

Prospective Doctoral Student Recruitment and Retention Program

A funding and partnership opportunity with the Graduate School

Proposals due Oct. 30, 2017

Michigan State University values diversity and inclusion in graduate education. In order to advance diversity and inclusion at MSU, the Graduate School is committed to promoting change through leadership and a variety of innovative programs and strategic initiatives.

The fundamental goal of the new *Prospective Doctoral Student Recruitment and Retention Program* is to help graduate programs at MSU recruit, retain, and support a diverse group of traditionally underrepresented domestic doctoral students who will contribute in meaningful ways to the intellectual, geographical, racial, and ethnic diversity of the future professoriate. The Graduate School, with generous funding from the Office of Inclusion and Intercultural Initiatives, is offering a seed-grant program and partnering opportunities for doctoral programs that develop a 3-year plan for the sustained recruitment, professional development, and completion of a diverse doctoral cohort. These grants will begin in January 2018.

Existing Graduate School programs such as the *Summer Research Opportunity Program (SROP)* and *Advance to Adventure (ATA) Prospective Graduate Student Visits* and program have sought to provide rewarding opportunities for an inclusive group of prospective graduate applicants to visit MSU. The MSU *Alliances for Graduate Education and the Professoriate (AGEP) Community*, MSU's involvement in the NSF-CIRTL network, as well as an array of career and professional development programs and workshops support students as they move toward faculty careers.

The *Prospective Graduate Student Recruitment and Retention Program* seeks to build upon these efforts in a more sustained and systematic way. Recruiting and retaining underrepresented graduate students with strategic initiatives is vital to creating and maintaining inclusive graduate programs. By bringing together a group of departments/programs with focused support by the Graduate School, we hope to effectively leverage existing programs and to share resources and strategies to maximize success.

The Graduate School will fund a limited number of proposals in 2017-18, with opportunities for new departments/programs to submit proposals the following year.

Call for proposals:

Doctoral programs are invited to submit proposals for the *Prospective Graduate Student Recruitment and Retention Program* by **October 30, 2017**.

Proposals should:

- identify current issues and/or challenges in their programs that they seek to address, and current efforts to address them
- describe both specific new departmental efforts and planned connections with current Graduate School recruitment, retention, and support programs
- demonstrate effectual and proactive recruitment and retention efforts and strategies for historically underrepresented graduate students
- outline a 3-year plan over the period of the grant, beginning January 1, 2018
- identify key faculty and staff who will be involved
- create a summary budget related to activities.

Potential supported activities might include (but are not limited to): research faculty commitment to serve as mentors in summer research opportunity programs (SROP) when there are students who might be a good candidates for graduate admission to their departments; support for recruitment trips to particular campuses or conferences (including, when appropriate, in coordination with Graduate School partners), with plans for follow up; professional development activities for current students (including links to existing Graduate School programs, where appropriate); explorations of new partner programs with HBCUs, HSIs and tribal colleges; new mentoring programs; new admissions initiatives.

In preparing your proposals, indicate the amount of funding that your program would need to effectively accomplish your goals, but consider \$10,000 as a yearly maximum. A commitment for a partial funding match from the department and/or college should be included in the proposal. In addition to providing funds for department/program activities, the Graduate School will prioritize slots for students in SROP and in current retention programs, when these are included in the proposals. For examples, see the accompanying list.

The due date for proposals for the *Prospective Graduate Student Recruitment and Retention Program* is October 30, 2017. Decisions will be made by November 30, 2016. If your unit receives funding for this program, a post activity report will be required for each year that the Graduate School supports the program. This report should be brief and concise and will be due at the end of the spring semester. The 3rd year of funding will be contingent upon the submission of a plan to sustain beyond the 3-year period the activities begun under the seed grant.

Applications (5 single-spaced page maximum) should be sent to fellowshipapps@grd.msu.edu and include the following:

- **Contact person(s):** Who will be in charge of facilitating the recruitment and retention program? Do any of the unit's faculty members have expertise in this area? If yes, please describe.

- **Brief overview of the issues and/or challenges related to diversity and inclusion that you seek to address.** Please describe any current strategies for recruiting and mentoring URM graduate students, and assess their effectiveness.
- **A brief summary of the proposed recruitment activities:** For instance, what events will you plan for visits? Will specific faculty members reach out to potential applicants? Do you have any plans for cultivating any cross-institutional partnerships? Please also highlight how the proposed recruiting practices differ from previous practices. For instance, in what ways has the department attempted to enhance or expand the diversity of the graduate student population over the past three to five years? How would the department describe the success of those initiatives? What have been the primary obstacles to recruiting underrepresented graduate students?
- **A brief summary of the proposed retention activities:** Describe your plans for supporting underrepresented graduate students after they are admitted into the program. Issues to consider could include mentoring, workshops, research opportunities, networking programs, new professional development opportunities, etc.
- **Faculty commitment:** Please provide a statement confirming the unit's commitment to ensure that participating faculty in the unit will participate in activities designed to enhance the diversity programming, such as workshops, summer mentoring, etc. The proposal should indicate key faculty who will be involved, as well as the specific efforts they will participate in (e.g., recruitment, mentoring, summer research, etc.).
- **Assessment:** Please provide a statement confirming the unit's commitment to (1) assess and evaluate the recruitment and retention program as implemented in the unit and (2) provide related outcomes and evaluative summaries to the Graduate School reporting on the activities of the program for the funding period.

The Graduate School will support graduate programs' efforts through:

- 1) compiling and sharing local and national data; 2) providing support for departmental analyses of practices and programs as outlined in proposals; 3) providing information on best practices in mentoring and retention, based on what we have learned through NSF, NIH, Mellon, and CGS grants; 4) creating connections with external institutions already participating in SROP, AGEP, and NSF-CIRTL activities; 5) providing support for assessment and evaluation.