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QUEST
Research, Scholarship, Creative Activity
April 28, 2010
NEWS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Office starts 'EARLY ALERT' forecast for limited submission RFPs

Will hold competitions in advance of announcements

Large grant programs such as those funding major research centers require long lead times to prepare successful proposals. The need for increased lead time poses particular challenges for programs that limit the number of proposals the university is allowed to submit.

Sponsors often do not release a new program solicitation until just a few weeks or months before the deadline, leaving the university limited time to conduct an internal competition, select the strongest candidates, and still allow the chosen investigators sufficient time to develop a competitive proposal.

For recurring grant programs, waiting on a new program solicitation can be self-defeating.

"If you wait until the new RFP hits the streets, you're already out of the competition," says Robert Porter, Director of Research Development. "For large grant programs like NSF research centers, successful PIs will often put in a year or more of serious proposal development. And proposals that need partnerships of any kind--whether they be linkages to the public school system or collaborations with other universities--take far longer than many investigators realize."

To address this problem, the Office of Research will implement a policy of forecasting the probable release date of expected limited submission announcements and will initiate the process of internal review and selection based on the previous announcement. As a result, the PIs who are selected will enjoy more realistic timetables to prepare complex proposals.

"Beginning with this newsletter, the Office of Research will post as many 'early alert' or 'forecasting' announcements as we can identify," Porter said. "For their part, we ask that investigators adopt a more proactive stance toward these programs and gear up to start their proposals on an earlier timetable than they're accustomed to."

As they look at RFPs, faculty should be alert for language in the solicitation that limits the number of proposals an institution can submit and should contact the Office of Research to determine the status of any existing or planned internal competitions.

Details: Contact Robert Porter (reporter@utk.edu, 865-974-3053) with questions about limited submission solicitations, deadlines, or policies

ORU public hearings set for Haslam Building

Public budget hearings for the proposals submitted by Organized Research Units at UT Knoxville will begin at 8 a.m. on Thursday, April 29, and continue until 4:50 p.m. on Friday, April 30, in Room 440 of the Haslam Business Building, a conference room above the atrium on the 4th floor of the building's West wing.

Organized Research Units are campus research centers recognized by the UT Office of Research as independent entities. The Office of Research will make limited allocations of funds to help selected units with administrative and research-operational costs. Potential ORUs include emerging research centers that have the potential to make a significant impact on a topic or discipline, or also any group of faculty working on a common research mission.

The Office of Research has invited some 31 ORU directors to give public presentations.

More information: Jane Taylor (tayloje@utk.edu)
Details: http://research.utk.edu/orus/

Burman to coordinate outreach, engagement for Office of Research

Elizabeth Burman has joined the UTK Office of Research as the new outreach and engagement coordinator. Burman has long been involved at the University of Tennessee and has varied nonprofit experience in both the United States and Canada. She has also worked as a freelance writer and web developer. She attended Smith College in Massachusetts and Whitman College in Washington, from which she graduated with a B.A. with honors in English and an art minor. She holds a professional certificate in nonprofit management from Duke University.

Contact: eburman@utk.edu, 865-974-8363.

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http://research.utk.edu

Opportunities

Organizational Learning in Schools, School Systems, and Higher Education Institutions

The Spencer Foundation is soliciting proposals for research in organizational learning from researchers affiliated with a college or university, school district, research facility, or cultural institution. Grants can range from $5,000 to more than $400,000. The foundation is interested in advancing understanding on ways to strengthen the capacity of schools and education systems as learning organizations. Proposals can address issues of culture, incentives, authority and autonomy, teacher selection and preparation, among others.

Key dates: Accepts continuous submissions.
Details: http://www.spencer.org/content.cfm/organizational-learning

MacArthur Foundation International Peace & Security

The MacArthur Foundation seeks to promote international peace and security by reducing global risks from nuclear weapons. Currently, the foundation is reviewing its emphasis on reducing nuclear in preparation to posting new guidelines.

To pursue international peace and security goals, the foundation supports nonprofit organizations, including policy research institutes and universities. Grants are awarded in the strategy areas outlined below for policy research linked to prescriptions for action, outreach to the public and policymakers, and fellowship programs.

Key dates: Accepts continuous submissions.
Details: http://www.macfound.org/site/c.lkLXJ8MQKrH/b.930987/k.DA9A/International_Grantmaking__International_Peace_and_Security__Grantmaking_Guidelines.htm#a_reducing

Dreyfus Special Grant Program in the Chemical Sciences

The Dreyfus Foundation's Special Grant Program in the Chemical Sciences is open to institutions in the states, districts, and territories of the United States that have a focus in the chemical sciences. Institutions include schools, colleges and universities, as well as other not-for-profit organizations, such as scientific societies and science museums.

