

Tufts Institute for Innovation

Microbes: Improving the Environment and the Human Condition

To the Tufts University Research Community A Request for Proposals

Tufts Institute for Innovation (TII) announces a second round of funding with a start date of May 1, 2015.

The four TII focus areas related to the TII theme of “*Microbes: Improving the Environment and the Human Condition*” are:

- **Food and Nutrition**
- **Water and the Environment**
- **Infectious Disease**
- **Social Science/Policy**

In this round TII particularly encourages proposals driven from social science/policy perspectives.

Funded project teams should include investigators from multiple disciplines across campuses (Boston, Grafton, and Medford), who will integrate their skills and disciplines to solve a specific problem related to at least one of the above focus areas. Proposals should offer a novel solution to the problem and provide a framework for subsequent implementation. Proposals should request funds to support pilot projects with specific aims that can be achieved within one year. Applications should also include the long-term goals to provide perspective on the future impact of the project. In discussing long-term goals, the proposal should explain how investigators will address all aspects of solving a real-world need and should be “holistic” or fully multidisciplinary. Proposals should also incorporate implementation strategies that account for factors pertaining to economic, social, political, and policy aspects of the identified problem. If relevant, specific targeted regions or populations should be identified, and region/population-specific solutions should be addressed.

TII will provide initial funding for personnel, equipment and supplies, as well as laboratory, office, meeting, and collaboration space on the Boston campus, and will also provide administrative support. ***Funding is available for 3-5 projects with an anticipated average first-year budget of \$50,000 to \$100,000; however, with compelling justification, projects with a budget of up to \$250,000 will be considered.***

Applications are due by 5pm Friday, January 5, 2015. Decisions will be made by March 31, 2015.

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To be considered, submitted projects **MUST**:

- Relate directly to “*Microbes: Improving the Environment and the Human Condition*”, and align with at least one of the identified thematic areas: Food and Nutrition, Water and the Environment, Infectious Disease, or Social Science/Policy.
- Identify a project leader and team members and explain how each team member’s expertise will be used to solve a particular aspect of the project.
- Identify any resources and expertise that TII might be able to provide to enhance the immediate and long-term goals of the project.
- Include full-time faculty from at least two Tufts campuses (i.e., Boston, Medford, Grafton; two schools on one campus do not qualify as two campuses.).
- Indicate whether researchers (faculty, students, and postdocs) would benefit from spending significant time at the TII space located on the Boston campus, and if so, what equipment (and possible concomitant funds) would be required.
- Provide a project plan timeline (e.g., Gantt chart) for both first year pilot studies for immediate funding, and for a projected continuation of this work beyond the first year with the expectation that the research team will seek and secure continuation funding.

Projects **MAY**:

Include Non-Tufts collaborators, such as collaborators from industry or other institutions, as long as the above requirements are satisfied. Their participation must be clearly justified, including the absence of the collaborator’s specific expertise at Tufts.

Criteria for Selection

A peer-review process will evaluate proposals for addressing all aspects of project and potential for impact. Other criteria include:

- Clarity and appropriateness of goals and statement of need
- Degree of innovation for accomplishing project goals (within academic field and/or Tufts community)
- Feasibility of timeline
- Appropriateness of budget allocations
- The use of evaluation methods for assessing outcomes and impact, where relevant
- The potential for funding and continued collaboration should be clearly described (e.g. how the work relates to a funding agency’s mission statement).

Reporting requirements

By **December 1, 2015**, grant recipients must provide to TII a brief report to verify progress on the proposed timeline.

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By **July 1, 2016**, grant recipients must provide to TII a summary report of no longer than five single-spaced pages.

The summary report should:

- Describe the work that was accomplished, including any publications generated;
- Describe the outcomes/impact of the collaboration;
- Describe any future plans for the collaborative project;
- Provide a final accounting of budget expenses;
- Identify specific proposal(s) submitted to external sponsor(s) as a result of the grant (if applicable); and
- Describe any significant deviation from or extensions to the project described in the original proposal, if applicable.
- Describe how the project advanced the “holistic”, multidisciplinary long-term goals that were initially envisioned to address aspects of solving a real-world need.

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Project Application Form

The project application should describe both the immediate aims of a one year project for which funding will be offered (Description of Initial One Year Project), as well as how future goals could be accomplished if the project continued beyond the first year (Description of Future Holistic Approach to Achieve Long-term Goals).

All proposals should include the following sections as a single, electronic document in this order:

Project Title

I. PROJECT TEAM AND THEIR RELEVANT EXPERIENCE (one page, max)

Project Leader(s)

Project Team and relevant areas of expertise:

Must include full-time faculty from at least two geographically dispersed campuses (e.g. Boston, Grafton, and Medford). Schools located in Boston are considered to be on the same campus.

Identify any gaps in expertise:

Discuss any needed expertise to meet project goals, how the team might evolve over time to supplement key expertise that is missing, and a logistical plan and rationale for the future integration of this expertise. For example, this section could be used to address the project's future global impact and which personnel, both within and beyond Tufts, need to be brought in to meet both short-term and long-term project goals.

II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

A. Description of the Initial, One-year Pilot Project (two pages, max):

Organize as follows:

1. Background and significance of the problem to be addressed, including the targeted population/region and short-term and long-term goals of the project supported by relevant evidence in the literature.
2. Specific aims and corresponding hypotheses for the one-year project. Explain how these aims relate to the project goals.
3. Approach: Including overall strategy, methodology, and analyses that are required to accomplish the specific aims of the project, as well as alternative strategies, and benchmarks for success.

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B. Description of Future Holistic Approach to Achieve Long-term Goals (one page, max)

Organize as follows:

1. Integration—how will the project team work together to build an integrated project?
2. Translational impact of the project (potential for the innovative science to be brought to market or full implementation), including what steps, expertise or resources would be needed for achieving such an impact.
3. Innovative aspects of the application that indicate a shift in current paradigms.
4. Timeline - for both first year pilot studies for immediate funding, and for a projected continuation for years if additional funds are secured.

III. RESOURCES AND BUDGET (1/2 page, max)

Resources needed for Initial, One-year Pilot Project:

(laboratory space, office space, equipment)

Funds requested:

(use TII budget template)

Budget justification

Potential source(s) of follow-on funding

For questions regarding this application form please contact:

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Procedure for Submitting Proposals

Please submit completed form electronically by 01/05/2015 to:

Jordan Wilkinson
Program Coordinator, TII

jordan.wilkinson@tufts.edu