IMOD Call for Seed Proposals – Year 4

Program Description: We are pleased to announce a call for proposals for Year 4 IMOD Seed Grants. This call is open to non-funded faculty at the IMOD partnering institutions or by invitation to faculty at non-partnering institutions. IMOD Seed Grants are intended to respond to emerging or transformative areas of research, education, workforce development, broadening participation and knowledge transfer aligned with IMOD's research mission, and to enable IMOD to continually reach out to, and draw from the ideas of a broader community. *For Year 4, we particularly welcome proposals that bring together interdisciplinary projects with a significant theory component, or collaborations that involve AI or machine learning to accelerate materials discovery, analysis, or characterization.*

Anticipated Type of Award: IMOD Seed Awards will provide up to $75,000 to support new collaborative research teams. IMOD Seed Awards are intended to be collaborative and must include a PI as well as an additional funded co-PI and/or additional unfunded collaborators. The goals of IMOD Seed Awards are to support multidisciplinary teams active in areas complementary to IMOD's current research and integrative activities profile and to broaden IMOD participation to encompass more members of the participating institutions. The anticipated funding period is twelve months.

Eligibility: An applicant may serve as Principal Investigator (PI or co-PI) on only one proposal in response to this call. The PI and any funded co-PIs must hold a faculty-level appointment at one of the participating institutions. All proposed research must be clearly distinct from ongoing externally funded research. Current IMOD senior investigators may not receive Seed funds but are encouraged to participate in the proposed work as unfunded collaborators. External (non-IMOD funded) institutions seed proposal submission is limited and will be considered by invitation only. Invitations will be extended following a down-selection of nominations of external candidates. Nominations are due by May 3, 2024, for internal review. See the Opportunities page of imod-stc.org for more details.

Submission Deadline: Proposals submitted by 5:00 PM Pacific Time on June 7, 2024, will be given priority. Late submissions may be considered, depending on the availability of funds.

Award Duration: The award period is anticipated to be from 10/1/2024 to 9/30/2025, with the possibility of submitting a one-time renewal proposal for a YR5 seed award.

Award Information: We anticipate funding up to three seed awards in YR4, each up to $75,000.

Submission Requirements:
A proposal requesting seed funding for a new project should be uploaded as a single (one file) attachment in PDF format here (https://bit.ly/3TGHHlG) with a file name LASTNAME_IMOD_SEED_YR4.
The proposal file should include:
- Cover Page (one page) including:
  - Project title
  - Names, titles, and departmental affiliations of the PI and Co-PIs or collaborators
  - Complete contact information for the PI only
  - Names of student or postdoc researchers who will receive salary support if funded
  - Relevance to IMOD Research Thrusts and/or Programs
  - Proposal abstract (250 words maximum)
- Project Narrative (not to exceed three pages): A description of the proposed work including the potential impact of research and/or integrative activities, and how the PI would accomplish the project

goals. Any connections to optoelectronic materials for classical and quantum light should be emphasized.
- References Cited (no page limit)
- Budget Information (up to $75,000 for 12 months): Provide a succinct statement of work, a complete budget including overhead, and a budget justification. Your budget should include the following items:
  - Salaries, benefits, tuition. Seed funding can be used to support graduate students, undergraduate students, and postdoctoral scholars. Other salary types are not allowed.
  - Materials and Supplies.
  - Contractual Services. Facilities/instrumentation expenses are allowed if based on actual use and if required to advance the proposed research.
- An NSF-formatted biographical sketch, not to exceed 2 pages, for the PI and any funded co-PIs.
- An NSF-formatted Current and Pending Support form for the PI and any funded co-PIs.
- External seed proposals must be invited to submit. See for imod-stc.org for more details.

Review Process: Award recommendations will be based on internal review by the IMOD Seed Committee. Recommendations provided by the IMOD Seed Committee must be approved by the IMOD Management Team. Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:
1. Intellectual Merit of the proposed activities
2. Potential to advance one or more of the research discovery, education, broadening participation and diversity, workforce development, and knowledge transfer missions of the STC
3. Potential for the Seed, and the holistic efforts of the Seed participants at all levels, to advance IMOD's goals of creating a culture of inclusive mentorship in STEM
4. Potential to complement or leverage existing IMOD capabilities and synergies
5. Distinctiveness from ongoing funded research
6. Potential to positively impact seed PI career trajectory

Diversity: Participation of undergraduate students and URM scholars in IMOD Seed research is particularly welcomed and encouraged, as are other means of enhancing center diversity.

Budget Restrictions: IMOD Seed grants are intended to primarily support student and postdoctoral researcher salaries and associated benefits, tuition, as well as research materials and supplies and facilities user fees. The following expenses are not allowed: faculty salaries/benefits; computer or equipment purchases; travel; food and entertainment.

Terms and Conditions: All selected proposals are subject to terms and conditions, including reporting requirements, that will be detailed in the award notification letter. In particular, these include:
- All publications resulting fully or partially from IMOD Seed funding must appropriately acknowledge the IMOD support. (e.g., "This research was supported by the National Science Foundation through the IMOD STC under Grant No. DMR-2019444.")
- After completion of the project, a final written report will be required. Seed investigators must also provide brief summaries and an NSF "highlight" slide for inclusion in IMOD annual reports, as requested by the Center Director.
- All purchases and HR appointments will be conducted in the home departments of the Seed investigators.
- All external Seeds will require NSF approval to modify the IMOD contract. If IMOD is unable to secure NSF approval to add a new institution to the contract in a timely fashion, the seed proposal may be declined.

Please contact Denise at denise.bale@colorado.edu with any questions.

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