The foundation encourages proposals that are judged likely to significantly advance the chemical sciences. Examples of areas of interest include (but are not limited to) the increase in public awareness, understanding, and appreciation of the chemical sciences; innovative approaches to chemistry education at all levels (K-12, undergraduate, and graduate); and efforts to make chemistry careers more attractive. Research proposals are not customarily considered.

Aspects of proposals that are important are broad applicability beyond the submitting institution, and specific and detailed descriptions of the chemistry associated with the proposal.

Key dates: June 3, 2010, initial inquiry; November 11, 2010, submission of invited proposal.
Details: http://www.dreyfus.org/awards/special_grant_program_chemical.shtml

Helen Hay Whitney Postdoctoral Research Fellowships

The Helen Hay Whitney Foundation supports early postdoctoral research training in all basic biomedical sciences. To attain its goal of increasing the number of imaginative, well-trained and dedicated medical scientists, the foundation grants financial support of sufficient duration to help further the careers of young men and women engaged in biological or medical research. The foundation expects that fellowship training will be obtained in an academic setting. The selection of a commercial or industrial laboratory for the training experience is not acceptable.

Candidates who hold, or are in the final stages of obtaining, the Ph.D., M.D., or equivalent degree and are seeking beginning postdoctoral training in basic biomedical research are eligible to apply for a fellowship. The foundation accepts applications from candidates who have no more than one year of postdoctoral research experience at the time of the deadline for submitting the application (July 16) and who have received a Ph.D. (or D.Phil. or equivalent) degree no more than two years before the deadline, or an M.D. degree no more than three years before the deadline.

Applications from established scientists or advanced fellows will not be considered. The fellowships are for early postdoctoral training only. The foundation will not ordinarily consider applicants who plan tenure of the fellowship in the laboratory in which they have already received extensive predoctoral or postdoctoral training. The aim of the fellowship is to broaden postdoctoral training and experience, and a significant change of venue is advisable.

Key date: July 15, 2010, application submitted to foundation.
Details: http://www.hhwf.org/HTMLSrc/ResearchFellowships.html

QUEST NEWS AND OPPORTUNITIES
Research, Scholarship, Creative Activity

Departments must establish, submit refund policies

Jonee Daniels-Lindstrom, associate vice chancellor for finance and administration, has announced requirements relating to refund policies for the UT Knoxville campus. Daniels-Lindstrom notes that the university returns funds to individuals, institutions and companies for a variety of reasons including overpayments, duplicate payments, payments received in error, cancellations and some deposits. Each UT department issuing refunds must develop and follow its own policy concerning the amount and permissibility of refunds. These refund policies must be reviewed and approved by campus chief business officers. Departments are responsible for entering their own refunds in IRIS. Treasurer Charles (Butch) Peccolo has announced a revision to two fiscal policies relating to refunds: FI0310 - Receiving and Depositing Money and FI0505 – Processing and Paying Invoices. The policy changes were effective April 1, 2010. Departmental policies and procedures, once established, should be sent to Gena Wilson (gmwilson@utk.edu) for review and approval.
Details: https://my.tennessee.edu/portal/page?_pageid=34,34235&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL

EARLY ALERT: NSF Materials Research Science and Engineering Centers (MRSEC)

Through its Materials Research Science and Engineering Centers, the National Science Foundation supports interdisciplinary materials research and education while addressing fundamental problems in science and engineering. MRSECs require outstanding research quality and intellectual breadth, provide support for research infrastructure and flexibility in responding to new opportunities, and strongly emphasize the integration of research and education. These centers foster active collaboration between universities and other sectors, including industry, and they constitute a national network of university-based centers in materials research. MRSECs address problems of a scope or complexity requiring the advantages of scale and interdisciplinary interaction provided by a center. A MRSEC may be located at a single institution or may involve two or more institutions in partnership. Budgets average $10 million to $12 million over five years, with the possibility of renewal for another five years; 12 to 15 awards in each three-year cycle; last cycle was 2007.
Expected schedule: Announcement expected in 2010.
Available details: http://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=5295&org=DMR&from=home
Note: *This forecast is based on previous RFPs for this program and may vary from the final schedule or details of the expected solicitation.*

