Request for Applications
2015-2016 E²SHI Seed Grant Program

Application Deadline: February 11, 2015

The Johns Hopkins Environment, Energy, Sustainability & Health Institute (E²SHI) invites applications for seed grants of up to $25,000 to support teams of Johns Hopkins researchers to begin or expand interdisciplinary research projects related to environment, energy, sustainability, and/or their relationship to health. Applications are invited from researchers in any JHU division.

E²SHI is an interdisciplinary, university-wide institute of Hopkins that addresses critical issues related to environmental sustainability, including energy challenges and health impacts. E²SHI’s goals are to:

1) Establish Hopkins as a world leader in, and provide a single point of contact for, integrative approaches to global environmental change, sustainability, and their related health challenges.
2) Promote the development of interdisciplinary research collaborations and proposals.
3) Provide support to enhance and coordinate environmental curricula at the undergraduate and graduate levels.
4) Help to translate research into sound policy.
5) Develop collaborative partnerships with the business sector, federal, state, and local agencies, environmental groups, and Baltimore community organizations.

Information about the seed grant program and application requirements is provided below. For more information about E²SHI and/or the seed grant program, contact the E²SHI Program Coordinator at kilima@jhu.edu or visit our website at http://e2shi.jhu.edu/index.php/research_projects/seed_grants/.

Program Objectives

We intend to fund research projects of up to $25,000 each for 12 months of activity starting July 1, 2015,1 with strong preference given to proposals with a clear research plan that involves interdisciplinary collaboration and has clear potential for longer-term funding from external sources. In extraordinary cases, seed grants can be awarded for larger amounts than $25,000.

Successful proposals will involve interdisciplinary research concerning the environment, energy supply and use, economic and ecological sustainability, and/or their relationship to public health, and will describe an approach by which the research team will achieve the following:

1) Develop new or enhanced collaborations among researchers from more than one discipline.
2) Obtain preliminary research results to motivate and justify future work.
3) Develop a written proposal(s) to identified external funding source(s) for a multi-year, multi-investigator project.

For a list of past seed grants, visit http://e2shi.jhu.edu/index.php/research_projects/seed_grants/research_projects/.

---

1 Most seed grants will be disbursed starting July 1, 2015. However, if the proposed project is dependent on external factors such as seasonal fieldwork or external grant deadlines, then arrangements can potentially be made to disburse the award at an earlier date.
Criteria

The seed grant is open to all Johns Hopkins researchers, which can include faculty, staff and doctoral students, on the condition that the lead PI (Principal Investigator) is a full-time research scientist, research scholar, or professor at Johns Hopkins University.

- Research teams should include two or more investigators. There is no maximum number of investigators. We encourage new and young investigators to apply.
- Proposed projects should include research teams representing two or more different JHU divisions and/or new collaborations between team members, although proposals from teams representing the same division are also welcome and have been funded in past E²SHI seed grant rounds.
- Preference is given to projects with Co-PIs who are members of the Hopkins community. Non-Hopkins researchers can participate in the project; however, funding for their involvement should come from non-E²SHI sources.
- Seed grant funds can be used for equipment, supplies, travel, and to support graduate research assistants and other support personnel. Funds may be used to pay up to 50% of equipment costing $200 or more having useful lives beyond the 1 year seed grant (e.g. camera or computer). Faculty salary support will be permitted on the condition that such support can be clearly linked with helping develop a pathway to reach future external funding targets. See the application instructions below for more information.

Project Requirements and Obligations

All applications must meet the following requirements for consideration:

1) The project should be interdisciplinary and seek new and innovative ways of drawing together faculty and research staff across disciplines. Research team members must be willing to bring together their knowledge, experience, and expertise for the project.

2) Intellectual inquiry should be outcome-driven and aim to find implementable solutions to complex challenges. Examples include creating technologies that improve the quality of life, or using new kinds of science and public policy to have direct impacts on communities.

3) The project should aim to create a legacy, such as securing external funds to further the research, and publishing papers in peer-reviewed journals. The proposal should discuss how the experience gained from the project might be leveraged for external funding in the future.

4) The project timeline should indicate activities to be largely complete within a 12 month timeframe. Awarded seed grants may be eligible to request one no-cost extension of up to 3 months.

Recipients of seed grants will be asked to fulfill several obligations, including:

1) Prepare two reports, due 6 months and 12 months into the award period, summarizing research progress and accomplishment as well as evidence of submitting proposal(s) to external funding source(s).

2) Give a presentation about the research findings at an E²SHI sponsored event or other approved event.

