

Faculty group establishes “best practices” guide to fellowships

A group of UT Knoxville faculty members and administrators has created a set of “best practice” guidelines for administering awards and fellowships that come to individual faculty members instead of to the university for administration.

The guidelines include issues like professional development leave, sources of compensation and expense payments during fellowships, resources for departments and/or colleges that lose the services of the faculty member, tracking the fellowship application process, and negotiating the various university arrangements connected to the fellowship.

The group’s recommends that faculty seeking fellowships register that activity through the Office of Research by filling out the Document Review/Approval Sheet or Yellow Sheet.

The complete document is at <http://provost.utk.edu/awards-support/> and the Document Review/Approval Sheet is available at <http://research.utk.edu/forms/> under “Sponsored Programs - Proposals.”

UTK’s Newton high-performance computer gets upgrade

The Newton High Performance Computing program has completed its latest version of the UTK HPC cluster. The upgrade expanded the current Newton HPC cluster to 1,568 CPU cores. The 120 new compute nodes now feature the newest Intel Nehalem processors and a Qlogic Infiniband network fabric capable of 40 Gbit/sec data transfers between compute nodes.

The upgrade allows OIT to provide greatly increased capabilities to Newton customers: decreasing turnaround time, making resources available to a larger group of researchers, and making possible more computationally intensive scientific investigation. SAS and MATLAB have been installed on Newton. The next change will be to move to the Lustre file system, which should provide dramatically faster input/output to disc.

Newton is a cooperative program between the Office of Research, OIT, and the academic departments of UTK to build in-house computing infrastructure to serve researcher’s scientific computing needs. The upgrade was financed with funds contributed to the program by the Office of Research, Bamin Khomami and Brian Edwards in the Chemical Engineering Department, and Igor Jouline at the Joint Institute for Computational Science.

Details: <http://hpc.usg.utk.edu/>

Training in mentoring post-docs offered to PIs

The Office of Research is offering training for faculty who must comply with new post-doc mentoring requirements of the National Science Foundation.

The office will offer a workshop on 2 December 2009 from 11 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. for principal investigators who will have to comply with NSF mentoring language in proposals. Lunch will be provided.

Participants will receive a copy of “Making the Right Moves: A Practical Guide to Scientific Management of Post-Docs and New Faculty.”

The event is open to PIs, post-docs, and doctoral students approaching the end of their program. The Office of Research expects to repeat the workshop.

New terms affect purchase orders, contracts paid with ARRA funds

UT Knoxville was recently notified of new terms and conditions affecting any purchase order or contract that will be paid with funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

Vendors who do not agree to accept the new terms and conditions may not be paid with ARRA funds. If it is determined after a contract is executed that payments have been made from one of the ARRA fund accounts, an amendment to the contract must be submitted incorporating the new provisions. Should a vendor refuse to agree to the amendment, any payments made will have to be transferred to a non-ARRA account.

Templates of the contract amendment and provisions for a new contract are available from the Office of the Associate Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration, Jonee Daniels-Lindstrom (danielsj@utk.edu, 865-974-2404).

Contact Monica Long (mbennet1@utk.edu) or Jackie Hurst (hurstjs@utk.edu) for assistance throughout the year.

Science Alliance offers JDRD funds for ORNL collaborations

UT Knoxville faculty who are conducting research that is complementary to certain projects being conducted at Oak Ridge National Laboratory in FY2010 can apply for Joint Directed Research and Development funds.

The JDRD program operates in cooperation with ORNL’s Laboratory Directed Research and Development program, which identifies projects “with the potential to position the lab for scientific and technical leadership in future national initiatives.”

The Science Alliance will invest some \$400,000 to support eight or ten new JDRD projects for a year, said Lynne Parker, assistant director of the alliance. Support for a second year is possible.

UT researchers must match their proposed project to a similar project at ORNL; the list of those projects is available at http://research.utk.edu/funding/lldr_list.shtml.

“If there is a project on this list that is complementary to your own research and you wish to explore a potential partnership with the PI of that project, please contact him or her to discuss the possibility,” Parker said. Principal investigators who find common interest can apply for Science Alliance funding to support the complementary program.

