Application for Designation as a UAB University-Wide Interdisciplinary Research Center

The University-Wide Interdisciplinary Research Center (UWIRC) Program is recognized as one of UAB’s signature programs. The Program promotes outstanding interdisciplinary research across the spectrum of science and scholarship enhancing the development of partnerships across departments and schools.

UWIRC awards provide resources to:

* Facilitate the advancement of scholarship in focused areas of importance to the university, state, region, and nation;
* Support fundamental and translational research; and
* Play a role in graduate and postdoctoral student education and mentoring, and to facilitate community outreach.

The interdisciplinary activities fostered by UWIRC awards should enhance the competitiveness of individual faculty members and groups of investigators for extramural awards in specific thematic areas. UWIRC awards may also be used to augment programs supported by multi-investigator extramural awards. The primary mandate for UWIRC designation is the creation and support of programs that, were not for the UWIRCs, would not otherwise exist.

Designation as a UAB UWIRC carries with it the expectation to:

* Support programs that align with the broad strategic goals of the institution;
* Include substantive involvement of faculty from multiple schools/college;
* Stimulate collaborations among investigators across departmental and school/college boundaries, as exemplified by receipt of one or more competitively awarded multi-investigator extramural awards. Such collaborative arrangements add to the intellectual environment of the University and facilitate interactions across departmental and school boundaries;
* Facilitate recruitment, retention, and professional development of research scholars;
* Increase the diversity of the Institution’s investigators;
* Increase the Institution’s breadth and depth of extramural funding;
* Enhance UAB’s research infrastructure by providing efficient and well-run shared facilities (cores), which make available specialized expertise, services, and/or equipment that is difficult or cost-prohibitive to provide within individual research programs or units;
* Enhance the University’s financial base by providing grant submission and management resources to Center faculty;
* Provide an interdisciplinary matrix for student training such that UWIRCs serve as the intellectual home for theme-based extramural training awards;
* Serve as a facilitating entity for the integration of research and service; and
* Promote the University’s strategic plan and the research mission through community-based education, service, and/or outreach activities.

TIMELINE FOR APPLICATION SUBMISSION, REVIEW PROCESS, AND FUNDING

March 20, 2019 RFA released

May 31, 2019 Applications submitted to the Office of the Vice President for Research (OVPR),

August, 2019 Reviews discussed by institutional leadership

October 1, 2019 Start date for funding

INSTRUCTIONS

Please note that all groups wishing to apply must have BOT Center designation approval.

These instructions apply to all centers applying for Full UWIRC status or conversion from Pilot UWIRC to Full UWIRC status. Groups planning to submit new Pilot Center applications must adhere to the requirements of this RFP but MUST FIRST consult with Drs. Kent Keyser and Chris Brown as early as possible.

Applications will be accepted from currently funded UWIRCs and currently funded Pilot UWIRCs seeking full UWIRC status. Funding is not available for continuation of existing Pilot UWIRCs as Pilots. Teams not currently funded as a UWIRC or Pilot UWIRC may apply for full UWIRC status but must first consult with, and receive permission from, Drs. Keyser and Brown.

Each application must be accompanied by a supporting letter from the Dean of the School or College in which the Director has her/his primary appointment.

Budgetary guidance:

Approximately $4,500,000 will be available in FY2020 for the UWIRC program. Of this amount, approximately 1O% is planned for the support of meritorious Pilot UWIRCs.

If this application is from an existing UWIRC, use your Center’s current funding level as a starting point for budgetary planning. Requests for funds that are higher than current amounts must include a compelling justification: how the increase, if awarded, will enhance the return on institutional investment by supporting innovative new programs, increasing the amount of outstanding science produced, and leveraging new extramural funding. Please include a brief discussion of target metrics, i.e. new multi-PI funding applications, new research infrastructure, and a timeline. UWIRC funding will be for five years with annual renewal contingent upon satisfactory progress (see section below) and the availability of funds.

Pilot UWIRC budgets should be limited to no more than $100K. Funding requests must include a clear explanation of how funds awarded will enhance the return on institutional investment by supporting innovative new programs, increasing the amount of outstanding science produced, and leveraging new extramural funding. Please include a brief discussion of target metrics, i.e. new multi-PI funding applications, new program development or new research infrastructure. Pilot center funding will be for 3 years with annual renewal contingent upon satisfactory progress (see section below) and the availability of funds. Early in the third year pilot centers will have the opportunity to go through an application and review process for full UWIRC status.

