Pursuit Program

Deadline:
Sep 16, 2019

For our currently open Requests for Proposals for Pursuits, please see:
https://www.sesync.org/opportunities

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Overview

Pursuits are collaborative team-based synthesis research projects focused around emerging SES topics. We encourage proposals that synthesize data, develop and apply models, and couple quantitative and qualitative data/information in new ways. SESYNC has a tradition of announcing Pursuit focal themes with each RFP. You can find current RFPs on our Opportunities page.

Teams should be composed of 10-12 members who will meet at our center in Annapolis for three meetings of three to five days each over a period of 12 months. The composition and number of participants in a Pursuit will vary depending upon the nature of the research problem and the expertise needed to address it. Teams should be highly interdisciplinary (natural and social scientists), and we encourage the inclusion of individuals from outside of academia (i.e., governmental agencies, non-governmental organizations, the business sector). Projects co-developed by academic researchers and non-academic knowledge users (from the NGO, private, and government sectors) are encouraged. SESYNC places priority on teams whose members have not had extensive prior collaborations with one another.

Researchers should develop research questions and methods for results that can be applicable across multiple places and scales and have the potential to inform decision makers. We are particularly interested in novel, actionable research efforts that employ synthesis methodologies in new ways.
Projects that can bring together quantitative and qualitative data and knowledge are of special interest. Please see our website for examples of successful projects.

Proposal Development

We highly encourage those interested in this RFP to discuss their ideas with SESYNC prior to developing their proposal. Discussions with team leaders can often help determine whether an idea is appropriate for SESYNC, as well as how syntheses might be structured to achieve strong interdisciplinary/transdisciplinary outcomes. Please contact research@sesync.org to solicit feedback or arrange a conversation, once a current RFP is open. In your email, please include a paragraph and/or concept document about your project ideas even if not fully developed (e.g., your research questions; what kind of socio-environmental data you plan to synthesize; what kind of product you envision). This will help in ascertaining whether or not your proposal aligns with SESYNC’s mission and in putting you in touch with the right person at SESYNC.

You may also find our videos on Tips for Submitting Your Research Proposal and Lessons Learned for Interdisciplinary Collaboration helpful as you develop your proposal.

Support Details

Details on SESYNC funding and support can be found here.

Support for Pursuits includes travel, lodging, and meals for participants in accordance with our Travel Policies. All Pursuit meetings are held at our facilities in Annapolis, MD.

SESYNC has significant modeling, data analysis, and database management expertise to guide and support teams that need assistance with the technical aspects of data mining, processing, integration, analysis, visualization, and/or modeling.

Support is also offered for aspects of interdisciplinary team science including meeting design and facilitation of specific sessions and/or meetings as needed.

Pursuit support does not include salary support, stipends for participants, or grants to other institutions.

Project Eligibility

Pursuit groups must meet the following criteria to be considered:

- There may be no more than 12 total participants
- Groups should hold 3 meetings
- Projects should have two PIs/team leads
- At least one PI/team lead must be based at a U.S. institution
- Graduate students are not eligible to apply as PIs/team leads for this opportunity, although they may participate on teams. SESYNC offers a separate Graduate Student Pursuit program for students wishing to lead working groups.
• The project cannot involve collection of new empirical data

Please see the SESYNC FAQ [9] for more information on the types of projects we support.

Proposal Criteria

Pursuit applications will be ranked with regard to the following:

• a focus on an important and timely socio-environmental problem;
• scientific merit of fundamental research questions (i.e., for projects that focus on a more regional scale or on a limited number of cases, findings should have implications that provide new insights with broad applicability);
• novelty and creativity in approach or proposed outcomes;
• feasibility to produce meaningful synthetic research including identifying and showing ability to access appropriate data;
• potential to contribute to actionable science (e.g., inform decisions at the government, business, and household level; improve the design or implementation of public policies; and/or influence public and/or private sector strategies, planning, and behaviors that affect the environment);
• qualifications, appropriate diversity of scientific backgrounds (social and natural scientists), and experience of the proposed participants;
• inclusion of diversity to broaden the participation of groups underrepresented in SESYNC research including scholars from developing countries, and participants from underrepresented U.S. minorities (African Americans, American Indians including Native Alaskans, Hispanics, and Native Pacific Islanders; for more information on such efforts see: www.nsf.gov/od/broadeningparticipation/bp_portfolio_dynamic.jsp [10]); and
• an explanation of why a SESYNC Pursuit is the most appropriate way to support the activity.

Apply

Please see our Opportunities [1] page for current Pursuit opportunities and additional details on submission requirements.

Questions?

Email: research@sesync.org [4]

The University of Maryland is an Equal Opportunity Employer
Minors and Women Are Encouraged to Apply