An advisory committee appointed by the Science Alliance will evaluate proposals on technical merit, opportunities for new collaborations at ORNL, prospects for future external funding, inclusion of graduate and undergraduate students, and issues of timeliness and strategic importance to UT Knoxville. All UTK faculty are eligible to submit proposals, but selection will favor faculty who do not already have an established research relationship with ORNL.

Key dates: 5 p.m., 3 December 2009, electronic submission to jdrd@utkworks.tennessee.edu; 1 January 2010, start of project.

Details: <http://research.utk.edu/funding/jdrd.shtml>

UT Libraries survey closes Friday

The electronic survey about the University of Tennessee library services will end Friday, 20 November.

UT Libraries has been collecting information about how it meets users’ expectations and how it can improve its services.

Take the survey at <http://survey.libqual.org/index.cfm?ID=232897>. Contact Debbie Valine (dvaline@utk.edu, 974-4936) with questions.

Deadline for UTRF proposals is 20 November

UT researchers interested in applying for the UT Research Foundation’s Maturation Funding Program have until Friday, 20 November, to submit proposals.

Started in 2007, the Maturation Funding Program provides up to \$15,000 in direct costs to UT faculty, staff, or students who need support to mature their technologies for potential commercial development.

Proposed projects must be related to an existing invention/creation disclosure on file with UTRF or to a disclosure submitted simultaneously with the proposal.

Proposals should not exceed three pages and should describe the technology, a work plan, expected results, a budget, and an assessment of the technology’s commercial potential.

Judgment criteria include demonstration of a path for commercial development, the market potential, and the technology’s stage of development.

Key date: 20 November 2009, submission of proposal to UTK Office of Research.

Details: http://utrff.tennessee.edu/faculty/funding_programs.php

Global Venture Challenge 2010

Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL) will host Global Venture Challenge™, an educational event that brings together teams of college and university graduate students from around the world to compete for significant cash prizes in two entrepreneurial competition tracks. The event, set for 24-26 March, attracts venture investors from across the country who serve as judges, and it provides the opportunity to get a glimpse at emerging research being conducted at ORNL and the University of Tennessee.

The event is designed to accelerate the discovery and development of innovative ideas along the commercialization continuum, with the ultimate goal of launching new entrepreneurial ventures.

Teams of UT students can register for an Idea to Product® competition in either of two tracks: (1) advanced materials for a sustainable energy future and (2) community resilience and homeland security. Teams will submit a one-page description of their idea that discusses the product and its technology, justifies its uniqueness and innovation, describes target customers and market, explains the need the product meets, and describes barriers to entering the market. Teams invited to participate will give a 10-minute presentation at the event.

Key dates: 18 January 2010, applications to participate due; 8 March 2010, technology commercialization plan due; 24 March 2010, competition begins.

Details: <http://globalventurechallenge.org/guidelines.shtml>

Opportunities

The UT Office of Research presents selected opportunities of potential interest to UT Knoxville faculty. Due to space limitations, the listing cannot be comprehensive but indicates the number and breadth of possible support for research and scholarship. The Office of Research can help faculty develop strategies for identifying funding sources for their research agenda. Contact the office at 865-974-3466.

Studying Complex Systems: 21st Century Science Collaborative Activity Awards

The James S. McDonnell Foundation offers collaborative activity awards to initiate interdisciplinary discussions on problems or issues, to help launch interdisciplinary research networks, or to fund communities of researchers/practitioners dedicated to developing new methods, tools, and applications of basic research to applied problems. The Complex Systems program supports scholarship and research directed toward the development of theoretical and mathematical tools that can be applied to the study of complex, nonlinear systems.

It is anticipated that research funded in this program will address issues in fields such as biology, biodiversity, climate, demography, epidemiology, technological change, economic development, governance, or computation. The program's emphasis is on the development and application of theoretical models used in these research fields and not on particular fields per se. The foundation is particularly interested in projects attempting to apply complex systems approaches to real-world problems where such approaches are not yet considered usual or mainstream (for example, differentiating normal physiology from disease).

