Introduction to WSSS

The Tufts University graduate education and research program in Water: Systems, Science, and Society (WSSS) addresses the need for an integrated approach to the solution of water problems by encouraging interdisciplinary research. Throughout the program, student learns to consider problems from the viewpoints of several relevant disciplines. Doctoral and masters degree students from the Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy, the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, the Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine, and the Schools of Arts & Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine at Tufts have completed the WSSS program. The WSSS program is sponsoring Grant-Writing Fellowships in 2010, described below. Applications will be accepted at any time until September 30, 2010.

Objectives

The broad goals of this fellowship program are to provide seed-funding which encourages and fosters interdisciplinary research in the field of Water: Systems, Science and Society, and to provide incentives to student-faculty teams to develop new and innovative research proposals which are consistent with WSSS program objectives.

This Request for Applications (RFA) summarizes the 2010 WSSS Grant Writing Fellowship Application Process. All grant writing fellowship applications must show that the requested funding will lead to a research proposal to an external funding agency, and that the proposal will be jointly prepared by one or more WSSS students in association with one or more participating WSSS faculty.

General Requirements

Matriculated graduate students in the WSSS program are eligible to apply for the WSSS Grant Writing Fellowship. These Fellowships are available to students in both the research and practicum tracks of WSSS, with no preference given to either track. Applicants must identify at least one WSSS participating faculty member to serve as a mentor. While the faculty member must provide a letter of support for the student’s project, the WSSS fellowship is not intended to
provide support to the faculty member - it is only intended to provide support to the WSSS student fellow. Since one of the objectives of this fellowship is to encourage collaborations among WSSS students and faculty, sharing of ideas is encouraged and students are encouraged to seek as much advice, guidance and participation as possible from WSSS faculty.

**Deliverables:**

The expectation is that a WSSS grant-writing fellowship will result in:

1. A proposal to an external funding agency. Your application for this fellowship must summarize both the content of that proposal as well as the RFP which your proposal is responding to.
2. You will be expected to summarize your proposal, as an oral presentation, at a WSSS meeting.

**Evaluation Criteria**

Overall, grant-writing fellowship applications will be evaluated taking into consideration the following: the number of disciplines and institutions involved, the size and complexity of the proposal effort, the amount of background research required to prepare the proposal, and the nature of the funding agency. For example, a multi-investigator grant-writing application describing a $1 million proposal to the National Science Foundation will be given higher priority than a single investigator $10,000 proposal to a local watershed association.

Highest priority will be given to those applications that:

- Identify requests for proposals from external funding agencies which closely align with the research proposed in the WSSS grant-writing fellowship application.
- Provide evidence of WSSS participating faculty support for the effort. This is important because one or more faculty members will be responsible for submitting the proposal to the external funding agency on behalf of Tufts University.
- Clearly outline the objective(s) of the proposed research
- Include a brief literature review relevant to the proposed research as well as a very clear outline of the approach to be taken.
- Differentiates the proposed research from previous research.

Preference will be given to applications that:

- Include faculty advisors from two or more disciplines
- Enhance signature areas of our WSSS program including: Water and Health, Water and Conflict, Hydromorphology, Water and Livelihoods, Watershed Management and Water and Sanitation or Resilience of Social-ecological Systems with Respect to Water Resources
- Meet guidelines on expenditures (see Funding Restrictions below).
- Provide evidence documenting the potential for an effective collaboration between the student and the WSSS participating faculty who provide a recommendation (see below)
- Emphasis will be given to proposals for new and innovative research, though proposals to complete ongoing research projects will be considered.
Grant Writing Fellowship Application Submission Requirements

- The title page of your application should give the title of the proposal you plan on writing, identify the student and faculty involved, as well as their department and school affiliations and degree program, contact information, amount requested.
- The entire proposal, not including the title page, resume and references, should be approximately 2-3 pages long.
- A short summary should be given for the external request for proposal which you have decided to respond to. Also include the external sponsoring agency, deadlines for submission of proposal and information on recommended size of proposal in terms of page length and funding level. (If appropriate, provide a weblink for the RFP.)
- Summarize the qualifications of the team you have assembled for performing the work
- Summarize the likely roles of all members of the student/faculty team and identify all potential collaborators
- Provide a timetable for your response to the RFP.
- Provide a budget itemizing how you will use the money requested for this grant-writing application.
- The student must include a copy of their resume (3 pages maximum).
- The proposal must include a reference letter by a WSSS participating faculty member which documents their commitment to submit the resulting proposal to the external funding agency (emailed to Heather Angstrom by that faculty member)
- An additional reference from a WSSS participating faculty member in another discipline or from another organization is recommended, but not required. That reference should also be emailed to Heather Angstrom.
- If your proposed research team involves an individual from an organization outside of Tufts, then a letter of support from that individual is required.
- All completed proposals must be emailed to Heather Angstrom heather.angstrom@tufts.edu

Funding Restrictions

The WSSS Grant-Writing Fellowship funds are available from the date your proposal is accepted until September 30, 2010. WSSS will provide up to $3000 per student. Funds may be used for student stipends, travel to conduct research, data acquisition and analysis, and equipment and supplies needed to prepare the grant proposal. In the event an application for a fellowship is received by a student team, the fellowship funds will be split among the student team. The WSSS steering committee will select the best grant-writing application, with attention to equitable distribution of funds across schools.