Limited Submission Announcement

W.M. Keck Foundation
Science/Technology and
Medical Research Programs

Overview:

The Research Program seeks to benefit humanity by supporting projects in two specific areas, (1) science and engineering and (2) medical research, that are distinctive and novel in their approach, question the prevailing paradigm, or have the potential to break open new territory in their field.

Note: Keck describes itself as "an agency of last resort" that only funds very high risk work that NSF or NIH have declined to support, but whose reviewers noted "science was good, but too risky," or something similar. Keck will ask for copies of the reviews from nominees if they recommend pursuit of a Phase 1 application.

UMass Amherst may submit one application to each of the following grant programs:
1. **Science/Technology Program** - advances the frontiers of the life sciences by supporting basic research that is high-risk. Successful projects are innovative, distinctive, push the edge of their field, and have the potential for transformative impact, e.g., founding a new research field. (Note: Keck rarely funds environmental or alternative energy projects.) To determine the appropriateness of your project, review the [abstracts of recently funded projects](#).

2. **Medical Research Program** - supports pioneering biological research, including the development of promising new technologies, instrumentation, or methodologies. Projects cannot be disease specific and must hold the potential to shift a paradigm. To determine the appropriateness of your project, review the [abstracts of recently funded projects](#).

**Award Background:**

- **Amount:** $500,000 - $5 million (typically $2 million or less)
  - *Note: a 1:1 match is expected*
- **Duration of grants:** 1-5 years
- **Number of applications/institution:** 1 per category
- **Number of awards:** varies per year, but is typically between 10 and 12
- If a collaborative project, UMass Amherst must be the lead institution.
- **UMass History of Success:**
  - 2012 - $1 million to Narayanan Menon, Physics, for "A New Class of Solid Surfactants: Unfurling Ultrathin Sheets at Interfaces"
- **Directory of Past Awardees** - we strongly recommend reviewing past awards to determine competitiveness

**Eligibility/Funding Priorities:**

Funding is awarded to universities and institutions nationwide for projects that:

- Focus on emerging areas of interest.
- Have the potential to develop breakthrough technologies, instrumentation, or methodologies.
- Are innovative, distinct, and interdisciplinary.
- Demonstrate a high level of risk due to unconventional approaches or by challenging the prevailing paradigm.
- Have the potential for transformative impact, such as the founding of a new field of research, the enabling of observations not previously possible, or the altered perception of a previously intractable problem.
- Do not focus on clinical or translational research, treatment trials, or research for the sole purpose of drug development.
- Fall outside the mission of public funding agencies.
- Demonstrate that private philanthropy, generally, and the W.M. Keck Foundation in particular, is essential to the project's success.

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**Deadlines**

**Internal:** June 27, 2017  
**External:** November 1, 2017
Internal Application Process

An internal selection committee, composed of the deans of applicants' respective schools and colleges or their designees and, if necessary, the Provost, Vice Chancellor for Research Engagement, and/or faculty with relevant expertise, will select up to four nominees for each program to submit to the Keck Foundation during its pre-application counseling period (July 1 - August 15). Based on feedback from the Foundation and deliberation informed by the grant programs' guidelines and submission requirements, the committee will select one proposal in each category to submit by the November 1 Phase 1 Application deadline.

If you are interested in applying to either of these programs please email a 1-page (maximum) Concept Paper and PI's and Co-PIs' CVs as a single PDF by Tuesday, June 27, 2017 to Michelle Wonsey (mwonsey@umass.edu).

Concept Paper Guidelines

- In header: include name, department, email address, phone number, title of proposal, and which Keck program you are applying. Use 12 pt. font with 1" margins.

- Include a list of current and pending support.

- Write for a lay audience specifically focused on Keck criteria. A reused NSF/NIH concept paper not rewritten to focus on these guidelines will not be put forward.

- Include only brief introductory material aimed at demonstrating the importance of the scientific question being posed. Keck reviews enough proposals to quickly grasp what is an important scientific question in various fields.

- Detail what is novel in your approach, what distinguishes the work you are proposing from previous efforts (e.g., the enabling of observations not previously possible, or the altered perception of a previously intractable problem).

- Demonstrate a high level of risk due to unconventional approaches emphasizing unique aspects.

- A one-to-one cost share is expected. Document preliminary discussions and approvals by department head.

- Include a concise, clear, and concrete outline of how your proposed work will lead to new solutions or discoveries - a road map of the steps you will take to achieve your stated goal, including the methodology.

- Mention pilot studies or preliminary data, including unpublished findings that support the idea.

- Include a brief description of key personnel. Why is the team uniquely capable of doing this research and why does this work have to be done at UMass (e.g., facilities, distinctive team of faculty)?

- Include a brief justification of the need for Keck support (e.g., information about your project being denied by relevant funders).
- Provide an **estimated budget** broken down by major areas (e.g., personnel 20%, equipment 15%). Budgets can be rough estimations at this stage.
- Confirm the availability of adequate **space to house any new equipment**.

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**Additional Information**

For additional information, visit the programs' website. To view the typical profile of successful nominees, applicants are encouraged to visit Recent Awardees. If you have technical questions about the grant program(s) or your eligibility, please contact Liz Smith or Michael Stein in Corporate and Foundation Relations.

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Please click on the following links for more information on funding opportunities:
- Limited Submission Funding Opportunities
- On-Campus Funding Opportunities
- Funding for New or Early Career Faculty

You can find additional information on the CFR Website:
- Private Foundation Limited Submission Opportunities
- Grant Writing Tips and Suggestions