Dean's Catalyst Award: Call for Proposals 2022

The Dean's Catalyst Award program aims to seed innovative research, typically in new directions, by College of Engineering faculty and the graduate students they mentor. In keeping with the College's 2020 Strategic Plan, the 2022 Dean's Catalyst Award competition emphasizes convergent research. Proposals aligned with one or more of the College's six Convergent Themes (Energy & Sustainability; Intelligent, Autonomous, & Secure Systems; Materials by Design; Neuroscience & Neuroengineering; Photonics and Optical Systems; Synthetic Biology, Mechanobiology & Tissue Engineering), *as well as* those in other areas of convergence, are highly encouraged.

Eligibility
- All College of Engineering full-time tenured and tenure-track faculty in the professorial ranks (assistant, associate, or full) may apply, unless they are members of the College's Executive Committee.
- Individual faculty members may not receive two simultaneous or consecutive Dean's Catalyst Awards as Principal Investigator; therefore, those who have received a DCA in 2020 are not eligible.
- Teams may contain members who are not a part of the College of Engineering; however, at least one of the DCA proposal's principal investigators must have their primary academic appointment in the College of Engineering.

Award Mechanism
The College anticipates 6-10 awards with a typical award of $50,000/year **for two years**. Proposals will be reviewed by a panel convened by the Associate Dean for Research and Faculty Development with the primary consideration that the expertise of the panel covers the topic areas of the proposals to the greatest extent possible.

Applications in all areas of research will be considered. If the topic of the proposal aligns with one of the following Centers or Divisions, and if the proposal is highly ranked by the review panel, the proposal will be eligible for joint support by the College and the Center or Division:
- Biological Design Center
- Center for Information & Systems Engineering
- Center for Multiscale & Translational Mechanobiology
- Division of Materials Science & Engineering
- Institute for Global Sustainability
- Neurophotonics Center
- Photonics Center

Joint support from a Center/Division requires at least one PI on the DCA being a member of that Center or Division.

Review Process

The specific review process is as follows:

1. All submitted proposals are reviewed by the panel and then rank-ordered solely based on merit (i.e., no consideration of alignment between proposal's topic and Center's/Division's mission).
2. Any highly ranked proposal that was requested by the PI(s) to be considered for joint support by a Center or Division will be sent to a designate of Center/Division who will then determine if the Center/Division supports funding a third of the award.
3. Highly ranked proposals that were not requested by the PI to be considered for joint support by a Center or Division will still be eligible for an award.

The total number of awards will be determined based on the number of highly ranked proposals, the number of proposals that Centers/Division elect to co-fund, and available funds. The College does not anticipate that all funding will go to Center-/Division-aligned proposals.

Budget Guidelines

There are no indirect costs associated with the Dean's Catalyst Award. Support will typically be for a new graduate student assigned to the project along with supplies. The awards must be used to accomplish specific research tasks. The PI(s) may be asked to provide a detailed budget prior to issuance of the award.

Unexpended funds in the first year may be carried into the second year but may not be carried beyond two years. Funds may not be redirected or reallocated from the awarded budget proposal without prior approval of the Dean's Office.

Application Submission Guidelines

Applications will be accepted **until 5 pm on December 2, 2022**, and should be submitted via the InfoReady portal: https://bu.infoready4.com/. Applications should include the following:

1. Name and contact information for principal investigators. Single PI grants are allowed, but new collaborations are preferred.
2. Name of Center or Division from which joint support is requested (if relevant)
2. Project Title
3. Project Abstract (250 words or less)
4. Project description and research plan: 5 pages maximum, at least 11 pt font, (Arial preferred) and 1 in. margins. Please include information concerning plans for future external funding. A list of references cited should follow at the end (not included in the 5 pages).
5. A curriculum vitae for each PI and other key personnel (NSF or NIH format)
6. A list of all current and pending support for each PI (NSF or NIH format)
7. A budget narrative that indicates the name and department of the graduate student to be funded. If this person has not been identified, please discuss how they will be recruited to the project.

For any questions regarding using the InfoReady application portal, please contact Nadija Mujagic, nadija@bu.edu.