3) When submitting proposals for external funding, consider submitting the proposal through E²SHI. Guidelines for submitting proposals are available at http://e2shi.jhu.edu/index.php/research_projects/proposals/. E²SHI provides all administrative and budget services needed to submit, and submitting proposals through E²SHI does not affect any return on research you, your department, or center would normally receive through your school.

Research Areas

The scope of this RFA is broad. Seed Grant applications can focus on any topic addressing environment, energy, sustainability or related health issues. However, we especially encourage proposals related to the following themes which have been identified as priorities by the E²SHI strategic planning process:
Request for Applications: 2015-2016 E²SHI Seed Grants

- Climate Change
- Built Environment
- Energy
- Behavior Change

For examples of focus areas related to the above themes, see E²SHI’s Strategic Plan at http://e2shi.jhu.edu/index.php/about/strategic_plan/.

When possible, we encourage applications to also relate to one or more of the Signature Initiatives set forth by the University administration, including:

- American City
- Global Health
- Water Institute

For more information about the Signature Initiatives, visit https://rising.jhu.edu/solving.

**Application Procedure**

There is no application form. Following the outline below, please submit the completed application materials as a single PDF file to E²SHI Program Coordinator at kilima@jhu.edu by 11:59 pm EST on Wed, February 11, 2015.

Note: All applications for funding should be submitted in 10-12 point font, single-spaced with margins of no less than 0.8 inch. Applications that are incomplete or whose project description exceeds the 4 page limitation will not be reviewed.

The application should include the following:

- A cover page with:
  1) Project title (can be a working title).
  2) A 300-word (maximum) abstract of the proposal.
  3) Principal Investigator’s (PI) name, department, division and contact information (telephone & email address).
  4) Co-PIs’ names, department, division and contact information.
  5) Dollar amount requested for seed grant (up to $25,000 for 12 months). If matching funds will be provided (such as for non-JHU collaborators), please state the funding amount.

- Project description, up to 4 pages (maximum). Label the sections as:
  1) Project goals and objectives.
  2) Background information and preliminary studies.
  3) Research design – Lay out the basic project plan, including the hypotheses being tested and the design used to test them, such as data collection and analysis methods. Refer to published papers where possible regarding methods. Indicate fieldwork site(s), the project partners involved in the project, and the project team’s experience, if any, working at the fieldwork site(s) or with project partner(s). Provide a brief description of each team members’ role in the project.
  4) Expected outcomes.
  5) Project timeline describing the timing of the project plan and anticipated project milestones.

---

1 E²SHI will consider applications between seed grant rounds for proposed research projects that would develop data or other preliminary results needed to prepare proposals for external grant opportunities with upcoming deadlines. The seed grant proposal would need to document that opportunity, and submitting an external grant proposal would need to be one of the seed grant products. If you are considering submitting an off-cycle seed grant application, contact E²SHI Director, Ben Hobbs, at bhobbs@jhu.edu to discuss the objectives of the work and the procedures for review.
Appendix A: References with all authors listed. Please underline PI and co-PI’s names.

Appendix B: One page budget for 12 months of activity listing key areas of support and justification. Faculty salary support will be permitted on the condition that such support can be clearly linked with helping develop a pathway to reach future external funding targets, as outlined in a letter from the PI’s Departmental Chair (or equivalent) that indicates this pathway.


Appendix D: Describe current funding support and future opportunities for the project using the list below. If not applicable for one or more of the items on the list, please indicate “None” or “N/A”. Please note that preference will be given to applications with a clear potential for longer-term funding from external sources.

1) Other sources of support already in place for this project, including the amount and funding period.
2) Other grant applications or contracts pending for this project.
3) Grant applications or contract bids intended to be submitted in 2015-2016 for this project.
4) Potential funding sources for continued research in the future.

Appendix E: Letters of support from the Department Chair (or equivalent), only required for faculty members requesting salary support.

Review Process

Applications will be judged in terms of:

- The creativity, potential and importance of the proposed research project.
- Quality of the research team’s preparation and experience, as judged by past research experience, qualifications, and ability to communicate across disciplines.
- The interdisciplinary nature of the proposed project, e.g., how the team will work across disciplines to achieve the project’s goals.
- Potential for further grant support from external sources.
- Strategies for communicating the results to the public.

Proposals will be judged by an interdisciplinary review committee. As such, seed grant applications should be able to communicate research objectives, design and outcomes to people outside of your discipline.

Timeline

November 18, 2014: RFA released for Seed Grant applications
February 11, 2015: Seed Grant application deadline
April 2015: Grant awards announced
July 1, 2015: Start date for funded seed grant projects
June 30, 2016 End of seed grant funding period

Submit application as a single PDF file to E²SHI Program Coordinator at kilima@jhu.edu by 11:59 pm EST on February 11, 2015.