

Sun Grant Center Internal Call for Proposals

A bioenergy related competitive grant program for UTIA Faculty

This competitive grant program is administered by the Southeastern Sun Grant Center in the Tennessee Agricultural Experiment Station. A pool of \$600,000 is available to support bioenergy related projects conducted by UTIA Principle Investigators. Proposals may request no more than \$75,000 and may not exceed 2 years in duration. Deadline for receipt of applications is **February 6, 2009**.

Scope of Solicitation

The solicitation focuses on the effort to ensure efficient and economically viable lignocellulosic biorefinery operation through work in feedstock characteristics, pre-processing methods, separation technology, and conversion processes for biobased building blocks. This solicitation seeks proposals across each phase of lignocellulosic biorefinery operation. Proposals in agronomy, engineering, chemistry, and policy and economic evaluation are sought.

Industrial partnerships are highly encouraged. Industrial partners must provide a 20% match to any grant funds requested.

Topics of interest include (but are not limited to):

- Development of sustainable agricultural and silvicultural practices to maximize yield of dedicated bioenergy crops.
- Improved accessibility of cellulose to enzymatic activity from genetic improvement through breeding and molecular genetics.
- Effect of feedstock pre-processing methods on the economics of ethanol production from cellulosic biomass.
- Effect of harvest and storage conditions on process performance and ethanol yield.
- Identification and development of novel pretreatment technologies for cell wall deconstruction.
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- New chemical and/or enzymatic transformation pathways to produce biorefinery co-products.

- Optimized models for convenient assessment of agricultural and forest biomass availability, and regional biorefinery siting.

Eligibility

All Principle Investigators must be faculty of the Univ. of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture. Co-PIs, research partners, and collaborators from other parts of the University, other universities, the National Labs, and private industry are encouraged.

Application

A full application packet will include:

- A completed application form (available at <http://sungrant.tennessee.edu/grants/>)
- A maximum 3-page, 12 pt font, single spaced, 1-inch margin project narrative
- A list of citations
- A maximum 1-page budget narrative
- A maximum 2-page curriculum vitae for each PI
- A current and pending Research list for each PI
- A brief Email of Support from the PI's Department Head sent to sungrant@tennessee.edu

Application Submission

Applications will only be accepted through email. Please submit your completed application materials in one email to the Sun Grant Center at sungrant@tennessee.edu.

The email letter of support from the Department Head should be sent separately by the Department Head.

Applications are due by **5:00 p.m., Feb. 6, 2009**.

Presentations

After receipt, proposals will be screened by the Administrative Committee. Selected PI's will be invited to give a 10 minute presentation to the review committee on the proposed project. The committee will then make funding decisions based on the application and presentation.

Questions

Please review the attached FAQ sheet provided with this RFP. Should you have further questions not addressed by the FAQs, please contact Sam Jackson at 6-1124 or samjackson@utk.edu.



Frequently Asked Questions

- 1. What is this grant program and what is the source of funding?** This grant program is funded through the Southeastern Sun Grant Center. A portion of the funding received from the U.S. Department of Transportation was reserved to increase research capacity and excellence in biofuels and bioproducts research at the University of Tennessee Agricultural Experiment Station. This internal program results from these funds.
- 2. How is this grant program different from the Regional Southeastern Sun Grant Initiative Competitive Grants Program?** This program is open only to principle investigators within UTIA, and also operates from a separate pool of funding. The other Sun Grant program is a regional competitive grants program that is open to PI's throughout nine southeastern states. With a larger amount of funding available, the regional competitive grants program offers both the Integrated and Seed proposals. Submission to the internal call will not influence the decisions in any external call. However, we will not provide funding to a project from both programs.
- 3. What types of projects are eligible for funding?** Projects that address the scope of the solicitation in research and outreach are eligible. The grant funds are not available to support curriculum development projects.
- 4. How much funding is available, what is the maximum award amount, and what duration can the projects have?** This program has a pool of \$600,000 with grants of a \$75,000 ceiling for a maximum duration of 2 years.
- 5. Is this a one-time award, or do you expect future rounds of funding to be available? And how much in future years?** This is a one-time award. Subsequent program calls for proposals are dependent upon receipt of additional grant funds.
- 6. When will funds be available to begin funded projects?** Funds will be available March 1, 2009.
- 7. Do I process this application through the normal UTIA proposal submission process?** No. No internal UTIA forms need to be completed by your departmental bookkeeper. You may complete and submit your application directly to the Sun Grant Center. We encourage you, though, to have your bookkeeper review your budget for accuracy. The only departmental activity that needs to occur is a letter of support emailed from your department head.
- 8. Do I need a cost match/share?** No. Cost match or share is not required, however, leveraging of funds is encouraged.
- 9. What about indirect (F&A) charges?** Since these are internal funds, no indirects should be included in your budget.
- 10. Are these funds eligible for the Faculty Incentive Program?** No. These funds are not eligible for the Faculty Incentive Program.
- 11. I understand the lead PI must be a UTIA faculty member. Can other project collaborators outside UTIA be included? Does this strengthen proposals?** Yes, project collaborators from outside UTIA can be included. Though not required, these collaborators may strengthen proposals. Please note that Sun Grant funds cannot be used to support federal research partners.
- 12. I see a box to list industrial partner(s) on the proposal application. Is this required? Does this strengthen proposals?** Research partners from industry are not required in this program. However, proposals with industry partners will be viewed favorably. Industrial partners requesting funds must provide a 20% match on the funds requested. This match can be through actual dollars or through in-kind services.
- 13. Can graduate student stipends and student fees be covered by these funds?** Yes, graduate student stipends and fees can be requested in this program.
- 14. How will the applications be evaluated?** Each proposal will be reviewed by a UTIA Administrative Committee established by the Dean. This committee will review the proposals based on their applicability to the program areas outlined and their overall merit. This committee will make an initial selection of proposals whose authors will be invited to give a brief, 10-minute presentation to the committee concerning the proposed work. After all of the presentations, the committee will make the final funding selection.
- 15. When do you expect to announce these awards?** Awards will be announced as quickly as possible. This should occur no later than mid to late March.
- 16. What about indirect charges for partner institutions, such as UTK, ORNL, other universities, etc?** If you plan to share \$25,000 or less with a partner, no indirects are allowed and no matching is required. The one exception to this is for industrial partners. Industrial partners are required to provide a 20% match on any funds they request, no matter how much they request. If you plan to share more than \$25,000 with a partner, please contact us (865-946-3240 or sungrant@tennessee.edu) to discuss this issue.