

UMass Lowell-Worcester Polytechnic Institute
2022 Collaborative Seed Funding Initiative

Overview:

The leadership of the University of Massachusetts Lowell and Worcester Polytechnic Institute are committed to leveraging our respective strengths to foster productive and sustainable interdisciplinary collaborations among our faculty and students. To support this goal, UMass Lowell and WPI funded six collaborative projects a few years ago, and we are seeing signs of early success. One group has reported tangible research results in simulations and experimental work. Another collaboration is well on its way of creating preliminary results for a proposal to be submitted.

This year, UMass Lowell and WPI are committed again to jointly provide up to \$20,000 per project to support collaborative projects for research teams comprised of faculty from both institutions.

Description:

This initiative is intended to support new collaborations, novel discoveries, increased external funding, future industry partnerships, and possibly, the development of patentable intellectual property. Priority for funding will be given to new collaborations, projects that include multiple UMass Lowell and WPI faculty, projects that include more than one discipline, and projects that are likely to lead to external funding and/or commercialization/industry partnerships.

This year's priority areas are community-engaged research/global health/social justice, biomanufacturing/biotechnology (including workforce development), and cybersecurity. Proposals in other areas are welcome.

Estimated Number of Awards: Up to five (5) collaborative, one-year projects

Estimated Funding Amounts: Up to \$20,000 per project

Estimated Start Date: June 1, 2022

Application Deadline: February 28, 2022

Eligibility:

All full-time UMass Lowell tenured/tenure-track faculty are eligible to participate. All full-time WPI faculty, whether tenured/tenure-track or non-tenure track, are eligible. An individual investigator may serve as primary applicant on one proposal and co-applicant on one additional proposal.

WPI and UMass Lowell embrace and celebrate diversity in all its forms and encourage individuals from underrepresented populations to apply for this fund

Online Site for Brainstorming Ideas and Develop Collaborations:

We will have sessions via zoom, one on each of the topic areas, during the week of January 18, 2022, for those interested in applying and in need of finding a collaborator at the other institution. These sessions will provide spaces for introductions and initial conversations. We ask that participating faculty use a slide template to introduce themselves and their work/research interests. We will follow up with times, zoom links, and slide templates in the new year.

Faculty may also use the Dimensions Public Portal <https://app.dimensions.ai/discover/publication>, to find possible collaborators at either institution using keywords and institution name. Once identified, they can then be contacted and directed to project ideas for collaboration.

Submission:

Each submitting team must include at least one member from UML and one from WPI. Teams should submit their proposal through UMass Lowell's InfoReady Review site: uml.infoready4.com. Navigate to the competition named "UML-WPI Collaborative Seed Funding" and follow the submission guidelines.

Proposal Requirements:

Project Description: No more than five (5) type-written, single-spaced pages. The narrative should include a discussion of a novel research project that involves substantial collaboration between one or more faculty from each institution, and includes the following:

1. Problem statement
2. Project goals and objectives
3. Project design and methodology
4. Innovation and potential impact
5. Roles and responsibilities of performing team
6. Existing resources available to support the project
7. Expected outcomes, including specific plans for submitting to external funding agency
8. Project timeline

Literature Cited: Include a separate section listing any literature or scholarly works referenced in the text.

Biographical Sketches: Please provide a two-page biographical sketch for each applicant and co-applicant.

Budget: Provide a detailed budget that contains separate columns for the UMass Lowell and the WPI portions of the project budget, justifying all expenses. Each institution's share of the budget should reflect reasonable effort and costs anticipated by that institution's participants in the project, since in this program each institution may only pay for the costs incurred by its own participants.

Applicant and co-applicant salary and additional compensation, student tuition, equipment acquisition costs, and indirect costs are not allowable. Allowable categories include:

1. Student hourly wages: Identify if graduate or undergraduate. Include an estimate of the number of hours, pay rate, and description of the work to be performed.
2. Research or administrative staff: Hourly funding to support a technical program manager, postdoc, or other research or administrative staff. Include an estimate of the number of hours, pay rate (and any applicable fringe benefits), and description of the work to be performed.
3. Material and supplies: May include tools, sensors, software, columns, etc., as well as other necessary lab materials and supplies. Provide an estimate (itemized) budget.
4. Core facility charges: Provide an estimate of hours and hourly charges.
5. Travel: Travel to annual conferences/workshops must be justified and show a direct link to the success of the project.
6. Meeting costs: Funds for hosting workshops and/or meetings related to the project should be justified based on the potential to build relationships and/or expand collaborations with other organizations and institutions. The estimated number of participants, itemized travel costs, and anticipated venue must be included.
7. Participant costs: Funds for participant incentives are allowable, but must be justified and fall within the standards/averages of the discipline.
8. Consultants: Any costs budgeted for an outside consultant must be well-justified.

Human subjects/Vertebrate animals: Please note if the proposed work includes human subjects or vertebrate animals. An award will not be made without IRB or IACUC approval.

For questions about the competition or help finding potential collaborators at the partner institution, please email UMLWPI_Seeds@uml.edu.