Interdisciplinary Team Excellence Enhancement Grants (ITEEG)
Today’s discussion

- Team research and creative scholarship and building a network 
  *before the RFP*
- Applying for the grant
- Review process
- Discussion of ideas and questions
What is Team Science?
And this is not just about STEM

What Is a Scientific Research Team?
...think of it as a continuum...

Low Level of Interaction and Integration
- Independent Research
  - Investigator works largely independently on a research problem with his or her lab.

Medium Level of Interaction and Integration
- Collaboration
  - Each group member brings expertise to address the research problem.
  - Group members work on separate parts of the research problem, which are later integrated.
  - Data sharing or brainstorming among lead investigators varies from limited to frequent.

High Level of Interaction and Integration
- Integrated Research Team
  - Each team member brings specific expertise to address the research problem.
  - Team meets regularly to discuss team goals, individuals’ objectives, and next steps.
  - Team shares leadership responsibility, decision-making authority, data, and credit.

Collaboration and Team Science: A Field Guide, L. Michelle Bennett
Motives for Collaboration

• To gain access to:
  • Special equipment or facilities
  • Special skills
  • Unique materials/reagents
• To increase visibility/recognition
• To gain experience
• To train researchers
• To increase productivity
• To submit more competitive proposals
Ask Yourself: Am I Ready to Participate on a Research Team?

✦ Can I thrive as a member of a highly collaborative research team? To what extent? What would it take?
✦ What would I gain? Do I have anything to lose?
✦ Am I willing to share data and credit with team members?
✦ Am I willing to accept constructive feedback and training from team members?
✦ Am I willing to provide constructive feedback and training to team members?
✦ Can I openly discuss issues and concerns with team members?
Ask Yourself: Am I Ready to Lead a Research Team?

- Am I able to clearly and decisively communicate and share information with team members?
- Am I prepared to clearly articulate my vision to team members?
- Am I prepared to model a collaborative process and inspire team members to achieve our shared goal?
- Am I willing to support team members at all levels and assign roles and responsibilities?
- Am I willing to manage team members’ expectations?
- Am I prepared to select team members who will thrive in the team’s culture?
Building a Team

• Bring together diverse backgrounds and experiences
• Clarify roles, responsibilities, contributions
• Define milestones and success
• Develop an environment of openness
• Establish schedule of meetings
• Discuss processes for sharing data and managing authorship
• Prepare for disagreements
• Have a policy for bringing on new members
Developing a Shared Vision

• All members should be able to articulate the team’s ‘big picture’ goals

• Each team member should be able to articulate their own research goals and how they fit the big picture

“C’mon, put some muscle into it...we’re not getting anywhere!”
Fostering Trust

• Regular meetings
• Constructive but supportive feedback
• Environment of openness
• Teach and train others
• Receive instruction from others
• Follow through on commitments
• Handle disagreements promptly
Communicating

• Conduct meetings, **regular meetings**
  • In person (someday)
  • Conference calls
  • Skype/FaceTime
  • Webinars

• Establish ground rules for communication
• Environment of openness and acceptance
• Contributions at all levels of seniority
Potential Challenges of Collaboration

• Potential for Group Think – stronger, more vocal members supplant their ideas as the goals for the group

• Promotions – team members’ unique strengths and contributions might be unclear

• Unresolved conflicts can slow progress, both of individual careers and towards team goals

• Potential for ambiguity re roles and responsibilities

• Longer decision/communication times
What Makes Teams Difficult

• Often multiple leaders with different styles

• Better interpersonal skill required to coordinate and accomplish the proposed work

• Differing levels of understanding of background information and new work can lead to confusion

• Potential for ownership conflicts
Problematic Leadership Styles

- Absentee leadership – unavailable or insufficiently involved leadership; conflict avoidant or adverse
- Defensive leadership – resistant to feedback regarding systemic problems
- Hostile leadership – actively promoting competition/conflict
Evaluating the Individual’s Contributions

In research and creative scholarship, high value and reward is placed on individual accomplishment, how does that work with teams?

- What was his/her/their role in driving the project forward?
- What are his/her/their key scientific contributions
- Were his/her/their contributions essential for the success of the project?
- How was the contribution original?
- How are those contributions regarded in the PI’s field?
## Is It Working?

<table>
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<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
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<td>Team members grow professionally in the context of the team</td>
<td>Team members prioritize their own objectives before those of the team</td>
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<td>Team members are made aware of the team’s culture and expectations for working together</td>
<td>Leader fails to provide clarity around roles, responsibilities and expectations</td>
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<td>If a person joins the team and is a bad fit, the individual either leaves of his/her own accord or is encouraged to find a different project</td>
<td>Team members who are a bad fit remain and work for their own gain at the expense of the team</td>
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Interdisciplinary Team Excellence Enhancement Grant

Dates

Internal Submission Deadline: Tuesday, March 23, 2021 at 5:00 pm
ADD TO CALENDAR

Details

Administrator(s): Kay Mortellaro (Owner)
Terri Kinzy
Category: WMU
Award Cycle: 2021-2022
Number of Applications Allowed Per Applicant: 1
Number of Possible Awardees: 1

Description

Purpose of the RFA:
This opportunity is designed to stimulate the creation of interdisciplinary research and creative scholarship groups around any topic that is likely to be supported by future external funding such as federal, state, and private funding. Interdisciplinary work pushes fields forward and accelerates scientific discovery and creative accomplishments. Important ideas often transcend the scope of a single discipline or program and undetected challenges in innovative ways. Pre-existing groups may also apply.

Eligibility:
Any full-time tenured or tenure track faculty member(s) may apply on behalf of the group. The group should have a minimum of 6 participating faculty and can include research and administrators with PI eligibility. The 6 “core” members must be affiliated with Western Michigan University, and a person can be a member of multiple teams but can only be the Lead (submitter) on one proposal. Members from outside WMU such as community groups, state agencies, national laboratories, WMU, etc. are also allowed.
Let's take a look at the application
Questions:
• Does your group currently have access to pilot funds within WMU (this includes but not limited to department, college, university, federal, state, corporate funding) specifically for the proposed work? If so, what is the source and amount of funds?:
• How often will they meet
• What is meeting format
• How will you promote participation
• Explain the extent of interdisciplinarity
• Explain the broader impacts of the work
• How will you get future funding to keep this going?
• Explain any “novel” ideas
• Describe equipment (if any) and how it will help
• Describe how you will also promote equity and inclusion of team members.

Files:
• Team members (WMU and outside)
• Budget and justification
• Current and Pending support
• Any cost share (if appropriate)
Review Process and Criteria:

Applications will be reviewed by an administrative team at WMU, people outside WMU and faculty with experience in interdisciplinary research. The review criteria include but are not limited to:

- Clear demonstration of team function and integration
- Clear plans for future grant applications derived from these funds
- Clear demonstration of interdisciplinary team membership
- Clear plan to recruit additional members to the team.