chci Center for Human-Computer Interaction

Call for Proposals:

Planning Grants for Large-Scale Research Efforts

Proposal Deadline
April 8, 2021, 5:00 PM EDT

Awards Announced
April 22, 2021

Overview and Purpose

The Center for Human-Computer Interaction (CHCI) invites proposals for internal planning grants leading to large-scale externally funded research efforts. The goal of this program is to identify and support interdisciplinary teams of researchers in convergent research areas to prepare for submission of large external grant proposals. In this context, "large" grants are defined as externally funded projects with a total budget of $2M or more. A CHCI planning grant will support new or existing teams to perform activities, such as team building and project scoping, that are necessary to enable the submission of a competitive large proposal in the future. This internal planning grant should lead directly to an external proposal submission as a next step, but the external submission may be a stepping stone to the envisioned large grant (i.e., an external planning grant or small grant).

Investigators

Proposals should come from teams of at least two investigators from at least two different departments or disciplines. In addition to the core investigators, proposals should identify additional faculty members, disciplines, or external partners that the team will engage during the planning grant period.

Research Areas

Any research area or theme related to human-computer interaction is within the scope of the program. Convergence between HCI and one or more other areas is strongly encouraged.

Activities Eligible for Support

Planning grants aim to support a range of planning activities intended to foster a convergent research team that can effectively integrate multiple disciplinary perspectives, explore the research theme in depth, build collaborations with relevant stakeholders, and hone specification of research gaps, questions, and hypotheses. Activities within scope include, but are not limited to, workshops, stakeholder meetings, literature reviews, data collection, preliminary experiments, prototypes, and pilots. In all cases, the proposed activities should be designed as a step along the path to a future large-scale external grant.

Available Funding and Budget Guidelines

The program has a total budget of $40,000, which may be used to support one or multiple awards. Teams should propose a budget commensurate with the scope of their proposed activities and their intended next steps. In particular, teams proposing activities leading to an external planning grant might request a smaller amount, while teams proposing to submit a large-scale external grant immediately after the planning grant activities might request a larger amount. The maximum allowable budget for a proposal is $40,000. The total requested amount, as well as the individual line items, should be clearly justified in the budget section of the proposal. The anticipated outcome(s) of the planning grant should be articulated in as much detail as possible to assist reviewers in clearly understanding the connection between scope of proposed activities and requested budget.

Eligible budget categories include faculty time (summer salary and/or AY course buyout), student assistantships and/or wages, travel (for team building), equipment, materials & supplies, and participant support costs.

Awards will consist of E&G funds that expire at the end of FY21. Funds will be transferred to the PI's home department, which will be responsible for working with the team to spend the funds by the end of the fiscal year or provide non-E&G funds to be spent in the next fiscal year. Unspent funds must be transferred back to CHCI within 45 days of the project's end date.

Proposal Content

Proposals should be no more than five (5) single-spaced pages, using Times New Roman 12-point font. Proposals should address the following topics:

- Definition of the research theme/area and motivation for its importance
- History and current status of the research theme at Virginia Tech
- Vision for development of the research theme
- Qualifications of the interdisciplinary team
- Specific large, external grant objective and target source

- Roadmap to achieve the large-scale funding objective
  - Proposed activities for this planning grant
  - (If applicable) proposed next steps before large-scale proposal submission
- Budget and budget justification
- Timeline

Submission Process

In addition to the five-page proposal narrative, submissions should include a cover sheet with signatures of the investigators and their department heads.

Email a PDF copy of your submission, including cover page with all necessary signatures, to Andrea Kavanaugh at kavan@vt.edu by 5:00 p.m. EDT on April 8.

Review Process and Criteria

Proposals will be reviewed and funding decisions will be made by the CHCI executive committee. Review criteria will include:

- Strength and potential of the interdisciplinary team
- Importance and potential of the research theme
- Opportunity for the team to create a distinct and compelling research niche
- Clarity and feasibility of the plan to achieve large-scale external funding
- Overall potential return on investment
- Relevance of the theme to the vision and interests of CHCI, VT, and the nation

Important Dates

- March 8, 2021: Call for proposals released
- April 8, 2021: Submissions due by 5:00 PM EDT
- April 22, 2021: Awards announced
- April 30, 2021: Funds transferred to the home department of the PI