Fall 2015 CNS Catalyst Grant Competition
Proposal Deadline: Thursday, October 1, 2015

CNS Catalyst Grants are a College of Natural Sciences internal funding mechanism meant to inspire interdisciplinary research collaborations that will seed efforts for securing external funding. Proposals for interdisciplinary projects that are co-mentored by faculty members in different departments or colleges are requested. The College’s clear expectation is that receipt of a CNS Catalyst Grant carries a commitment by the PIs to pursue external funding for the collaborative effort within 12 to 18 months of receiving Catalyst Grant funding. The College’s Strategic Research Initiatives Office will assist teams receiving Catalyst Grant funding with the development of their proposal to an external funding agency.

Award Information
CNS Catalyst Grants provide up to $50,000 to teams of 2 or more members to begin new interdisciplinary research collaborations. Two award cycles are being offered for calendar year 2015, with proposal deadlines of April 1 and October 1. One CNS Catalyst Grant will be awarded per cycle. Teams whose CNS Catalyst Grant proposals are not selected in a given award cycle are allowed to resubmit their proposals in subsequent cycles.

Eligibility Guidelines
CNS Catalyst Grant funding is meant to catalyze new research collaborations in high-impact, emerging fields that have potential for major external funding. With this goal in mind, we expect that a successful Catalyst Grant proposal will possess the following characteristics:

- Project teams should include at least two members, each from a different academic department, who are tenure-track faculty, non-tenure-track faculty or permanent research scientists, and who have not previously received external funding as a team. The participation of individuals at the Assistant and Associate Professor ranks is particularly encouraged. Adjunct faculty, visiting researchers and postdocs are not eligible Co-PIs but may be named investigators in proposals.
- Project teams must provide convincing evidence that external funding exists that will be viable to pursue. A target grant mechanism must be identified at the time of proposal submission.
- The timeline for submitting a Catalyst Grant application should be 12 to 18 months ahead of the team’s anticipated submission to one or more target external grant programs.

What Will a CNS Catalyst Grant Pay For?
CNS Catalyst Grant funding should develop promising new research areas and teams in order to enhance competitiveness of applications to external agencies.

**ALLOWED Expenses:**
- Materials/supplies/consumables
- Graduate student, postdoc or research scientist support *(Note: Salary funds may only be paid to UT-Austin employees and may not be transferred outside UT.)*
- Travel or conference hosting for team-building in advance of proposal submission

**UNALLOWED Expenses:**
- Faculty salary (summer or otherwise)
- Administrative or secretarial support
Application Instructions:
Application website: https://utexas.infoready4.com/#competitionDetail/1741158
Create your application (UT EID and password required) and upload your materials at the website above to be considered for CNS Catalyst Grant funding in the next award cycle.

Note: If this is your first time submitting a proposal through the proposal submission website, you will first need to affiliate yourself with the College before you can submit. To do this, login with your EID and password, then click on the “Hello, [Name]” link at the top right of the website. This will take you to your user profile. In your user profile, under “Primary School or Department,” select “Natural Sciences, College of” and then scroll to the bottom of the page and click on the Save Changes button. You will now be able to apply for a Catalyst Grant.

Required Submission Materials:
1. A three-page proposal including:
   a. Rationale and vision for the proposed collaboration. Explain the innovative and transformative nature of the interdisciplinary collaboration, and provide an assessment of why the project team is particularly well-positioned to develop competitive external proposals in this research area.
   b. Justification for why a Catalyst Grant is required to initiate the collaboration, and how the grant will impact the team’s probability of success in securing external funding.
   c. A list of participating faculty members and a clear explanation of each member’s role in the collaboration
2. A one-page summary assessing the external funding landscape for which the seed funding proposal is being prepared and plans to pursue external funding. Include an anticipated timeline with milestones for development of an external proposal, names of potential sponsoring agencies, and relevant deadlines for those agencies.
3. A Catalyst Grant budget and justification showing categories for expenditures. Other resources that will be committed to the effort, such as support from academic units, should also be outlined.
4. Biosketches or CVs for all members of the faculty team

Application Review Process and Evaluation Criteria:
CNS Catalyst Grant applications will be reviewed by a committee of CNS faculty with appropriate subject matter expertise. One award will be announced approximately 3 weeks after each grant cycle deadline, and funds will be disbursed approximately 4 weeks after each deadline. Evaluation criteria include:

- Demonstrated commitment by the faculty team to establish a new interdisciplinary collaboration
- Evidence that Catalyst Grant funding will enable the faculty team to overcome barriers currently prohibiting them from collaborating
- The proposed collaboration’s potential to enhance UT-Austin’s competitiveness in securing external funding
- Strength of the proposed plan to secure external funding
What's Required of Me After I Receive a CNS Catalyst Grant?
In addition to submitting a proposal for external funding, you must submit the following information to Jennifer Lyon in the Office of Research and Facilities 6 and 12 months after receiving the award:

- A two-page progress report including (i) research outcomes and (ii) progress toward securing external funding. If progress has been hindered in one or both of these areas, a clear explanation for the delay is required.
- A list of any other key outcomes of Catalyst Grant funding (e.g., manuscripts published or submitted; conference presentations given; external collaborations formed)

Successful collaborative teams may also be asked to highlight their collaborations in a College-wide forum such as a CNS Town Hall meeting or research symposium.