

Earth Clinic

Practical Solutions Grants
Call for Proposals

2009-2010

To: Columbia University Faculty
Columbia University Research Scientists
Columbia University Research Scholars
Columbia University Postdoctoral Fellows

Award Amounts

\$10,000 - \$30,000

\$30,000

Typical Award Amount

Maximum Award Amount

Proposal Deadline

Thursday, April 30, 2009

10:00 pm

Award Notification

Wednesday, July 1, 2009



Call for Proposals – Practical Solutions Grants

Proposals are solicited from the Columbia University faculty and research staff to advance the goals and objectives of the Earth Institute's Earth Clinic. Practice is a core activity of any problem-solving entity of academia by providing solutions to real world problems. It is informed by basic and applied research, thus bringing the most advanced knowledge base to the field, the ultimate test bed of theories and hypotheses developed in the research and teaching environment of academic institutions. At the same time, practice is a constant source of new scientific problems that require further basic and/or applied research. This fruitful synergy between research and practice forms the foundation for achieving change in the ways society responds to the challenge of sustainable development through academically informed problem solving.

As the Earth Institute's main practice instrument, the Earth Clinic is designed to help developing countries and communities within developed countries creatively respond to pressing economic and environmental problems. It offers science-based assistance to urgent issues of economic development, public health, energy systems, water management, agriculture and infrastructure. The clinic's work differs from traditional consulting in that it seeks to bring a solid academic component to problem solving. An important element in this effort is close work with local partners on design and implementation to ensure long-term project effectiveness. Current projects include the Millennium Villages Project, the Millennium Cities Initiative, curbing childhood obesity in New York City through the Urban Design Lab, expanding healthcare in Ethiopia, and reducing arsenic exposure in Bangladesh. A website is available which provides information on the Earth Clinic and on current and past Earth Clinic awards and recipients: <http://www.earth.columbia.edu/articles/view/1790>.

For additional information, contact Robin DeJong at robin@ei.columbia.edu or 212-854-7905.

Eligible to Apply

These funds are available only to proposals with a member of the Columbia University community as the Principal Investigator.

- The lead Principal Investigator (PI) must be a full-time research scientist, research scholar or professor at Columbia University. There can be up to four co-PIs and co-PIs need not be members of the Columbia University community. There is no limit to the number of project team members.
- An EI Fellow or Columbia postdoctoral research fellow may be the PI of a project as long as a co-PI who is a full-time research scientist, research scholar or professor at Columbia University signs an agreement to assume responsibility of the project once the Fellow has completed his/her fellowship. If a postdoctoral research fellow wishes to be PI, he/she must indicate in the proposal when the fellowship ends. A fellow may also be a co-PI.
- The project team ideally will be comprised of a mix of senior and junior scientists including Earth Institute Fellows, and may include graduate students. The project team may include collaborators outside the Columbia University community.
- A project that receives funding from the Earth Clinic is an Earth Institute project and will remain so regardless of changes in project leadership.

Award Amounts

A maximum amount of \$30,000 will be granted to a single project, except under rare circumstances when the Earth Clinic Steering Committee determines otherwise. A minimum of \$10,000 will be awarded. Support can be provided for preparation of specific proposals emerging from Earth Clinic planning activities.

Project Requirements

1. The project should address a critical issue in the mission of the Earth Institute and the proposal should describe how it fits into the larger picture of the Earth Institute.
2. The project should relate to the goals and objectives of the Earth Clinic. The Earth Clinic should be viewed as a clinic with developing countries, communities, or individuals as the clients. The client needs to be identified and provided with an application or intervention to address sustainable development issues.
3. The success of the project should be measured on the basis of four key questions:
 - Did the project lead to confirmation or rejection of the underlying theories and/or hypotheses?
 - Have they been adopted as new standards?
 - Did the project produce new research questions?
 - Did the project advance educational programs?
4. The project should aim to leave behind a legacy – institution building, external funds to further the research, published papers in peer-reviewed journals, etc., and how the experience gained from this project might be leveraged for external funding in future years.

Proposal Format

The proposal should include the New Project Proposal Coversheet (attached) and up to five (5) pages (minimum of size 12 font, 1” margins) covering the remainder of the information about the project. Only the first five pages will be considered if more than five pages are submitted. All proposals must be submitted in Microsoft Word or equivalent (please no PDF files) and the budget must also be in Word format. Appendices are not permitted except one (1) page of references (can be in size 10 font and at the end of the proposal). The proposal should contain the following sections:

Title and Scope of Project. This section should include the project title and a description of the goals and objectives of the project. An explanation is required of how the project relates to the 4 project requirements (listed above).

Methodology. This section should layout your basic project plan – what actions you are going to take in order to reach your goals and objectives, how you will collect or generate data and how you will analyze the data.

Required Equipment and Approvals. This section should describe any equipment that is to be used and whether new equipment is required for the project. The grant money cannot be used to purchase new computers. Software, if it is vital to the project, can be purchased. This section should also list the approvals necessary for project initiation (e.g. Institutional Review Board, etc.).

Names and Titles of Contributors and their Role in the Project. This section should present a breakdown of the Project Team, Collaborators, etc. and provide a brief description of what specific activities they will be conducting.

Budget. This section should contain an itemized budget projected for the seed funding. If this request is part of a larger project, please indicate how the remainder of the funds will be obtained or what portion can be accomplished with the requested amount. The project funding can stretch over more than one year and if that is the case, the budget should include a breakdown by fiscal year (July 1-June 30). Indirect costs are 5% of the total requested and should be included in the budget. The charge for fringe/benefits on salaries should be 31.1% for faculty and fellows (does not apply to students). The grant money cannot be used to cover student tuition but can be used for interns, research assistants and work stipends. The grant money can be used to cover faculty time or can provide additional funds to complement existing salaries; this is left to the discretion of the project leader. The Earth Clinic Steering Committee recommends that the grant money not be used for senior staff salary and instead be applied to junior staff.

Deadlines

Proposal Submission

Proposals must be received electronically by 10:00 pm on April 30, 2009, to Robin DeJong, robin@ei.columbia.edu. *Late submissions will not be considered.*

Award notification will be made by July 1, 2008.

Progress Reports and Final Report

Once the project commences, a progress report must be submitted to the Earth Clinic Steering Committee by April 1 and October 1 for the length of the project. A reminder and progress report form will be provided one month in advance of these deadlines. A final report is due at the end of the project. The progress report form and final report form will be provided at the time of award but can also be requested from Robin DeJong, robin@ei.columbia.edu.