work or partnerships, leverage new resources, and produce useful results.
4. **Objectives, Approach, and Expected Results:** Describe specifically the project objectives, how the team plans to accomplish those objectives, the expected tangible outputs, and the expected short and long term benefits or results, including how this work will enhance the potential for specific sources of external funding (in narrative or logic model format).
5. **Team Qualifications:** Describe the qualifications of the key team members, the capacity of the team to succeed, and how the team will achieve effective interdisciplinary collaboration.
6. **Budget justification:** Describe how the team plans to use the grant funding as well as any matching resources to carry out the project.

In addition to the proposal narrative, teams must provide a team roster with roles, responsibilities and signatures, a budget form, and a description of the key knowledge domains and disciplinary expertise that are needed to adequately review the proposal.

Please e-mail the full proposal in PDF format by **Jan. 31, 2018** to the SRE Program Coordinator:

Melissa Amos (amos.126@osu.edu, 614-292-3732)
K. **Review Criteria:** Proposals will be reviewed according to the following criteria:

1. **Team Composition:** Engagement of DT faculty; representation from multiple OSU units and from multiple disciplines.
2. **Capacity Building:** Potential to advance one or more SRE knowledge domains and expected contribution to specific SRE thematic area(s); potential to build capacity at OSU in interdisciplinary team science and scholarship.
3. **Technical Promise:** Likelihood of meeting or exceeding the stated project objectives.
4. **Expected Impacts:** Potential benefits; likelihood of generating external funding.
5. **Team Qualifications:** Evidence that the interdisciplinary team has the capabilities required to perform effectively.
6. **External support:** Sponsorship or existing collaboration from external public or private organizations; availability of matching resources (where applicable).
7. **No prior funding** from an SRE seed grant.

L. **Notification of Awards:** Applicants will be notified via e-mail about the outcomes of their proposals by **May 15, 2018.** A summary of the successful proposals will be published on the SRE website.

M. **Acknowledgment of Support:** Any presentation or publications resulting from this research should acknowledge support as follows: “This work was supported by a grant from the Sustainable and Resilient Economy program at The Ohio State University.”

N. **Official Project Timeline:** Projects will begin July 1, 2018 and conclude June 31, 2019. Mid project reports will be due on January 15, 2019. A final report and presentation must be delivered to SRE no later than September 30, 2019. These presentations will be scheduled by the SRE program staff.

O. **Proposal attachments:** The following 3 pages provide templates for the required attachments. These attachments must be completed properly for the proposal to be considered.

- Team Roster
- Budget Summary
- Suggested Areas of Expertise
Proposal Title:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team Members, Affiliations, and e-mail addresses</th>
<th>Project Roles and Responsibilities</th>
<th>Signatures</th>
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## Proposal Title:

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<th>Item (and brief description)</th>
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Seed Grant Application

KEY AREAS OF EXPERTISE NEEDED TO REVIEW PROPOSAL

Proposal Title:

Interdisciplinary Knowledge Domains:

Disciplinary Areas of Expertise:

Other: