REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
JAMES H. ZUMBERGE FACULTY RESEARCH & INNOVATION FUND

SPECIAL SOLICITATION
EPIDEMIC & VIRUS RELATED RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT AWARD

APPLICATION DEADLINE   5 pm, Monday, May 11, 2020

PURPOSE
Epidemics and pandemics are a growing concern in a highly interconnected and interdependent world. The current COVID-19 pandemic presents an acute example of the numerous societal challenges associated with an epidemic. This outbreak marks the third time in recent years that a coronavirus has caused severe disease and death (NIH) worldwide, but human history includes much larger epidemic events.

In response to the current pandemic of COVID-19 specifically, and more broadly, to the need to addresses critical gaps in knowledge and response methods, tools, technologies, and strategies related to viral diseases and disease outbreaks, the Office of Research is issuing a Zumberge Special Solicitation – Epidemic & Virus Related Research and Development Award, jointly sponsored by the USC Office of the Provost and the USC Stevens Center for Innovation.

This solicitation aims to support all areas of USC research and scholarship that may provide a broader perspective on viral diseases and the detection and response to their outbreaks. Eligible topics include biomedical and clinical research and development, as well as research and development broadly related to public health, legal, economic, societal and fiscal implications, among others.

The awards provide up to $85,000 total support. The funds should be spent within a year but special circumstances around COVID-19 will be taken into account in extending the grant period.

Given the just-in-time nature of this funding opportunity, and the availability of associated external funding, proposals need to include a concrete plan for applying for a specific external funding opportunity larger than the requested funds; (https://research.usc.edu/virus-related-research-at-usc/ provides examples of relevant funding programs). Proposals must also clearly describe how the special Zumberge award will make the planned proposal more competitive for that target external award. For development proposals, the impact and scaling plan of the proposed method to the USC community and beyond must be included.

ELIGIBILITY
Interdisciplinary, multi-PI research is strongly encouraged, but is not a requirement. The program will not fund the same work being supported under other USC programs or external sponsors; the only exception are development proposals focused on deployments targeted for the USC community. These awards are not renewable. Applicants must be permanent, full-time USC faculty with a research profile; tenure-track, research track, or clinical. Adjunct and visiting faculty are not eligible.

COST SHARE
Participating schools and research centers are encouraged but not required to provide cost share support through appropriate relief of academic duties, research infrastructure or equipment, or financial contributions in support of the effort.
TYPES OF ASSISTANCE

- Research materials, small equipment and supplies necessary to carry out the proposed work, including computers, software, digital records, lab materials, recording devices, etc.;
- Research expenses related to data acquisition, including the use of core/shared resource facilities;
- Salary support for PhD students, post docs, and other student wages;
- Collection and purchase of archival materials and subscriptions to databases.

GRANT CONDITIONS

- Equipment purchases and subcontracts are not permitted;
- Awardees have discretion in the budgeting and re-budgeting of funds to meet their research needs within the guidelines of the fund and the terms of the proposal. Funds may not be transferred to another project, researchers or institutions;
- No indirect costs can be charged, but fringe benefits are required as relevant;
- The work should be finished within a year but special circumstances around COVID-19 will be taken into account in extending the grant period.
- Awards do not fund faculty salary, conference travel, consultants, tuition or other student fees;
- All USC rules, with respect to conflict of interest, human subject research, animal research, etc., apply to projects funded under this program. Funding will not be provided until all pertinent reviews are complete.
- Awardees commit to submit a larger follow-up proposal to the identified external sponsor

RESEARCH PROPOSAL EVALUATION AND NOTIFICATION

Research proposals submitted to this Zumberge Special Solicitation will be evaluated internally and promptly. Applicants will be notified of the amount and conditions of the award and funds will be transferred by June 30, 2020.

