

Request for Proposals from Stanford Faculty

from

The Precourt Institute for Energy

Issued: October 12, 2009

Proposals Due: December 1, 2009

Introduction

As part of its mandate to build Stanford's capacity to conduct high impact research across the full range of energy conversions, and uses, and legal and regulatory environments that affect deployment of energy technologies, the Precourt Institute for Energy (PIE) invites proposals for seed funding of projects that, if successful, have the potential to equip investigators to write credible proposals for research based on the results of the initial project to other funding sources. For example, the project could involve a proof-of-concept experiment or theoretical analysis for an energy conversion device, process, or technology, an analysis of individual or group behavioral relating to energy production or consumption, or it could involve assembling an interdisciplinary team of investigators to develop innovative ideas for attack on an important problem involving complex systems associated with energy conversion, storage, transmission, delivery, and use. The proposed work may involve science, engineering, and/or social science, individually or in combination.

The intent of this competition is to select projects that have potential for high impact, that require significant initial effort to establish that the proposed work is feasible, and that are not yet at the stage where they could be funded by U.S. government research programs. Such projects inevitably involve risk, and the evaluation of the proposals will attempt to balance risk and potential impacts if the work is successful.

Proposals that involve interdisciplinary efforts, especially those that bring together faculty in new ways, are encouraged.

This research funding is intended to encourage faculty to move into energy research that is a departure from ongoing work in their research groups. Hence, research groups that are already well funded to work in a research area, and for which the additional funding for the proposed research would be incremental to funding already available, are less likely to be selected.

If you have a proposal idea and would like a judgment on how well it fits within PIE's goals, please contact Lynn Orr (fmorr@stanford.edu).

Proposals will be evaluated by a committee of faculty with expertise related to the areas of proposed research but who are not involved in the proposed projects.

Proposals should include:

- 1. a well thought out research plan that is also realistic about what results can be obtained within the budget limitations and project time period;**
- 2. a discussion of the potential to impact energy use at a significant scale if the ideas developed in the research are successful;**
- 3. a clear description of the reasons why the proposed project is appropriate for seed funding and if appropriate, why it differs from research funded already for the faculty member or group of faculty.**
- 4. a clear description of the anticipated outcome of the project and an assessment of potential funding sources for future work based on the results of the project. If support for similar work is being requested or is already hand from other sources, on campus or off, a listing of those proposals, amounts, and funding sources must be included.**

Only Stanford faculty who are eligible to act as the Principal Investigator may respond to this solicitation.

Project Funding and Duration

Maximum seed funding for each proposed project is \$200K per year for a period of performance of up to two years. Follow on funding in subsequent years is not anticipated.

The projected maximum combined support total for all new projects proposed in response to this RFP is \$2.0 Million over the two-year period.

Please note that the primary Principal Investigator (PI) must be a Stanford faculty member. Preference will be given to projects that build capability at Stanford, but projects that absolutely require collaboration with an investigator outside Stanford will be considered. Neither internal Stanford nor external institution overhead charges can be included in the budget for any proposed project.

Project Reporting

PIs of funded projects will be expected to prepare a final project report and presentation, and project PIs and students will be expected to participate in annual technical review sessions, workshops in related areas, and other activities that report on the research being performed. Papers/abstracts will be posted on the PIE website.

Guidelines and Information for Proposed Research Projects

Proposal Format

Proposals are limited to ten pages (all materials included). Proposers are encouraged to be as concise in their exposition as possible. The details of the formatting are left up to individual authors, but the text, figures, tables, references, budget, and budget

justification must be included in the 10-page limit. In addition to this, and not subject to the 10-page limit, a brief background on the Principal Investigators that will be associated with the proposed work, limited to one page per PI, should be included.

Proposal Review

The proposals submitted in response to this solicitation will be screened for relevance and then reviewed by a committee of faculty with expertise related to the areas of research but who are not involved in the proposed projects. The opinions of additional experts at Stanford or outside of it may be sought, with the requirement that the reviewer maintain the confidentiality of the proposed research. The members of the review committee will be asked to assemble a prioritized list of proposals received in response to this request for proposals that they believe should be funded if sufficient funding is available.

The objective of the review process is to identify high quality projects that are consistent with the goals of this solicitation. Reviewers will be asked to specifically address the following questions in their evaluations:

- Is the proposed research of high quality? What are the principal strengths of the proposed work? Are there weaknesses in the proposed research?
- Is the proposed work directly targeted to demonstrate the potential if the ideas developed in the proposal are successful;
- Are the investigators well qualified to carry out the research?
- Where does the proposed research fit in the spectrum of work going on now in the research area?
- Does the research have high potential for follow-on funding from external sponsors?
- Does the proposal involve researchers who have not traditionally worked in the energy area?
- Is the proposed budget and schedule reasonable?
- Should the proposed work be funded?

Submission Procedure

The cover letter, proposal and budget can be submitted electronically in the form of a PDF file to tammy.goodall@stanford.edu. It should be sent by the submission deadline, using standard Stanford procedures (e.g., routing all required proposal components through normal submission channels in each school to the Office of Sponsored Research) and **must include an official budget and budget justification.**

An electronic copy of the proposal will be sent to the steering committee for evaluation and a copy will be retained in the PIE files.

If you wish to submit a hardcopy in addition, it should be sent to:

*Ms. Tammy Goodall
Assistant to the Director
Precourt Energy Efficiency Center*

*473 via Ortega, Room 177
Mail Code: 4205*

Awards

It is anticipated that awards based on this solicitation will be announced by January 15, 2009, and projects selected for award may begin anytime thereafter. Award decisions do not require further approval.

Contacts

Questions about any aspect of this RFP are welcome. For technical or programmatic issues, please contact Lynn Orr (fmorr@stanford.edu)

For issues associated with the submission procedure, budgets, and subcontracts, submission receipt, please contact: Tammy Goodall (tammy.goodall@stanford.edu).