Pilot Post-Doctoral Funding Program Announced

A new university funding program to enhance research efforts across the university is being introduced. In this initial pilot phase, the program will provide full salary (up to $45,000) plus benefits for up to six post-doctoral associates for a period of two years, to be awarded on a competitive basis. In future phases, depending on the initial outcomes of this pilot phase, the program may be expanded to support more post-doctoral activity.

This program is designed to achieve two goals that together will help the university increase research activity and external funding and enhance the impact of our research. First, we expect that addition of post-doctoral personnel will increase the capacity of investigators to compete more effectively for additional grant funding and to more quickly and more successfully convert this additional funding into impactful results. Second, we will be able to create a more vibrant post-doctoral culture, which we view as a natural extension to our graduate research programs and which represents an important step in raising our reputation as a research university.

Funding for the first year of the two-year post-doctoral appointments will be provided by the Vice President for Research and Economic Development. Funding for the second year of the appointments will be provided by the college(s) of the PI(s), subject to availability of funding, and/or by the PI through other sources. At the time of proposal submission, it is not necessary to identify the source of the second year of support.

Program Information:

1) Principal Investigators must be University of North Dakota faculty or full time staff researchers.
2) Teams of PIs who are working in interdisciplinary areas are particularly encouraged to submit proposals.
3) PIs may submit or participate in more than one proposal.
4) Proposals may request post-doctoral support for a period of up to two years each.
5) Support is designated for new post-doctoral associates, i.e., those persons who do not currently have an appointment at UND and have not had an appointment at UND in the previous three years.
6) Support will include 12 months’ salary up to $45,000. Additional support will be provided to cover benefits.
7) No ancillary costs will be supported (e.g., materials and supplies, travel, recruiting costs, PI compensation, etc.)
8) Post-doctoral associates will submit multiple external research proposals during the lifetime of the award both for their own support as well as for the support of their research group.
9) PIs will submit at least one major research proposal for each year of the award.

Proposal Preparation and Submission:

All proposals must include the following information in the order indicated and conform to the page limits and other noted restrictions. If this information is not provided and clearly indicated, proposals will be returned without further review.
1) Describe the research idea/concept and the specific tasks that the post-doctoral associate will carry out. (3 pages, minimum 10-point font, including figures. References should take up no more than 1 additional page.)

2) Describe the impact that post-doctoral support will have on the capacity of the PI/PIs to increase external funding.

3) List and describe the specific additional funding opportunities that will be enabled by post-doctoral support, including funding agencies and specific programs. If relevant, describe how this support will help improve a previously unsuccessful external proposal. (1 page)

4) Describe how the proposed research is synergistic with current university research. (1 page)

5) Summarize PIs’ and co-PIs’ external funding track record, current funding, and proposals submitted and awaiting a funding decision. (No page limit)

6) Describe the source and amount of current resources that can be used to support the post-doctoral research. (e.g., materials and supplies, travel, etc.) (1/2 page)

7) Describe previous institutional support, and the purpose and the research outcomes of this support. (If proposals for extramural funding were submitted/awarded, include this information.) (1 page)

8) Provide an NIH-style, NSF-style or equivalent Biographical Sketch of the PI(s)/co-PI(s).

9) Proposals should be submitted electronically as a single PDF file to the Vice President for Research and Economic Development, c/o Brenda Halle at vpr@research.UND.edu.

Proposal Evaluation:

Proposals will first receive an administrative review for adherence to the proposal requirements. Following this review, an ad hoc group of internal and/or external reviewers will be assembled to evaluate the proposals based on the criteria described below.

Evaluation Criteria:

Review will consider the following criteria:

1) Intellectual merit of the proposed research.
2) The potential to quickly generate substantial external funding.
3) Current funding and funding track record of the PI(s) and co-PI(s).
4) The results of previous institutional support for the (co)-PI’s research, including support from this program.
5) Synergy of proposed research with the research strengths and emphases in the PI(s)’ department(s), college(s), and/or university.

All reasonable attempts will be made to ensure wide domain expertise among the reviewers. Reviewers will be recused in cases of conflicts of interest. Reviewers will rank order all proposals received. Reviews and rankings will be forwarded to the Vice President for Research and Economic Development. Awards will be made dependent on funding available.

Interim Review of Progress and Reporting Requirements:

If funded, PIs will report regularly on their progress. This includes reporting on recruitment efforts, appointment of the post-doctoral associate, and semi-annual reports of research and funding progress (including proposals prepared and submitted). Progress toward proposed goals will be reviewed after
nine months and funding for the second year of the award will be contingent on adequate progress. In addition, awardees and their post-doctoral associates will attend periodic meetings designed to enhance the post-doctoral culture at UND and to facilitate collaborative research. As there is a requirement that PIs and post-doctoral associates will submit external proposals (at least one major proposal per year of support from PIs), copies of the proposals should be sent to the Vice President for Research and Economic Development, c/o Brenda Halle.

**Deadline and Funding Decisions:**

Proposals will be due on January 15, 2016 and funding decisions will be made no later than February 6, 2016. Awards may begin immediately upon notification.

Please direct questions to Grant McGimpsey, Vice President for Research and Economic Development at 701-777-6736.