Call for Research Equipment and Instrumentation Investment (REI) requests – Fall 2022

The Research Council is soliciting requests for Research Equipment and Instrumentation (REI) funds. Program details are outlined below. Requests are due October 07, 2022. Template and submission form are available here: REI Template 3-24.xlsx

Overview: In AY2021, the Research Council created a small research equipment (includes instrumentation and parts for equipment fabrication) procurement program. The goal is to equalize the pursuit of timely research opportunities to acquire preliminary data, as well as to lighten the load on the Mines administration by streamlining support mechanisms for small requests. This is an open and transparent process. Funding for the program varies annually.

Eligibility and award criteria are aligned to support Mines research goals per the Mines@150 targets. Deadlines will be announced by the Research Council chair twice per year. A committee will be established by Research Council at the beginning of every academic year for a one-year term.

Proposal Review Committee: The Research Council reviews submitted proposals via a rotating review committee comprised of three faculty members currently serving on the Research Council, three Mines equipment managers, and one member from the VPRTT. Based on recommendations from the committee, final award decisions will be decided by the full Research Council. The committee has the power to recuse members who are not self-recused because of COI.

Timeline: Announcement of the Fall/Spring REI program will be released roughly around the last weekday in August/January annually. Proposal submissions for Fall/Spring REI will be due the last day of September/February. Reviews of proposals and award decisions will be made by middle of November/April. Funding award notifications will be announced by the Research Council chair to the submitting PI and their department head. Funds must be spent within six months of the award notification.

Eligibility:
1. Mines faculty and lab managers may submit a funding request as PI.
2. Research associates, staff and PhD students who are not lab managers may submit a request with faculty as co-PI.
3. Total funding requests for each round must fall between $5,000 and $30,000. For larger amounts we suggest external or crowd funding (https://research.mines.edu/crowdfunding/). Single research supporting equipment such as batteries, chillers, pumps and uninterruptible power supply systems should not apply. If no funds are available to bring a down or at-risk machine to full operation, please contact the RTT office directly.
4. REI funding requests must not be eligible for Mines Tech-Fee requests.
5. REI funding is mainly intended for PI/CO-PIs who do not have other forms of flexible funding (startup, discretionary, etc.) for the proposed purchase. Otherwise, applicants must provide strong justifications for not using such funds for the requested equipment.
6. Applicants must determine if similar equipment exists on campus, and if so must justify the purchase of similar equipment.
7. Applicants must detail potential conflicts of interest clearly.
8. Unsuccessful proposals from previous years may be resubmitted together with responses to reviews.

Criteria: Applicants are requested to:
1. Document the existence of follow-on funding opportunities.
2. Indicate if previous REI funding was awarded. If so, state any research impact achieved to date.
3. Describe potential cross-disciplinary impacts on faculty, departments, and centers.
4. Demonstrate Mines need for this equipment or add-on module for an existing equipment.
5. Provide a budgetary analysis that includes the purchase and ongoing maintenance costs.
6. Must include a plan for long-term maintenance (consumables, service contract, repairs, user fees).
7. Describe the lifetime and anticipated research impact of the equipment.
8. Some percentage of cost-sharing is strongly encouraged and will be viewed favorably by reviewers.
9. Detail if the equipment will be shared or not shared and why.
10. Priority will be given to requests for equipment that will be placed in a shared facility or used by a significant number of faculty.

Measures of Success Report
The Research Council will submit an annual evaluation report to the office of VPRTT to include the number of requests, the number of equipment purchased, diversity of initiatives, publications citing REI funding, new capabilities opened, frequency and number of uses and a summary of outcomes.