

## **Proposal Training and Competition Request for Proposals**

The Department of Physics and the Oregon Center for Optics (OCO) are inviting applications from graduate students for interesting small projects that are not supported by their current research programs. .

### **Background**

In Spring of 2008, the OCO submitted a training program proposal to the NSF IGERT program. The proposal was not funded in the first round and was resubmitted in March 2009. In the meantime, the center is moving forward with some of the plans outlined in that proposal (such as the Optical Science Discovery Program) and initiating new proposal ideas.

### **Purpose**

We are seeking to improve student professional development and support new ideas for independent student research. This initiative is part of the broader plan to improve graduate research and training in physics.

### **Available Funds and Anticipated Number of Awards**

The OCO has committed \$3,000 matched by \$3000 from the Physics department, for one academic year. We expect to fund up to four awards for this budget cycle.

### **Budget and Project Period**

The total project period for a proposal submitted in response to this funding opportunity may not exceed 1 year. Total costs are limited to a maximum of \$3,000 per award, although submitters are encouraged to leverage funds from existing resources to support more expensive projects.

***Requests for funds less than the maximum award level are encouraged.***

### **Eligibility**

Eligible parties for this program are students with advisors who are full members of the OCO or Physics department. Students must have completed their comprehensive exams by the submission date. Submitters must apply to and complete the Proposal Training Program prior to submission. Only one submission per participant is allowed.

### **Application Materials**

Written proposals should not exceed 5 pages. Margins should be no less than 1 inch on each side. Proposers may use Arial, Georgia, Helvetica, Palatino Linotype or Computer Modern fonts at 11 point or larger. The proposal should be organized as follows:

***Cover Page*** (not counted in page limit) – A completed, signed cover sheet must be attached as the first page of the proposal. Cover sheets can be found <http://oco.uoregon.edu/cover.pdf>.

***Specific Aims*** – A self-contained description of the activity that would result if the proposal were funded.

***Project Description*** – A clear statement of the work to be undertaken. It must include the objectives for the proposed work, the expected significance and the

relation of the proposed work to existing knowledge in the field.

**Timeline** – A brief summary of the activities to be undertaken and what plans the investigator has to make sure work is completed in a timely fashion.

**Budget** – Describe what funds are needed and how funds will be used over the course of the project. Detail any matching contributions in time and financial resources that will be provided by advisors or outside sources. Contributions from outside sources must be verified by letters of support from an authorized budget authority.

**Allowable budget categories include:** equipment, supplies, computer hardware or software purchases or upgrades, equipment usage charges, publication costs and services. Salary, tuition and benefits are not allowable.

**References** (not counted in page limit) – References must follow accepted scholarly practices in providing citations for source materials relied upon when preparing any section of the proposal. This section must include bibliographic citations only and must not be used to provide parenthetical information outside of the Project Description.

**Biographical Sketch** (not counted in page limit) – a one page summary of the applicants education, professional experience and qualifications (suggested format page can be found at <http://oco.uoregon.edu/bio.pdf>).

**Supplemental Materials** (not counted in page limit) – Proposers may submit letters of support, images, equipment/service quotations and other supporting materials relevant to budgeting issues. **A signed letter of support from the proposer's adviser, acknowledging the student's participation in the contest is required.** Suggested format support letter can be found at <http://oco.uoregon.edu/support.pdf>.

*A note on figures and tables.* Submitters may include up to 3 high-resolution images in the supplemental materials. These images must have appeared in the project description in a legible format. Figures included in the supplemental materials are designed to enhance the reviewers' appreciation of the proposal *but may not* be used to circumvent page limitations.

### **Special Cases and Exceptions**

Participants who are considering developing topics peripheral to the outlined program should discuss their plan first with Miriam Deutsch. Examples for such activities include organizing topical workshops for graduate students, research proposals bridging to disciplines outside the sciences (e.g. humanities, psychology,) and proposals with mostly educational components. Submission of such proposals will be decided on a case-by-case basis.

### **Submission**

Proposals must be submitted to Brandy Todd, the OCO Research Administrator ([btodd@uoregon.edu](mailto:btodd@uoregon.edu)) by 5pm on June 1, 2009. Proposals will only be accepted in electronic format. Proposal not conforming to described standards will be rejected.

### **Review Process**

Proposals will be reviewed by a panel of faculty and students. Panel members will be screened for potential conflict of interest. Reviewers will be provided with a copy of the review criteria (below). Each reviewer will independently critique each proposal according to these criteria and provide comments.

Panel members will meet on June 12, to discuss the proposals and determine priority ranking of the proposals. After the panel has made its determinations, they will provide each proposer with live feedback. Proposers will have a chance to ask questions of the panel.

The review panel may request adjusted budgets for proposals with strong review rankings.

### **Review Criteria**

Proposals will be reviewed according to the following criteria:

- 1) **Significance/Innovation:** Does the proposal address an interesting and potentially revealing area of research?
- 2) **Project Plan:** Are the ideas and strategies proposed well reasoned? Does the proposal make an effective case for the research? Does the project seem feasible?
- 3) **Budget:** Is the proposed budget reasonable and appropriate for the proposed activities. Are plans for collaboration and/or external support viable and documented?
- 4) **Overall Evaluation:** What are the major strengths and weaknesses of the proposal.

### **Reporting**

Awardees will be expected to present their findings at the Graduate Student Seminar before May 30, 2010. A final technical report will be due by July 10, 2010. Awardees are encouraged to publish their findings.

Please direct questions about this initiative to :

Brandy Todd in the OCO at (541) 346-4313 or [btodd@uoregon.edu](mailto:btodd@uoregon.edu) or 240C Willamette Hall.

Miriam Deutsch, 275 Willamette, [miriamd@uoregon.edu](mailto:miriamd@uoregon.edu)