EARLY ALERT: CUR will name fellows for undergrad research leadership

The Council on Undergraduate Research requests nominations for the CUR Fellows Awards, which are presented at the organization's biennial national conference to two CUR members who have developed nationally respected research programs involving undergraduates. Each CUR Fellow will also be awarded a Brian Andreen-CUR Student Research Fellowship that they will give to a deserving undergraduate at their institution. Awardees will have established outstanding records of obtaining funding for their work and for their students, and have published research findings with undergraduate coauthors. The selection committee will use the following criteria for selecting awardees: (1) active CUR membership, (2) sustained involvement of undergraduates in research, senior faculty member, (3) publications with undergraduate co-authors in peer-reviewed journals, (4) extramural support for research, (5) presentations by undergraduates at regional or national meetings, (6) admission of students to postgraduate programs, (7) evidence of outreach to minority or underrepresented groups, (8) incorporation of research activities and experiences into courses. Any member of CUR may submit a nomination for the CUR Fellows Awards.
Expected schedule: The next call for nominations willl open fall 2010.
Details: Questions may be addressed to cur@cur.org; http://www.cur.org/CUR_Fellows.html
Note: *This forecast is based on previous RFPs for this program and may vary from the final schedule or details of the expected solicitation.*

EARLY ALERT: DOD Peer Reviewed Cancer Research Program

The U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command has issued a pre-announcement that will allow researchers to plan and develop proposals for the study of melanoma and other skin cancers, pediatric brain tumors, genetic cancer research and genomic medicine, blood cancers, colorectal cancer, kidney cancer, a *Lysteria* vaccine for cancer, and radiation protection using nanotechnology. Award types include Concept Awards, Idea Awards, and Translational New Investigator Awards.
Expected schedule: Full announcements and instructions for applications will be posted in May and June 2010 on www.grants.gov and on the website for the Office of Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs.
Details: http://cdmrp.army.mil

EARLY ALERT: NSF Emerging Frontiers in Research Innovation (EFRI)

The National Science Foundation's EFRI funds interdisciplinary initiatives at the emerging frontiers of engineering research and education. EFRI seeks transformative concepts, potentially leading to new engineering research areas for NSF and other agencies; new industries or capabilities that result in a leadership position for the country; and/or significant progress on a recognized national need or grand challenge. Makes 12-15 awards annually, averaging $500,000/year over four years; new core themes announced each year.
Themes for 2011: (1) Multicellular and InterKingdom Signalling (MIKS), (2) Mind, Machines and Motor Control (M3C).
Expected schedule: Summer, 2010, new solicitation; October, 2010, letter of intent; November, 2010, preliminary proposals.
Available details: www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?WT.z_pims_id=13708&ods_key=nsf09606
Note: *This forecast is based on previous RFPs for this program and may vary from the final schedule or details of the expected solicitation.*

EARLY ALERT: DOE/NSF RE-ENERGYSE

RE-ENERGYSE (Regaining our ENERGY Science and Engineering Edge) is a new clean-energy education program first funded under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, now greatly expanded jointly by the Department of Energy ($50 million) and the National Science Foundation ($19 million) to support the following kinds of projects:

- Individual fellowships to graduate students and postdoctoral researchers in the clean energy field.
- Interdisciplinary energy programs at the masters and doctorate levels that will integrate science, engineering, entrepreneurship, and public policy.
- Partnerships between industry and academic institutions that strengthen education for technicians in the clean-energy sector and include career pathways from high schools to community colleges.
- Increased educational opportunities for women and underrepresented minorities seeking careers in the clean energy sector.
- Energy research opportunities for undergraduates.
- Education and outreach campaigns to teach young people about the role science and technology plays in addressing energy challenges.

Expected schedule: Funding to begin in FY 2011 (October 2010).
Available details: http://leadenergy.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/02/NSF-REENERGYSE-2011.pdf
Note: *This forecast is based on preliminary announcements for this program and may vary from the final schedule or details of the expected solicitation.*

EARLY ALERT: NSF Centers for Chemical Innovation (CCI)

The National Science Foundation CCI program supports centers that can address major, long-term basic chemical research problems that have a high probability of both producing transformative research and leading to groundbreaking innovation. Appropriate research problems are high-risk but potentially high-impact and will attract broad scientific and public interest. Centers are expected to be agile structures that can respond rapidly to emerging opportunities and make full use of cyberinfrastructure to enhance collaborations. Center teams may include researchers from disciplines other than chemistry and from academia, industry, government laboratories, and international organizations.
Expected schedule: Preliminary Phase I center startup proposals will be due in February, 2011 with budgets averaging $500,000/year over three years. Phase II proposals, if awarded, will average $4 million/year over five years, with possible renewal for a second five year term.
Available details: www.nsf.gov/pubs/2009/nsf09503/nsf09503.htm?org=NSF
Note: *This forecast is based on preliminary announcements for this program and may vary from the final schedule or details of the expected solicitation.*

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Contact: Bill Dockery, dockeryb@utk.edu, 865-974-2187. Archived at http://research.utk.edu/news