Governance, Oversight and Reporting

The UAB UWIRC Oversight Council, chaired by Dr. Kent Keyser, will assist in oversight and governance of the UWIRC program beginning in 2019. This Council includes representatives from across the University, and a representative from the Faculty Senate. The Council reports to Vice President Chris. Brown and Senior Vice President Selwyn Vickers. See graphic below.



Application review and Annual Progress Reports:

1. The applications for UWIRC and Pilot UWIRC status and funding will be reviewed by a broadly-based review panel with representatives from across the University. In addition, there will be at least one external review for each center.
2. Applicants will receive review comments concerning the strengths and weaknesses of their application within 90 days of review.
3. Each center that is designated as a UWIRC and that receives support from this program will be required to submit an Annual Progress Report. Each Center Director will be asked to meet with a small group drawn from the UWIRC Oversight Council chaired by Dr. Keyser to discuss their progress report. If a center is not demonstrating adequate progress, the group will make a series of recommendations for improvement. The Director will then have 90 days to implement the improvement plan and again meet with the review group for a follow up discussion. Inadequate performance can lead to a reduction or loss of funding and loss of UWIRC status.

Complete the application below in 11-point font with no less than 0.5” margins. Please adhere to the space limitation for each item – the tables and instructions do not count toward the space limit. Call or email Dr. Kent Keyser (934-7757; ktkeyser@uab.edu) with questions about the application. Completed applications must be sent as a single PDF in landscape format to Dr. Keyser by to 5:00PM, May 31, 2019.

BODY OF THE APPLICATION

1. Executive Summary – Provide an overview of the Center, including its mission, leadership, governance structure, membership, current programs. (Two pages maximum). This summary should include current and future benchmarks of success, and a description of the Center’s role in multi-school projects and initiatives. Important review criteria will be evidence that Center programs are aligned with UAB’s strategic plan (<https://www.uab.edu/plan/>) and evidence of support for essential core facilities. Please describe programs that, were not for the center, would not otherwise exist. Please attach copies of the most recent external evaluations of the Center (e.g. IAC and EAC reports, multi-PI grant application summary statements, etc.). 2 page maximum

1a. Center Membership

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| --- | --- |
| Number from each school | Unit |
|  | College of Arts and Sciences |
|  | Business |
|  | Dentistry |
|  | Education |
|  | Engineering |
|  | Health Professions |
|  | Joint Health Sciences |
|  | Medicine |
|  | Nursing |
|  | Optometry |
|  | Public Health |
|  | Other entities, e.g., SRI, HAIB, etc. |

1. Expenditures – For currently funded UWIRCs only. Please provide information on how Center funds have been used in the budget years indicated, and the source and amount of funds from other sources that were used to support Center programs and initiatives.

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| UWIRC expenditures – all sources | UWIRC funds | | Center extramural funds | | Other internal funds available to the Center (briefly explain) | |
|  | 3/1/18-3/1/19 | | 3/1/18-3/1/19 | | 3/1/18-3/1/19 | |
| Personnel |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Director |  | |  | |  | |
| Assoc. Director(s) |  | |  | |  | |
| Admin staff |  | |  | |  | |
| Program and investigator development |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Seminars and/or workshops |  | |  | |  | |
| Innovative new multi-investigator projects and/or technology development |  | |  | |  | |
| Recruitment/retention efforts |  | |  | |  | |
| Pilot grant program |  | |  | |  | |
| Community outreach, including clinics, if applicable |  | |  | |  | |
| Core facilities, including personnel costs |  | |  | |  | |
| Other, such as philanthropy, define |  | |  | |  | |
| Total |  | |  | |  | |

