

MEMORANDUM

To: USC Viterbi faculty and staff

From: Maja Mataric 
Vice Dean for Research

Date: Monday 23 April, 2012

Subject: VSoE Research Innovation Fund – Spring 2012 Call for Proposals

Dear VSoE researchers,

VSoE RIF was introduced in fall 2007; it is aimed at fostering novel strategic research directions, projects, organized research units (ORUs), and other activities that increase research excellence and visibility of the Viterbi school. For details about the Fund and past awards, please see:

<http://viterbi.usc.edu/research/info/vsoeinitiatives/vsoe-research-innovation-fund.htm>

Faculty with novel ideas and collaborations are encouraged to apply for the Spring 2012 RIF award cycle. Examples of activities fundable by this program include:

- 1) Organizing workshops at USC that bring external experts and visibility to the school;
- 2) Establishing or significantly revitalizing an Organized Research Unit (ORU), team, and proposal;
- 3) Obtaining pilot data toward strategic identifiable external funding opportunities; and
- 4) Establishing lasting research resources for the school. Other innovative ideas for supporting new strategic research programs are invited.

Faculty of any rank may apply, excluding visiting faculty and those having received an award from RIF in the past 3 years. Note also that this fund is not meant as a means of supplementing startup funds. Proposals that include cost-sharing from other sources should clarify the sources and amounts.

To be considered for this award, applications must provide a realistic justification of the strategic value of the grant, demonstrating how the award will make a difference in stimulating new research relevant to the school's priorities or in new attracting research support. Applicants are strongly urged to review the list of past awards (at the above URL) for illustrations of the nature and scope of the intended uses for the Fund. As in the past, up to \$50,000 in Fund support is expected to be awarded in this cycle, over multiple awards, usually about 5 to 6, making the average award around \$10,000.

The proposals should include the following components:

- 1) Title page: project title and list of participating faculty (1 page)
- 2) Project description: brief motivation, background, relevance to VSoE, and project plan (up to 3 pages)
- 3) Budget: brief budget justification (up to 1 page)
- 4) CVs of the participating faculty

Awardees will have discretion in the budgeting and re-budgeting of funds to meet their research needs within the guidelines of the fund and the terms of the proposal. However, funds may not be transferred to another project. Awards will include fringe benefits but are not assessed indirect costs and are not transferable to other institutions. A brief (1-2 page) report of the results of the funded project will be due one year after the award is made. The report should be written so it can be posted on the RIF web site; web sites are very welcome.

All materials should be submitted in electronic form to Eddie Avila (edwardav@usc.edu) by **15 May 2012**. It is expected that the awarded funds will be made available immediately.

Questions regarding this program should be directed to the Vice Dean for Research Maja Matarić, at mataric@usc.edu.

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