

Centers for Innovation and Innovation Groups

Issues and problems of global dimension are affecting the quality of the human condition as never before. These include poverty, hunger, health and disease, climate change, economic systems, industrial competitiveness, societal dynamics, art and culture, and access to energy.

One characteristic of such problems is that their understanding and resolution do not lie within the neat boundaries of existing scholarly disciplines. Indeed, the complexity and nuances of these problems are such that not only must multiple disciplinary perspectives be brought to focus but, often, totally new paradigms must be evolved. In addition, these issues are of such importance that questions of developing public and private policy approaches to their resolution cannot be ignored.

As a means of encouraging trans-institutional and interdisciplinary scholarship that addresses these global theoretical and applied issues beyond the boundaries of individual disciplines, the Office of Academic Affairs and the Office of Research are creating a program to support the formation of Centers for Innovation and Innovation Groups.

These Centers and Groups are to be initiated by faculty and focused around faculty research interests in the emerging areas of intellectual pursuit noted above. Proposals for the creation of Centers and Groups must serve to further differentiate and distinguish the role played by The Ohio State University in creating the knowledge that will advance the underlying science necessary for understanding relevant dynamics and the policy implications that flow from such new knowledge.

Program to Create Centers for Innovation and Innovation Groups Successful Proposal Characteristics

Centers for Innovation

1. Proposals must come directly from faculty and have a clear and distinct focus related to the issues/problems identified above or other issues/problems of great importance. Where noted below, they must also have approval of involved department or college leadership.
2. A maximum of two Centers will be established in the first year of competition and two in the second year.
3. Eligible proposals must identify and involve at least 30 faculty members drawn from a minimum of eight different colleges with firm commitments to the intellectual focus of the Center (for purposes of these proposals the five constituent colleges of the arts and sciences will be thought of as separate entities). A Center's focus must be on both the underlying science and policy implications for society. Successful Centers will reflect the involvement of faculty from basic science groups and also professional colleges.

4. Clear governance guidelines must be developed and agreed to by participants.
5. The primary aims of each Center shall be research and support of graduate education, although integration with undergraduate academic programming will also be important.
6. Reward structures for all faculty involved in Centers must be predetermined and agreed upon by the department chairs and deans involved. The basis for faculty performance assessment must be identified, taking into account the contributions of individual faculty to the proposed Center as well as home departments or colleges. This applies both to annual appraisals for compensation purposes and reviews for promotion and tenure.
7. Policies must be articulated and agreed upon for distributions of direct and indirect cost recovery by colleges, departments, faculty members, and the Centers. A clear annual budget must be part of the submitted proposal.
8. Individual faculty members may only participate in one Center for Innovation proposal and can also be involved in one Innovation Group proposal.
9. For each approved Center the Office of Academic Affairs will provide the following:
 - a. Assignment to a fiscal officer;
 - b. Assignment to a staff coordinator;
 - c. Funding of \$750,000 for each year of a five-year period – such funds to be used for “buying” faculty time at 1/9th per course (buy-out funds going to the TIU involved) or for research or administrative assistance;
 - d. Some limited conference room/meeting place facilities;
 - e. Training in systems perspectives, teamwork, and best practices of successful interdisciplinary centers.
10. Agreement that after five years of university funding the center will be self-sufficient through its own fund generation or will disband.
11. Identification of clear annual and five-year evaluation criteria, which should be consistent with university criteria for approval of university center status.

Innovation Groups

1. Proposals must come directly from faculty, have a clear and distinct focus, and be judged to have the potential to grow into a Center for Innovation through external resource generation.
2. Eligible proposals must identify and involve at least 10 faculty members drawn from a minimum of three different colleges with a firm commitment to the intellectual focus of the Innovation Group.
3. A maximum of three Innovation Groups will be identified in the first year and three in the second year.
4. Clear governance guidelines must be identified and agreed to by participants.
5. The goal of each Innovation Group shall be to develop a common research and policy development focus.
6. For each recognized Group the university will provide:
 - a. Limited access to meeting/conference space;
 - b. \$20,000 per year for three years to facilitate Group interactions (e.g., support for research colloquia, weekly gatherings, etc.);

- c. Information on best practices for developing successful interdisciplinary centers.
7. Agreement on assessment metrics for review of Group effectiveness annually and after three years of operation.

Criteria for Evaluation of Proposals

The following criteria will be used in the review of Centers for Innovation and Innovation Groups, as appropriate:

- Strategic focus of the Center/Group on one of the overarching issues/problems identified above, including the science involved and policy implications;
- Potential to advance the “One University” concept and articulation of that goal;
- Potential to propel the area of focus into an internationally recognized area of research and policy formulation;
- Distinctiveness of center focus or approach to knowledge generation and understanding;
- Ability to access and leverage regional and national funding resources;
- Plans for sustainability after the initial funding period;
- Feasibility of opportunities for partnering with other institutions world wide;
- Potential impact on Ohio economic development;
- The extent of matching fund generation from department, college, or external sources;
- Licensing and commercialization potential.

Application Review Process

A letter of intent (LOI) to submit an application for Centers for Innovation is required by **Monday, March 2, 2009**. The letter should be addressed to Executive Vice President and Provost Joseph A. Alutto, Office of Academic Affairs, 203 Bricker Hall, 190 N. Oval Mall, to the attention of Assistant to the Provost Crystal Garrett. It may also be submitted electronically to garrett.8@osu.edu. The letter of intent should contain the title of the application, the principal investigator, a list of participating colleges, a tentative list of participating faculty and a two page abstract that succinctly states the research problem, the goals of the Center and the prospects for long-term sustainability of the Center. A “down-selection process” will be conducted to determine those proposals that fit the guideline objectives, and are most competitive for moving forward. The initial selection will be conducted by the Vice President for Research, the Dean of the Graduate School, and the Provost. Those applications selected from the first round of screening will advance to the full proposal stage.

The deadline for full proposal submission for Centers for Innovation will be the end of business on **Thursday, April 30, 2009**. Proposals must be submitted to the Office of Academic Affairs, 203 Bricker Hall, 190 N. Oval Mall, to the attention of Assistant to the Provost Crystal Garrett. Submission may also be made electronically to garrett.8@osu.edu.

Proposals will be formally reviewed by a committee composed of distinguished faculty from within and outside the university. Those proposals selected for funding will be announced in June, 2009, with funding to begin July 1, 2009.

The deadline for application submission for Innovation Groups will be **Monday, April 13, 2009**, with submission to the Office of Academic Affairs, 203 Bricker Hall, 190 N. Oval Mall, to the attention of Assistant to the Provost Crystal Garrett. Submission may also be made electronically to garrett.8@osu.edu. The selection process will involve the Vice President for Research, the Dean of the Graduate School, and the Provost as well as distinguished faculty. Decisions about funding will be announced July 30, 2009, with funding becoming available September 21, 2009.