REPORTING AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF SUPPORT

Zumberge awardees are asked to submit a brief report by October, 2021 (including an accounting of expenditures and any external support received). A formal request for a brief final report will be sent to awardees at the close of the grant period. Portions of the report may be reprinted to build support for the fund among the university community and to make decisions about how best to use the fund in the future.

Any publication or creative endeavor arising from work supported by the fund must acknowledge the James H. Zumberge Faculty Research and Innovation Fund at the University of Southern California. The Office of Research should be informed of any grant submissions/awards for which Zumberge funds were used in order to support the continuation of the Zumberge fund.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND PROGRAM CONTACT INFORMATION

Questions about the award or the application submission process can be directed to Melody Pham at vprsch@usc.edu.

For submission instructions, see Proposal Guidelines.
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GUIDELINES

PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

Proposals must be submitted via the Office of Research on-line application system (see p. 4).

Format: Proposal documents should be written in Arial or Times New Roman font, 12 point, single-spaced, with one-inch margins all around, and submitted in PDF. Apart from use in formulas, preferably do not use “symbols” text format (use “alpha” instead of “α”).

PROPOSAL COMPONENTS

Cover page information (filled out on-line)

a) Principal Investigator (PI) contact information;
b) Proposal title;
c) Budget total requested;
d) Is regulatory approval required? (Please indicate all that apply);
e) Link to the specific solicitation or program targeted (if the RFP has not yet been released, provide the link to the most recent RFP available);
f) Expected date of proposal submission to external sponsor;
g) Amount requested to the external sponsor;
h) Co-PI contact information.

Sections to upload: Please upload each of the sections below individually. No additional sections can be accepted or reviewed.

a) **Abstract (not to exceed 30 lines):** A succinct stand-alone description of the proposed work

b) **Project Narrative (not to exceed 5 pages):** A comprehensive description of the work. No other ancillary text, appendices, etc., can be accepted; page limits include figures and tables. Please include the following sections and headers only:

i. **Research Description:** Describe the research/development to be supported and its relevance to the theme of the special solicitation.

ii. **Project Design:** Describe project activities to accomplish the project goals, and methodologies involved. Identify the roles of all personnel. Include any preliminary/prior planning or research activities that support the goals and success of the proposed work.
iii. **Sustainment:** Identify a specific external funding source larger than the Zumberge grant budget. Include the specific solicitation or program, the proposed submission date and amount requested, and the link to the program and RFP. Present a clear plan for how the Zumberge award improves the competitiveness for that external funding opportunity.

iv. **Expected Results and Impact:** Describe the expected outcomes and deliverables from the proposed work relative to the goals of the special program.

v. **Timeline:** A clear timeline for the completion of the work identifying specific milestones associated with project goals.

vi. **Commitment Statement:** A statement of commitment to submit a follow-up proposal to the intended external funder/target program.

c) **Budget Justification (one page):** Clarify the role of individuals for whom salary support is requested. Justify any request for salary support in terms of the objectives of the project.

d) **Letter(s) of Support:** Letter of support from the dean or relevant research centers and/or partners should describe financial and other support and importance of the proposal/partnership.

e) **References (one page)**

f) **Curriculum vitae (5 pages):** PI’s and co-PIs’ CV in any standardized CV format, or institutional ones (e.g., NIH, NSF, etc.).

**PROPOSAL SUBMISSION**

Proposals are submitted via the Office of Research application submission and reporting portal at: https://app.wizehive.com/webform/USCgrants

New users should create an account. Log in using your USC email address.

**APPLICATION DEADLINE**  **5 pm Monday, May 11, 2020**

**Signatures:** By submitting the online application, applicants indicate their agreement to comply with the terms and conditions of the Zumberge program and all other applicable USC policies.

**FURTHER INFORMATION AND PROGRAM CONTACT**

For additional information or inquiries about the Zumberge Special Solicitation - Epidemic & Virus Related Research and Development Award program application submission process, please contact: Melody Pham vprsch@usc.edu.