Key date: Continuous application process. Submit letter of inquiry.
Details: <http://www.jsmf.org/programs/cs/>

Awards intended to support American democratic capitalism

The Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation is devoted to strengthening American democratic capitalism and the institutions, principles, and values that sustain and nurture it. Its programs support limited, competent government; a dynamic marketplace for economic, intellectual, and cultural activity; and a vigorous defense, at home and abroad, of American ideas and institutions. In addition, recognizing that responsible self-government depends on enlightened citizens and informed public opinion, the Bradley Foundation supports scholarly studies and academic achievement.

Programmatic interests include improving education, promoting economic growth and prosperity, revitalizing civil society, strengthening private initiative, defending and advancing freedom, and fortifying the intellectual infrastructure that underpins American conservatism.

Key date: Continuous application process. Submit letter of inquiry.
Details: http://www.bradleyfdn.org/application_procedure.asp/

Awards for social justice projects

The Samuel Rubin Foundation makes awards typically ranging from \$5,000 to \$10,000 to projects that promote civil or human rights, social justice, or social services through the implementation of social, economic, political, civil, and cultural rights for all the world's people.

Key dates: Applications accepted by the first Fridays of January, May, and September.
Details: <http://www.samuelrubinfoundation.org/guidelines.html>

USDA International Science and Education program

The U.S. Department of Agriculture, under its National Institute of Food and Agriculture, is soliciting proposals for projects under its International Science and Education (ISE) program. The purpose of the program is to support the internationalization of food, agriculture, and related programs at U.S. universities and colleges with the intent to improve the ability of American students, business people, and community members to compete more effectively in global agriculture.

LIMITED SUBMISSION: The University of Tennessee, as accredited, is limited to submitting no more than two proposals as lead institution. No more than one award will be made per institution. Contact limitsub@utk.edu by 24 Nov 2009 with a statement of interest.

Key date: 28 January 2010, submission to agency.
Details: http://www.nifa.usda.gov/funding/rfas/intl_science.html

REMINDER: Proposals to be submitted electronically to funding agencies must be in the Office of Research Sponsored Programs unit five business days before the agency deadline.

Foundation offers travel support to France

The Philippe Foundation awards funds for conference and seminar travel to doctors and scientists interested in exchange programs between France and the United States. The grants are designed to encourage and facilitate Franco-American exchanges but cannot provide the primary source of support.

Grants are awarded on the basis of the applicant's record and demonstrated capacity, supporting recommendations, worthiness of the project, renown of the host laboratory, and financial needs of the applicant and his spouse or companion (taking into consideration their income, family situation, and place of residence).

Areas supported include agriculture and food sciences, arts and humanities, business and management, education, energy sciences, engineering, health and medicine, law, the natural and physical sciences, mathematics, technology, and the social sciences.

Key dates: Continuous. Submit proposals a month before the end of the March, June, September, and December quarters to be considered for the following quarter.

Details: <http://fundingopps.cos.com/cgi-bin/fo2/getRec?id=3732>

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Pathways to Science

The National Science Foundation and other donors are supporting undergraduate, graduate, and postdoctoral research opportunities through the Institute for Broadening Participation and the Pathways to Science program. The Pathways site contains information about some 400 paid undergraduate summer research positions nationwide. Also listed are graduate programs and fellowships, including Alliances for Graduate Education and the Professoriate (AGEP) and Integrated Graduate Research, Education, and Traineeship (IGERT). Positions for post-docs are also listed.

Details: <http://www.pathwaystoscience.org>

Peace Scholar Dissertation Scholarships

The U.S. Institute of Peace, through its Jennings Randolph Program for International Peace awards nonresidential Peace Scholar Dissertation Scholarships to students at U.S. universities who are writing doctoral dissertations on topics related to peace, conflict, and international security. Each year the program awards approximately 10 Peace Scholar Fellowships. Fellowships last for 10 months starting in September. Fellowships are open to citizens of any country. Dissertation projects in all disciplines are welcome.

Key date: 5 January 2010, online application submission.
Details: <http://www.usip.org/grants-fellowships/jennings-randolph-peace-scholarship-dissertation-program/peace-scholar-application>

New manual released

The National Science Foundation has released a new "Grants.gov Application Guide: A Guide for Preparation and Submission of NSF Applications via Grants.gov." The guide offers NSF-specific requirements for proposals (applications) submitted through Grants.gov. The guide is dated 1 December 2009.

Details: http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/grantsgovguide1209.pdf?WT.mc_id=USNSF_109