

INSTITUTE FOR SOCIETY, CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

2011 SUMMER SCHOLARS PROGRAM

Request for Applications

December 10, 2010

The Institute for Society, Culture and Environment (ISCE) is accepting applications for its summer research and scholarship stimulus grant program addressing issues of social and individual transformation. The aim of this program is to provide faculty support for developing proposals in the social sciences, humanities, and arts. There are two opportunities for funding. Applications are due February 15, 2011.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION AND GUIDELINES

I. The **Summer Scholars (SS) Program** will provide support for individual or small groups of faculty seeking funds to support initial work in a new or existing program area. ISCE is particularly interested in supporting (a) relatively new investigators and (b) more experienced investigators whose research or scholarship addresses issues of social and individual transformation directly tied to one of ISCE's five thematic areas (see www.isce.vt.edu). Minimum expectation is that proposal development activities will lead to the submission of a NIH R03 application or other government agency/private foundation proposal in the \$100,000 range.

ISCE anticipates making two or three awards in the range of \$15,000 to \$20,000. Examples of appropriate use of funds include (but are not limited to) faculty summer stipends, student wages, travel to funding agencies, and external consultation. Please note that there will not be funding for the kinds of activities supported by departments and colleges (e.g., travel to conferences, seed money for individual projects, software) or to support ongoing projects of individual faculty, graduate student research, or other on-going research and scholarly activities.

Request for summer stipends for the principal investigator may be up to \$8,000. Stipends for collaborating investigators should be commensurate with role in the development of the proposal and may not exceed \$6,000.

II. The **Summer Scholars in Residence (SS-R) Program** will provide support to teams of 3 or more faculty members to spend focused time on proposal development activities leading to the submission of a NIH (R21, R01, P- or U-Series), NSF, or a major foundation proposal. The purpose of the SS-R Program is to bring focus to the Institute's research agenda and build institutional capacity and strength. The program is intended to bring together faculty for intense, short periods of time to facilitate active participation and involvement in the proposal development process.

Proposals for the SS-IR Program must address one of ISCE's thematic research areas. Preference will be given to teams whose proposals address **social and behavioral health issues**. According to the World Health Association, social determinants of health are the circumstances in which people are born, grow up, live, work, and age, and the systems put in place to promote health and manage physical and mental illness. Social forces that influence personal behavior and ultimately affect the health and well-being of individuals, families, and communities include relationships, culture, economics, environments, and public policies. There is growing interest in related issues concerning social and behavioral health. These issues include developmental pathways, social inequalities and health disparities, at-risk and resilient behaviors, ethics and decision-making, emotions and relationships, and environmental conditions.

SS-R teams will meet monthly with the ISCE Director and/or Betsy McDonel-Herr, ISCE Senior Scientist, beginning in March 2011 and spend approximately three weeks on campus “in residence” in May-June 2011 as they refine their proposal ideas. Although “in residence” does not necessarily mean having an 8 to 5 physical presence, the intent of this program is for faculty to spend a significant amount of concentrated time together (without the interruptions of classes, professional travel, and vacations) generating and discussing ideas, working through the methodology, and developing a proposal.

ISCE anticipates making two or three SS-IR awards in the range of \$25,000 to \$30,000. ISCE will provide shared meeting space (if needed). Acceptable use of funds includes individual summer stipends, student wages, proposal-related travel, and support for external consultation/technical assistance for the SS-R team. Meeting with program officers at the identified funding agency is a requirement of participating in the SS-R Program, thus funds to cover travel costs should be included in the budget.

APPLICANT QUALIFICATIONS

Proposals are welcome from any and all departments, centers, and programs at Virginia Tech. The PI, however, is expected to be a full-time faculty member in a college represented by the ISCE stakeholders (i.e., Liberal Arts and Human Sciences [CLAHS], College of Science [COS], Pamplin College of Business [PCB], Architecture and Urban Studies [CAUS]).

APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Applications must include (a) signed cover sheet (attached), (b) 200 word abstract, (c) proposal narrative of up to four pages, and (4) information about potential funding agencies (one page appendix). Required information for the narrative portion of the proposal includes:

1. Overview and significance of the issue, problem, or situation.
2. Specific aims of the proposed investigation.
3. Timeline with list of key project and proposal development activities.
4. Primary team members, including identification of the team leader and primary roles/expertise of all team members and consultants (Do not submit curriculum vitae).
5. Itemized budget and budget justification.

Awards are designed to support the development of proposals that have the potential for external funding. Proposals are more likely to foster success in securing external grants when faculty have fully explored funding opportunities and used that information to inform their proposal writing plans. Please include responses to the following question as an appendix (1-page limit) to your submission.

- a) Are you responding to a specific request for proposal, program announcement, or other special funding initiative? If yes, which one and what is its timeline?
- b) Have you spoken to an agency, organization, foundation, or corporate official (e.g., project officer; research director) to determine their interest in this project or project area and get feedback on your concept and approach? If yes, please describe the communication you have had with the possible funder(s), including their level of interest in your idea, and any input they may have had on the study you are proposing.
- c) Have you examined other current projects funded by the entity you are targeting for funding? If yes, how does your study compare with projects in similar domains that have been funded by your targeted agency? In particular, does the scope of your project appear similar to other funded projects (e.g., sample size, measurement strategies, project design, analytic approach)?

- d) Have you gathered information about the criteria that will be used to evaluate your proposal and about the likely reviewers? If yes, briefly describe.

EXPECTATIONS AND OUTCOMES

Each individual/team selected to receive an award is required to:

1. Develop and submit a viable proposal to a government agency, private organization, corporation, or foundation, no later than December 31, 2011 (exceptions may be made based on due dates of individual agencies and foundations).
2. Submit a preliminary draft of the proposal to ISCE for review and comment.
3. Submit the project cover page and abstract to the ISCE Director upon submission of the proposal to the external funding source.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS/DEADLINE

Applications are to be prepared using 1-inch margins and Arial 11 font. Submit 1 paper copy and an e-copy of the complete application and signed coversheet to Ms. Carlene Arthur at ISCE (237 Wallace Hall [0426]; carthur@vt.edu) by **5:00 p.m. February 15, 2011**.

NOTIFICATION OF AWARD/AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS

Notification of awards will be made in early March 2011.

Funds will be dispersed upon notification of award and must be expended by the end of the fiscal year (see university guidelines for specific dates and deadlines).

QUESTIONS

Please contact:

Karen A. Roberto, Director

Institute for Society, Culture and Environment

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www.isce.vt.edu

