Strategic Energy Institute Request for Proposals

Background
Georgia Tech’s strategic plan, “Designing the Future” calls for increasing leadership in defining and shaping the world, rather than responding to or being shaped by it. This document closely follows this challenge, seeking proposals from the Georgia Tech community for projects that will promote thought leadership in the energy arena. Its goal is to complement the significant amount of energy research that is happening on campus, by encouraging and supporting activities with a clear thought leadership emphasis on energy issues.

The Energy and Sustainability (E&S) Planning Committee that met as part of the larger GT Strategic Planning exercise made a number of recommendations for the campus. Their final report stated that “the goal of the energy action play is to establish Georgia Tech as a recognized leader in engineering, science, education, economics and policy innovations addressing the most pressing energy and sustainability challenges.” The committee also put forward several ideas for “What would Success Look Like for Energy and Sustainability at Georgia Tech”? These include:

- GT is recognized as the leading academic institution in the Southeast for energy & sustainability technologies, science, policies and market economics, but continuously infuse GT’s Energy and Sustainability focus with national and international linkages and expertise
- Industry recognition as a go-to thought leader based on depth and balance of expertise on selected E&S technologies and associated markets
- GT recognized as providing a clear national voice on E&S issues, for example via congressional testimonies, position papers, consultations with policymakers, and influence on state and national legislation
- Leadership in targeting and capturing significant E&S programs and government funding in support of major research priorities and strategic collaborations with industry, government, national labs and other academic partners

Request for Proposals
This RFP solicits proposals directed toward these aspirations, with a particular emphasis on activities where external funding is difficult to obtain, yet that are important in terms of promoting one of the following three SEI goals:

1) Developing and nurturing the energy research community across the campus and in the state
2) Growing the resource base for GT energy research
3) Growing the thought leadership projected by GT

For example, we want to facilitate activities that define frameworks, develop roadmaps, and convene thought-leaders around complex energy issues. Proposals that link up groups across different colleges are highly encouraged, such as those that integrate technical discipline expertise with system analyses or economics/policy/business aspects.
Proposals could span activities ranging from a few hundred dollars up to a maximum of $40,000/year (direct costs and no tuition charged), and can span time ranges from one day up to two years. Second year funding for any two-year proposals will be influenced by PI efforts to engage external resources by the end of the first year.

Activities contemplated under this RFP are not limited to, but could include:

- Development of integrated techno-economic studies that frame issues and define frameworks for leaders in thinking through complex, integrated energy problems. Given the potential size and cost of such studies, where relevant the proposal should also map out how such seed grant funding would be leveraged to pursue other funds
- Development of roadmaps that guide policymakers and funders of research across the discovery to deployment spectrum.
- Financial and organizational support for internal workshops to organize ourselves internally, either toward some anticipated opportunity or to help frame and define an external opportunity
- Financial and organizational support for external workshops to develop consensus or recommendations around some energy issue.
- Financial support for pulling together proposals in response to large external solicitations

This list is certainly not comprehensive and we look forward to the exciting ideas which will bubble up from the campus. Please note that this RFP is NOT soliciting technical research proposals.

Program Eligibility

This program is open to Georgia Tech faculty and professional staff. It is also open to students who will be actively enrolled for the duration of a proposed project and who have a faculty liaison or sponsor for the project. The solicitation is not open to individuals enrolled in professional education courses or those previously employed or enrolled at Georgia Tech.