MAFES Special Research Initiative

Request for Proposals

2024

The goal of the special research initiative is to provide seed funding for new and innovative research projects, with the goal of leveraging the results into peer-reviewed external funding and subsequent refereed publications.

As a reminder, last year we implemented 2 major changes that are still in effect:

1. Period of performance can be 1 or 2 years (if you received 2 years of funding last year, you are not eligible to apply this year)

2. You may choose a start date of January or July

WHAT'S NEW for 2024? Faculty may only submit one SRI proposal as PI.

General Guidance

- **Submission Deadline:** September 18, 2023 at 8:00 AM CST

- **Eligibility:** Proposals will only be considered if the PI has a MAFES appointment <u>and</u> if PI and all co-PIs wanting a child account have an active and approved Hatch multi-state or Hatch project at the time of proposal submission and through the duration of the project. **Reminder: Faculty may only submit one proposal as PI.**

- **Amount*:***
    o Maximum funding is $50,000 per 12-month period.
    o Careful allocation among 6-month periods is still required and important. Unspent funds at the end of a fiscal year may NOT be rolled over to the next fiscal year, except in extenuating circumstances outside the PI's control.
    o Maximum funding for a 2-year proposal is $100,000 but most be allocated as a maximum of $50,000 per 12-month period.

- **Proposal Tracks**
    1) **New Investigators** (less than 5 years at MSU)
    2) **Innovative, Critical Need, or New Direction Funding**

- **Leveraging Plan:** All proposals are expected to include a leveraging plan for bigger, competitively-funded projects.

- **Self-Audit:** We are no longer requesting a self-audit at the end of the award period. However, you will be asked about publications and leveraging of funds in the application.

Proposal Guidelines

Project narrative is limited to 5 pages (excluding the SRI routing form, figures/tables, literature cited, budget, and budget justification), should be single spaced, 12-point font, and must follow the format in this RFP.

- Proposals must be submitted online at www.mafes.msstate.edu/sri/ by 8:00 AM CST, September 18.

- The proposal submission portal will request that you enter the following information in a web form:
  - PI contact information
  - Departmental affiliation
  - Rank
  - Proposal title
  - Abstract/Executive summary
  - Total proposal budget
  - Selection of 1- or 2-year project
  - Selection of project begin date of January 2023 or July 2023
  - You will be asked if you have received SRI funding during the past 3 years, yes or no. If yes,
    - you will be asked to list any peer-reviewed publications that have resulted from previous SRI funding (past 3 years)
    - you will be asked to list any proposals submitted (include PI, Co-PIs, Title, Agency, $ requested, and whether funded/pending/not funded as a result of previous SRI funding

- After these items are entered in the web form, you will be taken to a second page to upload a copy of the full proposal in PDF format.
  - Include the proposal submission routing form signed by the PI, co-PIs, and appropriate Department Heads as the first page. *No other internal approval sheet is required.*
  - Include the budget excel file, converted to a PDF file, as the last page

- After successful upload of the proposal PDF, you will receive a confirmation screen.

Other tips:

- Do not include resumes or CV.

- Budgets must be complete and include complete budget justification for all required fields.

- If funds are to be distributed to more than one PI, complete a separate budget page for each PI, in addition to the total budget. Only the total budget will be entered into the web form, but the pdf of the full project proposal should include the total project budget and PI-specific budgets.

- Each budget must indicate the proper multi-state or Hatch project number. If the multi-state or Hatch project is set to expire during the SRI project, an alternative Hatch project must be available to transfer funds.

BUDGET
Line Item notes:

- **ALL CATEGORIES:** NO indirect costs (costs that are part of the MSU Indirect Cost Rate) may be included (administrative assistants, utilities, gas for vehicles, etc.)

- **SALARY:** Salaries are limited to undergraduate students, graduate research assistants, post-doctoral associates, or temporary employees. Partial funding for soft-funded research associates, and soft-funded faculty will be considered in proportion to their time and effort allocation to the SRI project and require a project-related justification.

- **FRINGE BENEFITS:** MAFES Administration will cover fringe benefits (including student insurance) and tuition costs, and these should not be included in your budget.

- **TRAVEL:**
  - Hatch-Multistate travel should be requested separately through the MAFES Hatch-Multistate Travel program, and not included in SRI proposals.
    - Reminder: **Travel to meetings other than multistate meetings is specifically *prohibited* by NIFA on Hatch-Multistate funds**.
  - Travel for data collection, observation or action directly supporting the SRI research *is allowed* on both Hatch and Hatch-Multistate projects.
  - NO foreign travel

- **CONTRACTUAL:**
  - NO training
  - NO maintenance contracts

- **EQUIPMENT:** Not allowed

- **COST-SHARE:** SRI funds, because they are federal, cannot be used as match/cost-share.

Review Criteria

Proposals will be screened for compliance with stated eligibility criteria, budget criteria, and adherence to track priorities. Non-compliant proposals will be returned without review.

All other proposals will be sent for internal merit review, including the following conditions:

- Are the goals clearly stated and achievable within the stated timeline and budget?
- Are the approaches clearly described?
- Is the experimental design robust and likely to produce reliable knowledge?
- Is there a clear path to peer-review, competitive funding, and peer-reviewed publication?
- What is the potential impact of the proposed project?
- Does the form and format of the application match the level of presentation expected at the federal level?

Proposal Template

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: (Name, Dept., Rank, Phone, Email)

CO-INVESTIGATORS: (Name, Dept., Rank, Phone, Email)

CRIS PROJECT TITLE:

HATCH or HATCH-MULTISTATE NUMBER:

HATCH or HATCH-MULTISTATE TERMINATION DATE:

TOTAL FUNDING REQUESTED:

DURACTION OF PROJECT: ☐ ONE-year ☐ TWO-year

PROJECT START DATE: ☐ January 1, 2024 ☐ July 1, 2024

DID YOU RECEIVE SRI FUNDING IN 2023? ☐ YES ☐ NO

TRACK: ☐ 1 ☐ 2

NARRATIVE:

Abstract/Executive summary which should include brief introduction and objectives (no more than 1 page, copy and paste into web form)

Relevant background

Approach

Anticipated outcomes

Leveraging plans for competitive funding sources

Potential impact

Literature cited

Budget(s) and justification (use budget template in attached excel file)