UWIRC funds from current year, if any

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| First year UWIRC proposed budget  10/1/19-9/30/20 | Total UWIRC funds  requested | Center extramural funds | Other internal funds used by the Center (indicate source on a separate page) | UWIRC funds carried over from current year |
| Personnel subtotal |  |  |  |  |
| Director |  |  |  |  |
| Assoc. Director(s) |  |  |  |  |
| Admin staff |  |  |  |  |
| Program and investigator development |  |  |  |  |
| Innovative new multi-investigator projects and/or technology development |  |  |  |  |
| Seminars and workshops |  |  |  |  |
| Other |  |  |  |  |
| Recruitment/retention efforts |  |  |  |  |
| Pilot grant program |  |  |  |  |
| Community Outreach |  |  |  |  |
| Core Facilities, including personnel costs |  |  |  |  |
| Other, such as philanthropy (define) |  |  |  |  |
| TOTAL |  |  |  |  |
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1. Budget proposed for next funding cycle – Please use the form below. The “Other” row may be used for categories not specified on the budget sheet. Rows for categories may be inserted, if needed. Rows not needed may be deleted. In a one-page budget justification, explain how proposed expenditures are linked to the Center’s plans for the coming funding period outlined in item 5. If there are projected to be unexpended funds from the current budget year please explain why and when they will be spent on a separate page.
2. Progress and accomplishments – Include a narrative (no more than 4 pages total) that demonstrates the Center’s impact on the institution, and that delineates specific contributions to UAB’s research enterprise, referencing the tables below. Be specific about projects and initiatives that would not have happened were it not for the Center. *If this application is from an existing Pilot UWIRC seeking a transition to full UWIRC status, justify the change in status.*
   1. List active and pending multi-investigator extramural research awards iin which the Center played a significant role [examples: multi-PI R01s, NIH P-series and U series, foundation center grants, etc.] in Table 4.a. Include multi-PI R01-like awards, NIH Director’s Awards, and other special awards. Provide a short narrative to define the Center’s role. If P type awards are not available to the center, in place of the table provide a brief narrative (not more than half a page) describing the Center’s contributions to multi-investigator research projects.
   2. List active and pending training grants in which Center members have significant roles, e.g., serving as PI or service on the steering committee in Table 4.b. (do not list training grants on which a Center member’s only role is mentor or preceptor). Alternatively, if T series awards are not available to the center, in place of the table please provide a brief narrative (not more than half a page) describing the Center’s contributions to undergraduate, graduate, and/or postdoctoral student training.
   3. List pilot awards funded or co-funded, if any, since 10/1/2014 in Table 4.c. Please provide the source of funds used, and report any important new scientific findings. On a separate page describe if, and how, the award led to follow-on extramural funding.
   4. List core facilities currently supported by the Center that have a broad user-base. Provide number of users and fiscal data as shown in Table 4.d. Please indicate center participation in instrument grant applications (NSF MRI, NIH S10, or VA ShEEP).
   5. List the contributions of the Center to faculty recruitment and retention since 10/1/2014 in Table 4.e. indicate if the support was financial, programmatic, or enrichment.
   6. Enrichment activities: Describe the enrichment activities such as workshops, faculty development activities, etc., that the Center has supported since 10/1/2012 and how these have benefited the UAB community. Seminar programs are common to essentially all Centers and need not be listed. (no more than 1 page; optional)
   7. Describe the role of the Center in philanthropic efforts since 10/1/2014, and/or entrepreneurship (no more than 1 page; optional).
   8. Describe the contributions of the Center to community outreach and service since 10/1/2014, (e.g., activities including community participation, a clinic operated by the Center (no more than 1 page; optional).
   9. Major advances in knowledge: Describe up four major advances in knowledge since 10/1/2014 that were facilitated by the Center. (no more than 2 pages
3. Describe the center’s programs and initiatives planned for the next five years, emphasizing innovative projects, new multi-investigator proposals, new investments in research infrastructure, and efforts in the area of entrepreneurship and IP development, and/or important community outreach activities. Include a list of metrics that will serve to document the Center’s accomplishments, and a timeline for these accomplishments. These responses will be discussed at the annual Progress Report meetings. (no more than 1 page)

Table 4.a: Multi-investigator extramural awards (add rows as needed)

Active

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| PI last name | Extramural sponsor | Award # | Title | Current year funding | Total award period funding  (include dates) |
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Table 4.a.1: Multi-investigator extramural awards (add rows as needed)

Pending

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| PI last name | Extramural sponsor | Award # | Title | First year funding | Total award period funding  (include dates) |
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Table 4.b: Training grants (add rows as needed)

Active

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| PI last name | Extramural sponsor | Award # | Title | Current year funding | Total award period funding  (include dates) |
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Table 4.b.1: Training grants (add rows as needed)

Pending

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| PI last name | Extramural sponsor | Award # | Title | First year funding | Total award period funding  (include dates) |
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TABLE 4.c: Active pilot grant funding data, 10/2015-1/2019

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| PI of pilot grant | PI’s school and department | Total pilot award | $ from UWIRC funds | $ from other Center funds | $ from other funding sources | Return on investment if known:  Extramural funding received-  type (Foundation award, RO1, etc.), and total costs |
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| Core facility name | Extramural sponsor(s) | Fiscal support provided by UWIRC funding | Other fiscal support from Center | User fees collected in last 12 months (2/2108-2/2019) |
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Table 4.d: Core facilities currently supported by the Center that have a broad user-base

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| TABLE 4.e: Faculty recruitment and retentions efforts of the Center, since 10/1/2016 (add rows as needed) | | | |
| Faculty member | Faculty member’s school | Center’s financial contribution | Center’s role in recruitment/retention effort, e.g., major sponsor, financial contributor, provided core resources, etc. |
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