The Environmental Science and Policy Program (ESPP) and MSU AgBioResearch are pleased to announce the Interdisciplinary Team Building Initiative (ITBI), a funding mechanism designed to promote collaboration among faculty researchers from different disciplines, with the goal of enhancing our capacity to grow broadly defined interdisciplinary environmental scholarship and to compete for external grants.

Objectives

The ITBI grants will support the formation and operation of multiple workgroups centered on strategically important research areas including, but not limited to, water, global climate change, bioeconomy, invasive species, antimicrobials, and food systems. A workgroup consists of a small number (e.g., 2-5) of core faculty members from multiple disciplines who interact regularly with the goal of writing grant proposals, developing an interdisciplinary curriculum, or working on major multidisciplinary publications. Workgroup activities might include group meetings, presentations by group members, identification of and responses to grant opportunities, etc. Workgroup members are expected to maintain regular interactions towards clearly specified workgroup goals.

Eligibility

ITBI funding is open to all MSU faculty members.

Funding Level

An ITBI grant will provide funding for two years with a total amount of up to $10,000.

Use of Funds

The funds can be used for group meetings, workshops, visitors and invited speakers, travel to funding agencies, preliminary research, etc. Unlike a typical seed grant, an ITBI grant primarily supports interactions of faculty members who otherwise do not have the opportunity to collaborate.

Application Instructions

The application deadline is Tuesday, April 15, 2014.

Each proposal should include

- Cover page: outlining the research areas, names and department affiliations of workgroup members and the lead faculty, and contact information for the lead faculty.
- Workgroup Description (not to exceed 5 pages): outlining background information, research questions, goals of the workgroup, workgroup composition, activities of the workgroup, and expected outcomes.
• CV: NSF style two page CV of each workgroup member.
• Current and Pending Support form: NSF style document for each workgroup member.

Review Criteria

Proposals will be reviewed according to value added of the workgroup, including the following criteria:
• Fostering new collaborations, especially with new and junior faculty members,
• Interdisciplinary nature of the group membership and approach,
• Nature of proposed activities,
• Commitment to and likelihood of group members pursuing external funding opportunities,
• Alignment of research proposal with missions of ESPP and MSU AgBioResearch.

Award

An interdisciplinary committee will review the proposals. Funding decisions will be made within 4 weeks of the application deadline. The funds are expected to be spent within the funding period.

Post-Award

ESPP will provide logistic support for the operation of the workgroups. This would include space for group meetings, help with scheduling, grant intelligence and assistance with proposal development.

ESPP and AgBioResearch will hold an annual meeting for the workgroups to present their progress reports and discuss plans. The meeting will provide an opportunity for the workgroups to interact with each other.

Each workgroup is required to submit a final report outlining the activities and achievements of the workgroup within two months of the end of the funding period.