

## **2008-2009 – Second Miller RFP**

### **Portland State University Center for Sustainable Processes and Practices**

#### **Request for Proposals—Round Two Announcement**

*Abstracts Due 5:00 pm Friday March 20, 2009*

*Complete Proposals Due 5:00 pm Friday, April 10, 2009*

*Awards announced early May, 2009*

*Send Proposals to Beth Lloyd ([elloyd@pdx.edu](mailto:elloyd@pdx.edu))*

The Center for Sustainable Processes and Practices announces the second of a series of Requests for Proposals (RFP) from Portland State University faculty or staff for activities and initiatives that promote sustainability at Portland State and within the community. The James F. and Marion L. Miller Foundation's generous challenge grant of \$25 million is making these grants possible. <http://www.investinportland.org/>.

#### **Objectives of the RFP and Sustainability Strategy**

This Request for Proposals is intended to support activities during the 2009-2010 academic year that align with Portland State's sustainability strategic plan, with an emphasis on near-term and medium-term sustainability priorities. These priorities are to become a national and international leader in scholarship and education focused on a "systems" approach to sustainability in the urban context. Core to this opportunity are commitments to addressing all three aspects of sustainability (social, economic and environmental) in an integrated manner, and to engaging in a "living laboratory" approach - a problem-based teaching, research, and innovation strategy in which ongoing assessment and evaluation contribute to the knowledge base regarding sustainability at all scales. See <http://www.pdx.edu/sustainability/sustrfp.html> for working definitions of sustainable urban communities and the living laboratory.

Activities must promote the intention of the Miller Gift to build institutional capacity to positively impact the Portland metropolitan region and enhance Portland State's national and global leadership in one or more of the following three areas related to sustainability:

1. Enhancing the student experience
2. Expanding excellence in faculty research and teaching
3. Strengthening community engagement activities

Multi-year activities will be considered, though funding awards for future years will be contingent on the availability of funds.

## Core Proposal Attributes

The Request for Proposals for 2009-2010 will focus on building capacity at Portland State to advance these strategic priorities. Capacity building activities may include expansion of research capabilities through the purchase of equipment or investment in other technologies, development of strategic interdisciplinary research agendas that position PSU for additional external funds, assessment of curricular needs and the development of courses to address these needs, and other such activities. Up to \$350,000 will be awarded in this RFP process.

Projects must address the following considerations:

- **Strategic contribution to Portland State’s sustainability program priorities** – How does the project align with Portland State’s sustainability priorities? As noted above, these priorities will focus on sustainable urban communities, projects that advance Portland State’s engagement in creating a sustainability “living laboratory” in the region, and projects that take an integrated, “systems” approach that seeks to incorporate all three spheres of sustainability – social, economic and environmental.
- **Ability to generate external support** – Is project positioned and does it have plans to to generate additional financial support from the external community to help meet the Miller challenge and build additional institutional capacity? Does the project positioned, and have a plan for the distribution of its intellectual assets in order to generate external support and users? In addition, as this RFP is designed to continue to build a foundation for successful activities in the coming years, applicants should address the “fiscal sustainability” of proposed activities.
- **Multidisciplinary and collaborative approach**— To what extent do the activities and/or scholarship involve multiple disciplines, departments, schools and programs in meaningful collaboration?

Proposals that meet the criteria noted above and that expand on activities currently underway or that were funded under the first RFP are encouraged. Visit <http://www.pdx.edu/sustainability/sustrfp.html> for more information on projects funded in Round 1.

In cases where the proposal addresses international issues, social sustainability, and/or “living laboratory” projects related to sustainable urban communities, proposers are encouraged to indicate how their project relates to other strategic activities underway in those areas at Portland State. For more information, please contact Jennifer Allen ([jhallen@pdx.edu](mailto:jhallen@pdx.edu)).

## **Proposal Channels:**

Proposals under this RFP should fall into one or more of the following categories depending on the focus of the activities proposed:

- 1) Research Capacity Building
- 2) Curriculum
- 3) Student Experience
- 4) Program Development
- 5) Small Grants (under \$10,000)

If you are requesting additional funding for a project that was funded under the first Miller RFP round, please note that in your submission under one of the categories above.

*Please note that projects seeking a conditional commitment of Miller funds as part of a proposal submission to external sources should submit their request through the rolling “matching funds request” channel for projects (contact Jennifer Allen – [jhallen@pdx.edu](mailto:jhallen@pdx.edu) – for more on the matching grants programs).*

## **Application and Review Process**

- Abstracts are due Friday March 20, 2009
- Abstracts are not part of the review process, but are required as they will assist in the establishment of the review panels and ensure adequate resources available for processing of proposals.
- Proposals are due on Friday April 10, 2009
- Awards will be announced in early May, 2009.
- The total funding dedicated to this first RFP cycle is not to exceed \$350,000<sup>1</sup>
- Start date for funded activities should be July 1, 2009 or later.
- This Request for Proposals will consider multi-year activities and the amounts allocated to subsequent years may be additional to the funds issued for this RFP process. However, all funding in subsequent years is contingent on the University’s receipt of adequate funds under the Miller gift or other external sources in those years.

---

<sup>1</sup> The balance of the 2009-2010 Miller gift is allocated to new faculty hires; support for Center for Sustainable Processes and Practices, including core staff, Faculty Fellows, and organizational infrastructure; student support programs (scholarships, internships, post-docs, etc); and for other strategic investments that will contribute to the achievement of the goals of the Miller gift.

## **Review Process**

The review process for proposals submitted under the Research, Curriculum, Student Experience and Program Development tracks will be reviewed by panels consisting of internal and external reviewers. The abstracts will help inform the development of the review teams to ensure appropriate representation of relevant expertise. Small grant proposals will be reviewed by the CSP2 Director in consultation with others as needed.

Proposals will be reviewed based on the attributes described above using the following scale:

- Excellent: Outstanding proposal in all respects; deserves highest priority for support.
- Very Good: High quality proposal in nearly all respects; should be supported if at all possible.
- Good: A quality proposal worthy of support should be supported if funds remain after supporting the categories listed above.
- Fair: Proposal lacking in one or more critical aspects; key issues need to be addressed.
- Poor: Proposal has serious deficiencies.

The Provost and Director<sup>2</sup> of the Center for Sustainable Processes and Practices will make the final allocation of funds based on the recommendation of the review panels, taking into consideration the desire to have a balanced portfolio of projects that addresses the strategic intent of the Miller gift.

Comments from reviewers will be summarized and provided to all PIs after the awards are made.

## **Grant Requirements**

Proposals that receive funding must submit a status report by August 1, 2010 to enable the Center for Sustainable Processes and Practices to report on progress to date during their annual meeting with the Miller Foundation. Format for status report will be provided under separate cover. The report must include a description of the activities undertaken, the new external relationships established and information on community users created through the grant activities, the contribution of the activities funded to building Portland State's sustainability-related capacity, the lessons learned related to program development, and any next steps that would build upon the funded activities.

In some cases this report may serve as the final report on the project, if activities have been completed prior to submission of that report. In addition, projects that are still under implementation as of August 1, 2010, will be required to submit a report within 45 days of the completion of the funded activities.

---

<sup>2</sup> If the Director position is not filled by the time of review, the Interim Director will participate in this decision.