

NCKRI-NMT Internal Seed Grant Program  
FY 2020/2021

**Deadline: Monday, August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020**

The National Cave and Karst Research Institute invites proposals for FY2020/2021 Seed Grants in support of cave and karst research at New Mexico Tech.

Application deadline: August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020, 5:00 PM Pacific Time

### **Background and Goals**

The National Cave and Karst Research Institute (NCKRI) is a non-profit government-supported institute headquartered in the City of Carlsbad, New Mexico. Its goals are to conduct, support, facilitate, and promote programs in cave and karst research, education, environmental management, and data acquisition and sharing. New Mexico Tech (NMT) is NCKRI's major academic partner and provides the scholarly foundation of NCKRI.

In 2019, NCKRI initiated an internal seed grant program designed to support and expand cave and karst research at NMT. These seed grants are intended to enable NMT investigators to initiate new cave and karst research, and expand NCKRI's research footprint by enhancing collaborations with NMT faculty and students.

### **Application Criteria for Internal NMT Seed Grants**

Faculty in any academic department at New Mexico Tech, and including NCKRI staff members, are invited to apply. Only one application per PI is allowable.

- 1. New research:** Only new, unfunded projects will be considered, and seed grant funds may not be used to support existing studies. Because these grants are intended as seed money to enable new research directions, the investigator should not have published on the research or received funding for it from another agency, and should clearly describe how the proposed activity truly represents a new direction for them or their research group.
- 2. Clear relevance to cave and karst science:** NCKRI's goals are to conduct, support, facilitate, and promote programs in cave and karst research; thus, the research described in the proposal should be clearly relevant to cave and karst science. Basic and applied research in any field of cave and karst science will be considered.

- 3. Collaborations with NCKRI staff (encouraged but not required):** One of the goals of the internal seed grant program is to enhance collaboration between NCKRI staff in Carlsbad and NMT researchers. Collaborations with NCKRI staff are therefore encouraged. If NCKRI staff are involved but not formally listed as a PI or Co-PI, a letter of support from the NCKRI staff member should be included.
- 4. Research addressing the priorities of the National Park Service (encouraged but not required):** NCKRI seed grant funds are made possible in part by support from the National Park Service. Therefore, projects addressing fundamental scientific questions or management applications in caves within the National Park System are encouraged. Proposals for work in a national park should include a letter of support from an appropriate authority at the park.
- 5. Outreach:** Each project must include an outreach component. Examples of appropriate outreach projects are instructional programs in a K-12 setting, video presentations of research posted on an institutional or NCKRI video channel, collaboration with a show cave or museum (including the NCKRI museum), college-level outreach initiatives, or collaboration with an artist. Investigators or their students/postdocs should expect to spend a total of 5-10 hours on outreach in addition to preparation time.

Finalists will be selected based on scientific merit and quality of the proposal, alignment with cave and karst science and NCKRI research priorities, and the potential longevity of the proposed research (that is, the likelihood that pilot data obtained from the project will make the research team competitive for support from other funding agencies). Lead PIs cannot be a lead PI on a currently funded NCKRI seed grant.

### **Budgetary information**

NCKRI expects to support one project with a total award of up to \$25,000, contingent on funding availability. Project periods may be up to 12 months, but funds must be fully expended before the end of the federal fiscal year (9/30/2021) regardless of project length.

The budget and budget justification should be two pages in length. Please include an itemized budget (1 page) and budget justification (1 page) including details of personnel (salaries, fringe), materials and supplies, analytical costs, other expenses, and travel.

### **Reporting and award conditions**

Awardees will be featured on the NCKRI website and annual report, and will be required to provide a conceptual summary and a figure of their proposed research for the NCKRI website and report before any funds are disbursed. A final report will be due to NCKRI by the designated project completion date, including a list of any presentations and publications resulting from the research. We will also request that investigators provide a 2-3 page summary for the NCKRI annual report and website (2-3 pages, 2-3 figures).

NCKRI requests a copy of published materials such as manuscripts, dissertations/theses, or technical reports that result from the supported research, as well as acknowledgement in any publications or presentations.

After one year, and upon submission of the report, recipients are eligible for up to \$2500 for publication fees or travel support for PIs and/or their students to present at national or international conferences.

### **To Apply**

Please submit a proposal document containing the following sections as a single merged pdf using our online application system by the deadline.

The proposal will include the following parts:

1. Title, list of PIs/Co-Is, and summary (300 words maximum) on a single page.
2. Proposal document – **5 pages maximum** (1-inch margins, 12 pt. font, Times New Roman or equivalent font) which includes the following sections in no particular order:
  - a. Project description, including a brief background, objectives, and approach, with sufficient technical detail to pass review.
  - b. Significance of the proposed research to cave and karst science.
  - c. Description of the research team, including the roles and qualifications of the PIs and Co-PIs, graduate students, or any other personnel involved.
  - d. Project timeline and activity schedule (small table or graphic).
3. Literature cited.
4. Itemized budget (1 page) and justification (1 page), including salaries, supplies, equipment, etc. Budgets may not exceed \$25,000.
5. CV – 2 page CV for each PI and Co-PI.
6. Letter(s) of collaboration or support.

Applicants are also asked to provide the name, affiliation, phone and email address of 3-6 unconflicted reviewers.

### **Questions**

Please direct any questions about submission or budget preparation to Judith McShannon (Judith.McShannon@nmt.edu). Other questions about this RFP should be directed to Daniel Jones, NCKRI Academic Director (daniel.s.jones@nmt.edu).