Program Synopsis

The IDEA Institute supports scholarship, innovation, collaboration, and leadership in the areas of inclusion, diversity, equity, and access. The goal of the Grassroots Initiatives to Address Needs Together (GIANT) program is to enable teams of students, postdocs, staff, and faculty to propose and implement research-based initiatives in these areas.

Areas of Interest

The GIANT program seeks proposals from teams that want to actively collaborate with a target population to jointly identify a need, address it through project activities, and document best practices. The target population can be at any level, e.g., the general public, K-12 students in low-resourced schools, or undergrads, grads, postdocs, staff, and/or faculty within the Grainger College of Engineering. An example project could be to identify and address how Illinois can promote community, belonging, empowerment, and access to resources for under-engaged populations with the goal of publishing the results as a case study in an ASEE journal or conference. Areas of interest include but are not limited to:

1. Recruitment, mentoring, development, retention, and/or engagement of individuals from underrepresented groups in STEM.
2. Integration of inclusion, diversity, equity, or access in engineering education
3. K-12 outreach and STEM pipeline development
4. Public policy and/or engagement of the general public
5. Continuing education, cooperative education, and engineering workforce development
6. Scholarly research of best practices at Illinois or other institutions and effective methods to institutionalize these best practices

Note that projects may not duplicate work that is already being supported, but may leverage resources provided by existing programs.

Proposals to host a conference, workshop, or community building event are welcome, as are planning projects (e.g., conducting literature reviews, gathering preliminary data, and building partnerships) towards an extramural proposal focused on broadening participation (e.g., NSF LSAMP, INCLUDES, ADVANCE, AGEP, REU/REV/RET sites) or for which broadening participation is a major program component (e.g., NSF CISE BPC, ERC, STC, MRSEC).

A single RSO is ineligible for funding through the GIANT program. Instead, it is highly encouraged for two or more RSOs to submit a joint proposal to addresses a larger need.

Evaluation criteria

Proposals will be evaluated on the extent to which they address each of the prompts in the proposal template as well as their timeliness, appropriateness of budget, and scholarly rigor.

Total program budget

The GIANT program for 2020 will support up to 4 projects, each at the $12-15K level. To encourage student leadership and involvement, the program intends for at least 2 of the project awards to be made to student-led teams or multi-RSO collaborations.

Who may submit proposals

The project leader may be any member of the Grainger College of Engineering (e.g., a student, postdoc, staff, or faculty). Team members may be from any department on campus and include a mixture of students, postdocs, faculty, and staff. Each team should have at least three members.

Important dates
• IDEA Institute Town Hall Meeting: 3-4pm on Thursday February 13, 2020 in CSL B02
• Project proposals due: Wednesday March 4, 2020
• Project decisions: Friday March 13, 2020
• Project start date: Monday March 16, 2020
• Project end date: Thursday December 31, 2020.

Proposal templates
The proposal consists of a 2-page narrative and a budget spreadsheet. Download the proposal templates from https://uofi.box.com/s/5el06jb283pbbt4acfr78azwd3vok0yz (Illinois login). If there are participating faculty member(s), a single merged PDF of their biosketches is required.

Budget guidelines and rules
• Typically allowable budget items include salary/wages for students (e.g., undergrad hourly or grad TA/RA) or postdocs, materials, software, equipment, and travel funds to present project findings.
• No salary support for faculty or staff salary is allowed.
• No more than $5,000 for equipment.
• Tuition and overhead should not be included in the budget. Benefits are automatically computed in the spreadsheet.
• There is no explicit cap to proposals, but team members should be mindful of the number of projects we expect to fund.

Program structure
GIANT is modeled after SIIP. In addition to funding support, each project will have a mentor to discuss progress and advise the team as the project moves along. The IDEA Institute will hold a consultation towards sustainability joint meeting with all GIANT projects in September 2020. When relevant, the Institute will help interested teams identify opportunities to obtain external funding to supplement and extend GIANT funding.

A final report (~1-2 pages) is due on December 31, 2020. The report should include: (1) a list of goals met, outcomes achieved, total expenditures, and remaining funds, (2) a "Best of" short paragraph, photo, or link that highlights a particularly positive outcome of your project, (3) a list of any ways you have publicized your project (papers, faculty meetings, websites, etc.), and (4) a description of how the project will be sustained.

To share the generated knowledge and ideas and to help build community, each team will give a mixed oral/poster presentation summarizing their project at the annual IDEA Institute workshop (to be scheduled in spring semester 2021).

Proposal submission
Upload your proposal materials to: https://forms.illinois.edu/sec/56844. All team members must register to be a member of the IDEA Institute: https://forms.illinois.edu/sec/8012339 by the proposal due date.

Questions
Please address questions to Lynford Goddard, Director of the IDEA Institute (lgoddard@illinois.edu) or visit https://idea.illinois.edu/