Research Council
April 29, 2019
Minutes

Presidential Search

- Brook suggested sending the letter containing comments from Research Council members to both the Board of Trustees and Search Committee Chair.
- Siva encouraged comments from all RC members.
- It was suggested that the letter be finalized and sent tomorrow.

2019 RERF Application Scores

Proposal #1 – Micropate Reader Biotek H1M

- #1 and #2 reviewers strongly encouraged approval and both ranked it as a 1.
- #3 reviewer ranked it as a 2 since there is already a shared instrument on campus.
- CGRB is listed as a source of matching funds – is there an issue with the CGRB receiving funds from the Research Office (RO) and the funds, perhaps, ending up back into the RO. Kolluri noted that the matching funds are from the state.
- This request is duplicating another instrument in a different unit that is 10 years old and the CGRB is covering the annual service contract.
- One noted that the CGRB is a place where faculty have historically allowed faculty from other units to use their equipment and have even trained faculty outside their unit to use the equipment.

Action: One reviewer changed their ranking to 1; all three reviewers ranked the #1 proposal as 1; other members cast their votes.

Proposal #2 – BioTek Multi-Mode Detection Plate Reader

- *All three reviewers ranked the proposal as 1.*
- *The equipment will be housed in Newport and used by 3 different units in support of 23 different projects.*
- *This request is proposing a lower value model than the #1 request.*
- *The equipment would be beneficial to many different programs, as well as graduate student research.*
- *This is another proposal for basic equipment that achieves the lowest level of research – wondered what colleges and units provide in terms of funding. If not funded by the Research Office, would funds not be available elsewhere?*

Action: Reviewers ranked the #2 proposal as 1, 1 and 2; other members cast their votes.

Proposal #3 – A Micro-FTIR (Fourier-transform infrared spectroscopy) for the Support of Transdisciplinary Microplastics Research

- Kolluri noted he has a conflict since this is from a unit colleague, and he left the room.
- It's on the expensive side. Microplastics research has gotten recent attention. Financial justification was not fully quantified. Concerned by science funding. Felt that the supporters were not paying attention.
- Thought it was collaborative proposal for new capabilities for a piece of equipment not currently on campus; it likely would be heavily used. Currently don't have a micro-FTIR. Relevant to Fisheries & Wildlife and Microbiology. Would serve a large group of researchers. The proposal was quite strong.
- Seems to be a novelty. Concern related to documentation issues. Difficult to judge whether there would be wide usage.
- The equipment is used for identification of unknown materials, it has broad applicability, but its unique use is not clear.
- Could a microscope be attached to an existing FTIR? Not clear whether the existing FTIR is heavily used. Another noted that the equipment in Chemistry is heavily subscribed and difficult for non-Chemistry faculty to use.
- It's likely that at least five colleges would utilize the equipment, if funded.

Action: Reviewers ranked the #3 proposal as 3, 2, 2 and 1; other members cast their votes.

Proposal #4 – Noble Gas Analysis in Environmental Samples

- Used for Noble Gas analysis in environmental samples – would generate high impact research and would support other investigators in other programs. No clear indication of matching funds. Proposal aligns well with SP 4.0.
- No existing equipment capability. It's outside of CEOAS, but likely would benefit them.
- Consists of a 20% cost share from an NSF grant – if the grant relies on this piece of equipment, did the grant not budget for the equipment? It's fairly limited in scope – why are there no unit funds?

- Just discussed a proposal for basic capability that is not novel, but would allow faculty to do things for which they are now outsourcing. There are funds to outsource for this proposal, but questioned why there are no funds in the grant to purchase the equipment.
- Purchases above $5,000 require approval from the grantor.

Action: Reviewers ranked the #4 proposal as 2, 2 and 3; other members provided rankings.

Proposal #5 – Upgrades and Modifications to Braco Potato Harvester

- Kolluri suggested postponing discussion to Thursday since two of the reviewers were not present.

