Clean Energy Fund Innovation Research Project Proposal – Graduate Students

The Clean Energy Fund (CEF) was created in response to students’ vision of the University of Vermont (UVM) running efficiently on a fraction of its current energy needs, powered by clean, locally produced renewable energy that fulfills both the University’s needs and supports the local economy. Details of the fund, its mission and administration are described here. One of three CEF funding mechanisms is Innovation Research. The Graduate College solicits applications from graduate students for CEF Innovation Research Projects. The deadline for receipt of proposals is October 2, 2020 at 4:30 pm.

Eligibility
UVM graduate students with minimum half-time enrollment status in the academic year are eligible to apply for CEF Innovation Research funds. Students must be in good academic standing; the Graduate College will review applicant’s academic record. Proposals that require facilities and/or expertise of UVM faculty, staff or administration must include appropriate letter of support.

Amount and Duration
For the current solicitation, the total budgeted amount for the CEF Graduate Innovation Research Program is up to $90,000, with budget ranges from $1,000 to $30,000 considered. Funds will be available February 2021, and must be expended by August 31, 2023, or by the student’s graduation date, whichever is first.

Review Process
Proposals will be vetted by the Graduate Executive Committee in consultation with the Executive Council of the Graduate Student Senate and forwarded to Socially Responsible Investing Advisory Council (SRIAC). The SRIAC will solicit input and make recommendations to the Vice President for Finance, who will make final funding decisions. Successful applications will represent innovative ideas that align with the mission of the CEF and UVM, be feasible within the proposed budget and include all necessary regulatory approvals and/or evidence of collaboration and availability of facilities as needed.

Award Conditions
Graduate students accepting CEF Innovation Research awards must comply with all applicable procedures and regulations. At the end of the award period, successful applicants will report their activities and accomplishments to the Dean of the Graduate College and the SRIAC, who will post results on their respective websites.

The CEF Innovation Research award will be acknowledged in all publications and presentations and, as appropriate, in applications for further funding.
APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

The complete application must be submitted as a PDF emailed to Hannah.Helme@uvm.edu. No paper submissions will be accepted.

Graduate Student Innovation Research Awards will range from $1000 to $30,000.

The application should consist of:

1. Cover/Signature Page
2. Detailed Budget
3. Descriptive Proposal with Scientific Abstract
4. IRB, IACUC, IBC, etc. checklist (attach documents as appropriate)
5. Letters of support as needed for access to facilities or expertise
6. Letter of support from applicant’s advisor addressing the feasibility of the budget and timeline, and the extent to which the project overlaps with the applicant’s thesis or dissertation research
7. Lay summary of the project

1. COVER PAGE (typed)

Applicant’s name and Graduate Program: Include date entered graduate program and expected graduation term.

Title: A brief, clear, specific description of the subject of research. The title, by itself, should give a clear indication of what the project is about.

Duration of Project: Specify time period up to two years (must not continue past student’s expected graduation).

Budget: Only totals for each major category are required here. Round to the nearest dollar.

Signatures: Must be signed by both the student and the student’s graduate program director. Include typed name of the program director. Unsigned applications (or applications lacking a cover page) will not be considered.

2. DETAILED BUDGET

This budget page should include a list of the major items within the following categories: wages, consumables, equipment, services, and subject payments. Travel costs are not covered by this award, and should not be included in the total requested budget. Round to the nearest dollar. Provide a justification for expenses in each category. Also list any other sources of support (e.g. other grants, mentor support, etc.).

Note that wages for the applicant are allowed but limited to 200 hours at $20.00 per hour. Students who are not funded may use the wages at any time. Students who are funded for 9
month GTAs/GRAs may only use the wages in the summer. Wages for undergraduate students at $12.00/hour may be requested to assist in conducting the research. No funds for faculty salaries are allowed.

3. **DESCRIPTIVE PROPOSAL** (maximum length: 5 single-spaced pages, excluding references)

This description should consist of the following sections:

**One Paragraph Scientific Abstract:** A brief description of the work and statement focusing on the importance of the proposed research to the mission of the CEF.

**Body of Proposal:** Describe the research project and its relationship to the CEF mission. Include methods and design of the project, and collection, evaluation and interpretation of data. Describe the timeframe of the project. Equipment and facilities available for the research should be noted.

**Literature Cited:** not included in the 5-page limit.

4. **IRB, IACUC, IBC, etc. CHECKLIST (check all that apply):**

   - [ ] Animals, animal tissues or cells
   - [ ] Biological or Infectious materials including:
     - [ ] Virus, Bacteria, Parasite
     - [ ] Recombinant DNA
     - [ ] Bloodborne pathogens
   - [ ] Chemicals, compressed gases, Controlled substances or Select Agents
   - [ ] Electrical, hydraulic and other high energy systems
   - [ ] Farm and Animal or Field and Vehicle hazards
   - [ ] Human subjects
   - [ ] Human derived materials/tissue cultures, cell lines, or blood
   - [ ] Ionizing radiation or Lasers
   - [ ] Isotopes
   - [ ] Nanoparticles
   - [ ] Noise
   - [ ] Non-native/Invasive species
   - [ ] Shipping, receiving, and/or transporting hazardous materials, including samples in chemical solutions
   - [ ] Water, diving, and boat hazards

If you checked any of the above, do you already have the necessary IRB, IACUC, IBC, Environmental Safety Training, or other necessary approvals?

   - [ ] If yes, then attach the approval that clearly indicates your name as part of the protocol or the date and type of training.
   - [ ] If no, then attach an explanation of where you are in the process.
Note: NO funding will be given prior to the receipt of the necessary approvals.

5. LETTERS OF SUPPORT

Provide letters of support as needed for access to facilities or expertise of UVM faculty, staff or administration.

A letter of support from the applicant’s advisor should also be included and should address the feasibility of completing the project within the proposed budget and timeline.

6. RELATIONSHIP TO GRADUATE WORK

Describe the relationship, if any, of the proposed research to your scholarship for your master’s thesis or project or doctoral dissertation or project. If the CEF Innovation Research project is directly part of your graduate project, thesis or dissertation, provide a letter from your graduate advisor indicating that the project was developed by you and the proposal written entirely by you.

7. LAY SUMMARY

One paragraph lay summary of the project: not included in the 5 page limit. This description will be used to notify the university community about the award and should be understandable to a wide audience. Relationship of the project to the goals of the Clean Energy Fund must be included.

QUESTIONS – Contact the Dean of the Graduate College: Cynthia.Forehand@uvm.edu

For examples of previously funded projects, please see pp. 4-5 of this report. Note that faculty research has been funded in the past; however, the Innovation Research Projects going forward are for graduate or undergraduate students and managed by the Graduate College or the Honors College, respectively.