Introduction

The GSU strategic plan calls on us to build a research culture to tackle large and complex problems. The successful Second Century Initiative (2CI) program and the first three years of the Next Generation Program have resulted in the hiring of outstanding interdisciplinary faculty, have contributed to the significant expansion of our research/scholarship and funding, and have yielded creative new interdisciplinary courses and academic programs. To date, these programs have funded 45 initiatives and provided nearly $12 million dollars in continuing funding.

For this year, the fourth year of the Next Generation Program, our call for proposals challenges faculty and deans to design innovative research hubs. Are there new and/or emerging areas of research that we could or should establish? As technology continues its rapid evolution in virtually all areas, how will GSU meet the challenge of producing relevant and high impact research, scholarship and creative work? How will GSU respond to prepare our graduates for rapidly changing job markets? We encourage the submission of highly innovative proposals for the 2018-2019 academic year.

**Program Goal:** To build broadly-recognized strength and critical mass around research, scholarly and creative themes that have strategic importance to Georgia State University.

**Phase 1: Letters of Interest (Pre-Proposal, Due October 26, 2018)**

The Letter of Interest (LOI) should provide a clear overview of the innovative vision for tackling the issues and opportunities that will be addressed by the faculty (tenure track and/or non-tenure track) cluster. Please outline clear benchmarks of success envisioned by the proposal in a presentation designed to be evaluated by the broader academic community. The LOI should also provide justification for the award based on the following:

**A Guiding Principle of Innovation.** Proposals should have as their goal the establishment or the enhancement of an innovative hub. Make clear how this will enable the development of cutting-edge research, and scholarly and/or creative activity. In contrast to previous rounds, the proposed hub does not have to lie within the current university- and college-level organizational structure.

Funding requests are not limited to the previous cap of $1 million for faculty salaries and infrastructure support, although strong justification is needed when requests exceed $1 million. Prior clusters funded through this program or the previous 2CI program are eligible to apply for expanded funding if the new proposal clearly demonstrates the innovative, visionary, and cutting-edge impact of their plans. Cost-sharing of salaries and other support (i.e., supplies, travel, equipment, staffing) will be used, in part, to decide among competing proposals.

**Senior faculty** hires, at the rank of full professor, will have strong international reputations and the potential to attract other scholars and support. Non-grant-funded disciplines should seek faculty with distinguished records of scholarly productivity and/or creative work, including potential for prestigious international recognition. Hires in grant-funded disciplines should have distinguished records of past and current external grant funding.

**Matching Associate Faculty** hires will be associate professors with strong track records that would make them eligible for tenure-on-appointment and have considerable potential for future distinction. Two or more associate faculty hires may be proposed, with no more than one hired in the same department/unit as the senior faculty.

The following caveats apply:

- Proposals will not be funded that focus on solely building a single department’s faculty.
• If the proposal includes a senior faculty hire, all associate faculty hires must be made after the external senior faculty hire.
• Proposals should also address the University’s goal to increase faculty diversity.
• Salaries for the new faculty must reflect the market in these disciplines for individuals at that rank and accomplishment. To increase flexibility, the Provost’s Office will not set a maximum level of salary support for new proposals.

Letter of Interest Guidelines

Letter of Interest (limited to 6 pages, single space, 11 pt font). Provide an Overview (max 3 pages) of the selected area of research, scholarly or creative focus. In addition to the overview, please provide:

• a listing of the units and key faculty members who will be involved in the proposal and searches, and who will be responsible for ensuring its success (max 1 page)
• suggested general budget, with general amounts of Next Generation funds requested for personnel/non-personnel areas, and any matching funds or other resources to be committed from the specific units (max 1 page).

Please include a signature cover page indicating the approval and support of all involved vice presidents, deans, directors, and/or department chairs. All such signatories will be expected to ensure the proposal’s success if funded. Please do not add curriculum vitae or other appendices to the LOI as such additional materials will not be used for review.

All Letters of Interest are due Friday, October 26th, 2018. The fully approved LOI should be sent in PDF format electronically to the Associate Provost for Strategic Initiatives and Innovation (mbwalker@gsu.edu). They will be reviewed by the Provost’s Office based on:

• Potential for special innovative or emerging opportunities
• Relationship to the Strategic Plan and other university-level strategic initiatives
• Funding requested and committed cost-sharing or resources provided by units involved
• Proposal leadership and their track record in building scholarly activities and working collaborations.

The Associate Provost for Strategic Initiatives and Innovation will notify proposers of a decision no later than November 12th, 2018. Those projects that are approved are then eligible for submission as full proposals.

Phase 2: Full Proposals for Accepted Letters of Interest (Max 15 pages, single space, 11 pt font, due January 11, 2019)

Abstract (limited to 300 words): Specify the area of strength, its national significance, and the special opportunities being addressed by the proposal. Why is this a special opportunity?

Proposal (limited to 10 pages): The proposal should address the following:

1. What makes the proposed hub innovative and why is Georgia State the place to build this new or emerging research/scholarly area?

2. How does the proposal support the university’s strategic priorities and plan, or increase its interdisciplinary collaboration, research, scholarship or creative activities?

3. How will the proposal significantly elevate Georgia State as a nationally and/or internationally recognized innovator in scholarship, research, and/or creativity?

4. What evidence is there that the subject matter is one of documented national and/or international significance?

5. What evidence is there that candidates are available for such positions that we could attract?
6. What evidence is there that the proposing units have the administrative and academic leadership commitment in place for building the proposed group into a productive interdisciplinary team that can ensure a collaborative and intellectually attractive environment for ongoing development?

Appendices:

**Team** (limited to 1 page): List the administrators, key faculty and/or research staff, and their units, who actively collaborated on the proposal and are invested in its success. Identify the proposal ‘chair’ who will be the point of contact and provide leadership for all proposal-related administration and personnel.

**Budget Plan** (limited to 1 page): Provide estimates of the starting market salary levels for all requested hires, the proportion of each salary being requested from *Next Generation Program* funds, and the proportion from other sources (please specify those sources and amounts). Salary from all hires should be based on current, documented market data related to their discipline for that rank.

**Phase 3: Review and Approval Process**

1. Proposals are to be routed through the dean(s) or leadership of the participating academic or research unit(s), and then to the Associate Provost for Strategic Initiatives and Innovation in PDF format. If multiple colleges, schools and/or centers are participating, one vice president, dean, or director must be designated as the ‘lead’ for administrative functions. All participating chairs, unit or center directors, deans, and vice presidents must endorse the proposal and state their reasons for supporting the application in a joint cover letter.

2. To ensure broad faculty input, a university-wide faculty committee, appointed by and advisory to the Provost, will review and comment on the full proposals. Nominations of committee members will be made by chairs of the University Senate Executive and Research Committees.

3. The Provost’s Office will use the proposal ratings and evaluations by the deans and/or directors, and by the faculty review committee, to inform funding decisions. Proposals may be returned for modifications then re-reviewed. All funding will be allocated by the Provost in consultation with the President.

**Timeline**

October 26, 2018: Letters of Interest due.
November 12, 2018: Decisions related to Letters of Interest made.
January 11, 2019: Full Proposals due for those Letters of Interest accepted for Phase 2.
January 25, 2019: Faculty committee reviews completed.
February 8, 2019: Recommendations for funding go to President Becker.
For more information, see [https://nextgen.gsu.edu](https://nextgen.gsu.edu) or contact Mary Beth Walker (mbwalker@gsu.edu, 404-413-4305).