

**Request for Proposals
Research Support to Accelerate STEM Cluster Hiring
Columbia University**

Introduction

Cluster hiring is an intentional approach to hiring that brings in multiple faculty engaged in related scholarship. A successful cluster hire can have a transformative effect, bringing in cohorts of scholars who serve as catalysts for groundbreaking scholarship and enhanced community building at the university. Research also indicates that cluster hiring increases the yield of underrepresented faculty candidates by signaling that the university/school/department is a place where they can thrive.

The current initiative will provide research funding to facilitate STEM cluster hiring across the university, particularly in units that grapple with yielding the highly sought-after underrepresented candidates that they have identified for faculty positions. Please note that only research-related costs are eligible under this RFP. Schools/departments can also apply for funding to support salary, fringe etc. via the Faculty Diversity Initiative’s Target of Opportunity or Standard Search funding mechanisms.

Eligibility/Application Process

A proposed cluster must include at least two tenure-track/tenured faculty members with shared research interests. At least one candidate must be a new hire (not yet recruited) and the other(s) may be new or recently hired (i.e., within the past 2 years). Schools are encouraged to apply for support for exceptional individuals who will contribute significantly to the academic, curricular, and diversity goals of the School. Applications will only be considered from Schools that are in good standing with respect to diversity plan submissions/reporting.

Given the limited number of slots, Schools are strongly encouraged to develop a process for determining which proposals will be prioritized and put forward. Departments planning to apply should coordinate closely with their Dean’s office. Funding requests must be submitted with the support and sign-off by the School’s Dean. Those submitted without support and sign-off by the Dean will not be accepted.

Scope of Commitments and Budget

A supplemental research fund of up to \$50k (non-lab-based) or \$100k (lab-based) will be provided to each member of the cluster if at least 1 new faculty member is successfully recruited. Generally, the research supplement will be co-funded via central funds.

The precise structure of the funding support will be determined by the cluster outcomes/yield. Further details are outlined below:

STEM Cluster Outcome	STEM Cluster Initiative Funding Support
<p>2+ newly recruited faculty members and 0+ current/recently hired faculty members</p> <p>-or-</p> <p>1+ newly recruited faculty member and 1+ current/recently</p>	<p>Central office(s) will co-fund a research supplement of up to \$50k/faculty member (non-lab-based) or \$100k/faculty member (lab-based).</p>

hired faculty member	
1 newly recruited faculty member and 0 current/recently hired faculty members	<p>The research supplement will be funded equally by the recruiting school* and central funds.</p> <p><i>*The recruiting school will provide up to 1/2 of the research supplement.</i></p>

Schools: Schools and Departments are responsible for covering the remainder of costs not supported through the STEM Cluster Initiative.

Note: Awarded funds cannot be used for capital expenditures.

Funding Application Requirements

The Office of the Provost will only consider providing support for candidates being recruited as full-time tenured or tenure-track faculty members. Applications must include the following components:

- Details regarding the **proposed candidates**, and signature of the applying Dean(s) (and Department Chair(s), if applicable)
- **Proposal** (up to 5 pages) from the Dean (and Department Chair, if applicable) that includes the following sections. Please denote each section with a separate header.
 - **Qualifications, accomplishments, future promise** of the proposed cluster members
 - **Target area of STEM scholarship**, including how the cluster members will collaborate to enhance work at the university and/or lead new, innovative scholarship
 - **Potential of the cluster members to contribute to the diversity goals** of the Department/School
 - **Process by which the cluster members will be selected**, including the anticipated qualifications of any proposed new hires.
 - **Mentoring and support efforts** the hiring unit will undertake to support the professional career development of faculty members included in the proposed cluster. If you are proposing to recruit a senior candidate, provide a statement of the steps that will be taken to facilitate a successful transition into the hiring unit.
- **Statement of overall progress that the School has made in achieving its diversity goals and how this application will advance the School’s diversity plans**
- **Budget projection and narrative.** We recognize that the proposed budget is an estimate. The actual budget, and the actual award, will be based on the research support outlined in the accepted offer letter.

Review Process and Selection Criteria

Requests for support will be accepted and considered on a rolling basis. A committee appointed by the Provost will review the applications and will make recommendations to the Provost. Hiring units should expect a turn-around time of approximately 2 weeks.

Each of the application elements will be assessed on strength of presentation and feasibility. The School’s progress and commitment towards achieving its diversity objectives will also be an important

element in the review process. Interdisciplinary proposals that successfully incorporate two or more Schools/departments are encouraged.

Submission Instructions

The entire application must be submitted via the [online submission form](#), in the order of the application requirements noted above.

If you need to share the application-in-progress with others in your academic unit, please follow these steps:

1. Open the application
2. Click “Save” at the bottom of the page
3. Select “Get shareable link”
4. Paste and email the link to yourself and the corresponding colleague(s)

Contacts

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If you have any questions during the submission process, please contact our office at diversity-facultyrecruitment@columbia.edu.