Proposal #6 – Advanced Time-Correlated Single Photon Counting (TCSPC) System

- Instrument cost is $1,785, and 50% is matching. Quick response time. Collaborators are in Electrical Engineering and Computer Science (EECS), Physics and Chemistry. Would reside in one PI's lab, but no model for sharing; well-suited for Physics and EECS.
- Integrates into another microscope; PI says his group would be in charge of equipment maintenance and user training. Biological and Ecological Engineering would also use it. Multiple college users and supporters. An existing industry partner is interested in using the equipment. Vague as to how the five indicated projects would result in additional funding.
- Liked that PIs are from multiple colleges. Industry support with Apple and others. Weakness is that there is a similar system with lower resolution.

Action: The scoring range for proposal #6 is 2; other members provided rankings

Proposal #7 – Quantum P Ploidy Analyzer

- Instrument to look at DNA in cells – mainly used for looking at plant cells. There is another instrument, but not easy to use; because plant cells are larger, it's difficult to use an existing piece of equipment. This will be available to others in the unit with no per hour charges. Will support multiple labs and set up new collaborations. What is the future of funding?
- Investigators who support acquisition are all in Agricultural Sciences. Unclear how it will be used to leverage future funding. There is another, similar piece of equipment in the building. It appears that they didn't want to pay to use the other equipment.
- One couldn't see how it would generate high impact research or how it will attract more sponsors.
- If faculty don't want to pay fees, the college should provide equipment.
- Looking for justification for specific work. This is not a new capability.
- Suggested that the unit allow time for faculty to learn how to use the equipment at no cost.

Action: The scoring range for proposal #7 was a 3; other members provided rankings.

Proposal #8 – Seed Cleaning Equipment

- Asking for $66,000 with $44,000 matching. In Oregon, USDA says that seed is $445M and lead PI cleans seed. A smaller unit is in Corvallis, but not on the east side of the Cascades. Issue is that one member could see options, but proposers did not set it up well in the proposal. Extension faculty working with farmers defines high impact. Seed is currently trucked to Corvallis for hand cleaning, but the equipment in Corvallis is not scaled for large plots. How will it be tied into other grants?
- Data from reports would generate additional funding.
- The equipment would be housed in Madras, but used by other off-campus extension. Another reviewer noted that there was not sufficient support, but another reviewer noted that all support was from various Extension faculty.
- There are matching funds from the Foundation. There is multiple USDA and NSF funding.
- It is applied research, but the proposal didn't justify as high impact research or whether it would leverage additional funding.
- What percent is research and what percent supports industry?

Action: The scoring range for proposal #8 is 2-3; other members provided rankings.

Proposal #9 – Digital X-ray

- Didn't feel like the proposal was described well. Could be used by many faculty for lots of different biological materials; not currently on campus. Proposing to purchase a refurbished instrument, which gave the reviewer pause – is this an appropriate use for RERF funds. (There are no rules related to refurbished equipment.)
- Seems that it's an imaging X-ray for marine biology, entomology, etc. Requesting $37,499. Proposal is quite minimalist and didn't indicate urgent need and vitality. Future funding is quite generic. Impact to current research efforts is not articulated. Used an old application form. Felt it was a very weak proposal.
- Future research plans are not well outlined. Collaboration letters followed a template and were not terribly supportive. Not very good research.

Action: The scoring range for proposal #9 is 4-5; other members provided rankings.

Proposal #10 – X-ray detector with Phase ID

- This is a basic need for about 12 units at OSU; additionally, 2 industry units would benefit. It would be housed in the micro-imaging facility at OSU. There are no co-PI's, but there is support from two colleges and one unit. There is currently one unit available, but the demand far exceeds availability and the new unit will run much faster.
- There is shared equipment in the Linus Pauling Center.
- Seemed liked a fairly widely used piece of equipment.
- There was a discussion that the proposal could have been written better, and several felt that it should be written as if it was for a federal funding review. One noted that it may have been written by one who is not familiar with writing a proposal.

Action: The scoring range is 2; other members provided rankings.

The next meeting will be Thursday, May 2 at 2:30 in 109 Gilkey Hall.

Minutes prepared by Vickie Nunnemaker, Faculty Senate staff.