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**Auburn University Cluster Hire Initiative Proposal**

**The Office of the Provost invites proposals from faculty for the Strategic Cluster Hire Initiative. The initiative will address areas where clusters of faculty have the potential to enhance the University’s existing research capacity, contribute new discoveries and applications of knowledge, and address real-world problems that require cross-disciplinary expertise. Additional information, including a proposal template, can be found on the Cluster Hire Initiative** [**website**](http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/clusterhire_initiative.html).

**Overview**

As a land-grant institution, Auburn University is committed to advancing knowledge and discovery through application and scholarly work. To promote successful interdisciplinary research, scholarship, creative work, and engagement activities, it is important to identify existing multidisciplinary opportunities for research and cultivate new ones.

At the 2014 Research Retreat, the Associate Deans for Research (ADRs) identified cluster hiring as a key way to enhance the University’s existing research capacity, contribute new discoveries and applications of knowledge, and address real-world problems that require cross-disciplinary expertise.

In support of this effort and in consultation with the Deans, ADRs, and the Office of the Vice President for Research and Economic Development, the Provost’s Office launched the Faculty Cluster Hiring Initiative in fall 2014.

**RFP Schedule:**

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| **Event** | **Date** |
| Faculty Research Presentations | November 3-December 11, 2014 |
| RFP Release | December 11, 2014 |
| Deadline for Proposal Submissions | February 15, 2015 |
| ADR Review of Proposals (Completion) | March 1, 2015 |
| Deans’ Review of Proposals | March 31, 2015 |
| Announcement of Proposals Funded | April 2015 |

1. **Name of Principle Faculty Member Submitting:  
     
     
   Additional Faculty Members:**
2. **Proposal Criteria**

**All proposals for cluster hiring must include the following:**

1. A list of the sponsoring colleges. These are the colleges which will contain the home departments of the proposed faculty to be hired. These colleges and schools also represent the units that will be required to commit resources to the cluster hire program. All cluster proposals must be sponsored by a minimum of two colleges.
2. A narrative of no more than three pages describing the scientific/scholarly work of the proposed cluster and list faculty already at Auburn who would be part of the cluster. The narrative should contain:

* A brief description of existing faculty and their strengths in the proposed area, a brief plan to effectively engage existing faculty in the hiring of up to five additional faculty members over the next three to five years, and a clear description of how the addition of three to five new faculty would elevate qualitatively the work at Auburn in this area and significantly advance the research enterprise of the university;
* A clear description of research trend and potential funding opportunities in the proposed area to include potential funding agencies, how Auburn will become competitive in this area by the addition of the new hires. The new hires must be successful as independent researchers and as catalysts to enhance competitiveness of existing faculty.
* A list of the departments into which the new faculty would be hired and the resources required (e.g., as estimate for the cost for startup, shared equipment, etc.). Proposals for senior level hires as part of the cluster are encouraged, but an explanation should be given for why a senior level hire is needed;
* A brief explanation for how the cluster might advance graduate and/or undergraduate education, if applicable;
* The expected academic unit partnerships and anticipated collaborations in addition to a clear vision of the research/teaching/engagement plan and any targeted outcomes, e.g., a new center, new degree programs, and/or applications for major grants;
* Estimated salary costs of the new proposed hire(s) and additional programmatic costs that may be required.

1. CVs for each faculty member at Auburn who will be part of the proposed cluster. Please use the 2 page NSF style format.
2. A letter of acknowledgement from the dean of each college involved in the proposed cluster.

Proposals may build on existing programmatic strengths or propose new program development. **PROPOSALS ARE** **NOT LIMITED TO THE SIX TOPICS IDENTIFIED DURING THE CLUSTER HIRING FACULTY PRESENTATIONS.**

**A strong proposal will be one that:**

1. Addresses an area of national or global leadership in an emerging field and/or adds strength to existing areas of prominence; and
2. Articulates a strong case for enhancing the University's ability to utilize existing faculty strengths and to attract outstanding new faculty and students who will contribute to the desired goals and priorities outlined in the 2013-18 Strategic Plan.

**The deadline for submission is February 15, 2015 and all proposals must be submitted to** [**Dr. Nick Giordano**](mailto:njg0003@auburn.edu)**, Dean, College of Sciences and Mathematics. Please contact him if you have questions concerning your proposal.**