CONducting ComplEx Research Together (CONCERT) Grants: Standard, Planning, and Cross Center/Institute Awards

Introduction: Due to its unique location in the mountains of North Carolina, Appalachian State University has traditionally been committed to promoting scholarly work in the area of Sustainability. In 2008, the Research Institute for Environment, Energy, and Economics (RIEEE) was established to underscore this dedication through fostering interdisciplinary research that crosses the core research areas described broadly as:

- Environmental Systems;
- Human Energy Systems; and
- Economic Systems.

In order to support this mission, the RIEEE aims to assist faculty, students, academic departments, related centers, and other university units by providing (a) opportunities to participate in joint, disciplinary and/or education research, (b) opportunities to network with potential collaborators, (c) opportunities for professional development, and (d) financial administration for research projects. It is our hope that the work supported by the RIEEE will be integrated into academic programs at Appalachian State University, used to facilitate discovery among K-12 student students and teachers, and employed in the economic development of the region.

Purpose of CONCERT Program: Funding will support new, existing, or developing research projects that involve more than one of the RIEEE core research areas and are performed by collaborative, interdisciplinary teams. These research clusters may be composed of faculty members, graduate and undergraduate students, EHRA staff, and others such as research professors and external collaborators. Proposals should correspond to the missions of the Southern Appalachian Environmental Research and Education Center (SAEREC), the Center for Economic Research and Policy Analysis (CERPA), and the Appalachian Energy Center (AEC). We encourage projects involving the collection and analysis of “big data” to collaborate with faculty members in the Computer Science Department. We further encourage PIs funded through the CONCERT Mechanism to submit external proposals through RIEEE or the related centers.

Standard Awards will support new and existing projects that contribute to more than one of the RIEEE core research areas.

Planning Awards will support the development of new projects that contribute to more than one of the RIEEE core research areas.

RIEEE/Office of Sustainability Awards will support new and existing projects that contribute to more than one of the RIEEE core research areas and have a strong emphasis on regional sustainable development. These projects will be supported jointly by the RIEEE and the Office of Sustainability (sustain.appstate.edu).

Due Date: October 17, 2016 by 5:00pm.
Budget Limitations (FY 2017):
- Standard Awards – up to $5,000
- Planning Awards – up to $1,000
- RIEEE/Office of Sustainability Awards – up to $5,000

Anticipated Number of Awards: We estimate that between 12 to 24 distinct research projects will be funded.
- Standard Awards – 6 to 12 projects
- Planning Awards – 3 to 6 projects
- RIEEE/Office of Sustainability Awards – 3 to 6 projects

Review Process and Criteria: Proposals will be reviewed for funding by a committee composed of members of the RIEEE Advisory Board. Final funding decisions will be made by the Interim Director of the RIEE, the Center Directors, and the Director of Appalachian Sustainability. Review Criteria include:
- Interdisciplinary nature of the project and how well it aligns with the RIEEE core research areas
- Interdisciplinary nature of the research team or cluster
- Potential for the research to advance knowledge
- Potential for external support (grants, contracts, or organizational collaborations).

Application Instructions: The application shall consist of the following:
1. **Cover Page** (use linked template)
2. Project Description (4-page limit)
   - Background and Significance
   - Goals and Objectives
   - Research Plan and Timeline
   - Preliminary Results - for all existing projects
   - Clusters that have had prior support through the CONCERT Program should provide information about what has been achieved and a rationale for continued funding.
   - Evidence of Potential for External Financial Support (Clusters should provide details about targeted funding opportunities, deadlines, etc.)
3. References (1-page limit)
4. **Budget** (use linked template)
5. Budget Justification (1-page limit)

Formatting: Font: minimum of 11 pt. Arial or Helvetica; single-spaced, maximum of 6 lines per inch; 1 inch margins left/right and top/bottom.
Award Management Information for Principal Investigators:
Funds may be used for such things as academic year or summer salaries for undergraduate and/or graduate students, summer salaries for faculty members, travel for faculty members, staff, and/or students, and research related equipment and supplies.

- All expenditures must adhere to state and University policies.
- Expenditures will be subject to year-end spending guidelines, therefore all awards must be fully expended by May 30, 2017, except for funds allocated to student wages, which must be expended by June 15, 2017.
- Some clusters will be supported completely by supplemental funds which will not be assigned to RIEEE until Spring 2017.
- All publications and presentations related to the CONCERT award should acknowledge support from the RIEEE (and the Office of Sustainability, when relevant).
- All projects will be required to submit a final report by September 1, 2017. Please use this template.

Submission Process: Submit Cover Page, Project Description, References and Budget Justification as a single PDF attachment and Budget as Excel document to Grace Plummer via email at plummergj@appstate.edu by Monday, October 17th, 2016 at 5pm.

For additional information about Standard and Planning Awards contact:

Nicole S. Bennett
Interim Director, RIEEE
bennettns@appstate.edu

For additional information about RIEEE/Office of Sustainability Awards contact Nicole Bennett or:

Lee Ball
Interim Director, Office of Sustainability
balllf@appstate.edu