

Open Request for Proposals (RFP) - Winter 2017

EPICenter Mission:

The center's mission is to provide authoritative, unbiased, fact-based policy studies and analyses that address southeastern regional perspectives on global, national, and regional energy issues, while also developing a regional community that is actively working at the intersection of energy technology and policy. In implementing its mission, the center seeks to deepen the technological foundation upon which energy policy decisions are made, and to accelerate the dissemination of pragmatic solutions in the region via broader dialogue among major stakeholders. The funding awarded under this open RFP mechanism is one of several means by which EPICenter aspires to fulfill its mission. More background on EPICenter can be found in Appendix A.

Eligible Applicants:

This RFP solicits proposals within its primary objective categories from researchers within the Georgia Tech community individually or in collaboration with public and private entities within their Southeastern U.S. networks. Collaborative projects and exchanges may include, but are not limited to, entities in Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Virginia, and Tennessee. These entities could include universities, national labs, think tanks, NGO's, or other research centers. These funds can be used by external partners in support of their activities, although we strongly encourage them to waive overhead of these foundation funds.

Proposal Categories:

The list below enumerates potential proposal areas. It should be emphasized, however, that this list is not exhaustive; other approaches and ideas are also encouraged.

1. Policy Study "Add-ons"

Proposals are solicited for policy-related studies that address center goals. In particular, study ideas are solicited that serve as "add-ons" to existing projects (e.g., state, federal, or industrially funded) at GT or regional project partners, that will address a distinctly regional view and leverage funds that the proposer has already obtained. Add-on studies will be on the order of \$10-20K. **Special consideration will be given to efforts that encourage collaboration with researchers and stakeholders in the SE region.**

Illustrative examples include, but are not limited to, the following.

- Consider a College of Engineering or College of Science faculty member (or someone who is a faculty member in the region) who is the PI on an NSF-funded project that is completely focused on a given technology/science topic. An Ivan Allen or Scheller faculty might partner with them and propose in this RFP to address some policy, economic, or business angle, that adds additional perspectives (e.g., techno-economic or policy scenario assessment) to the S&T study.
- Consider also an ongoing Ivan Allen or Scheller study focused on a socio-economic, policy, or sustainable business project with a need to propose funding to access expertise from the Colleges of Design, Engineering, Science or Computing.

Such add-ons can be valuable when a particular technology scope is being examined, for instance, from the perspective of S&T policy, impacts of technology transitions, or the development of new business models.

It should be noted that independent or comprehensive fields of policy research are generally beyond the scope and budget of this RFP award mechanism. While the above examples are illustrative, a key concept here is to ensure two-way exchanges among the colleges in GT and with regional partners, including support to fund economic and policy considerations for science and engineering research projects, and vice versa.

2. *Hosted Events*

Proposals are solicited for faculty interested in hosting individual seminars or seminar series that address center goals. It is anticipated that such requests would range from a few hundred to a few thousand dollars.

3. *Educational Development and Workforce Development*

Proposals are sought for the development of education and workforce related outreach tools. These could be addressed to the general public, students, specialists, the media, or other stakeholders. This category also includes official content in module format that could support a formal undergraduate energy-oriented course. It is anticipated that such requests would be up to about \$10K.

Funding and Timeframe:

Proposal awards could span activities ranging from a few hundred dollars up to a maximum of about \$25k/year, and can span time ranges from one day up to one year. Please refer to *Table 1* for more details. **Please note, these will be Georgia Tech Foundation (GTF) funds which means no overhead will be charged against your proposed budgets. Fringe and tuition will apply.** We encourage proposal submissions to include cost share, joint funding, or waived overhead from external collaborating parties, although this is not a requirement.

Table 1. Funding Categories, Typical Award Ranges, and Estimated Number of Awards

Proposal Category	Typical Estimated Award Range	# of Awards Anticipated
1. Policy Study “Add-ons”	\$10,000 - \$25,000	Up to 2
2. Hosted Events	\$100 - \$3,000	Up to 3
3. Education Development/ Workforce Development	\$100 - \$10,000	Up to 1

NOTE: Estimated Ranges and Limits on the Number Awards Are Approximate and Subject to Availability of Funds. Larger awards must be broken out by tasks and time periods.

Notional examples for reference:

Appendix B includes some highlights for EPICenter RFP awards from the Summer 2017 funding cycle. These study concepts generally fall into the first proposal category, policy study add-ons. They are meant for illustrative purposes only. Information on EPICenter studies can also be found at: <http://www.energy.gatech.edu/pilot-studies>

Proposal Guidelines:

The typical award range and estimated number of EPICenter awards are given by Table 1. **All proposals must support the EPICenter mission and objectives described in Appendix A.**

All proposals must also include the following:

- EPICenter Open RFP Application Cover Sheet (include summary/abstract)
- Project Description (two-page maximum, 12-point font) must include:
 - Project purpose and need, in keeping with the program goals
 - Evidence of a collaborative approach
 - Deliverables: Tangible outcomes from the project and explanation of how these deliverables will advance the objectives of this RFP. Examples of deliverables could include written documents such as: summaries of workshops, project report, whitepaper, written testimony presented, transcript, policy brief, and social media.
 - Strategy for accomplishing proposed work, including proposed personnel activities.
 - Proposed schedule
 - If applicable, other opportunities for how these funds will enable leveraging of other resources, and/or how these funds help facilitate regional innovation or ecosystem objectives and meet a need that is currently unmet.
- Project Budget Sheet and budget justification

Projects will be selected based upon their compliance with the guidelines and based upon their fulfillment of key criteria as generally outlined in the following table.

Table 2. Review criteria for award selection, in priority order.

Review Criteria
Purpose aligned with EPICenter goals
Evidence effective partnering (within GT and regional partners)
Leveraging of existing programs; potential to foster new programs
Perceived impact of the deliverables and/or outcomes
Reasonableness of approach, schedule and budget

Along with the above criteria, selection of a proposal for awards may also depend upon a range of program factors including availability of funds, strategic goals, competing proposals, regional diversity, previously funded proposals, and others.

Table 3. Relevant dates for this RFP round.

Milestone	Approximate Date
RFP Issued	October 31, 2017
Proposals Due	November 30, 2017
Award Decisions Expected	January 5, 2018

Completed proposals (Application Cover Sheet, Project Description and Project Budget information) should be sent via email to: proposals@energy.gatech.edu

Please address questions to Kerri Metz, EPICenter Research Associate I at kmetz7@gatech.edu

Appendix A: Background on EPICenter

Background

Georgia Institute of Technology's Strategic Energy Institute launched the Energy Policy and Innovation Center (EPICenter) in October 2016 with the intent to advance energy policy and technology innovation in the Southeastern U.S. EPICenter is exploring the critical intersections between policy, technology, economics, and social considerations that arise from the convergence of these issues. EPICenter has been conceived to specifically focus on energy innovation within the Southeast in view of a growing awareness that the U.S. energy system is composed of regions, each of which has unique energy needs and opportunities.

EPICenter Mission, Objectives and Related Efforts

Objectives: The center will strive to accelerate a diversity of reliable, affordable and increasingly low-carbon energy options in the Southeast. The center will investigate challenges in both power generation and in transportation on a regional basis. Techno-economic, social and policy factors, as well as near and longer term impacts, are within the scope of consideration. Primary center products include:

- **Work Products including studies and roadmaps:** Produce and disseminate rigorous, fact-based policy studies that will address southeastern perspectives on global, national and regional energy issues;
- **Events:** Sponsor conferences, workshops and symposiums on relevant energy issues, serving as a nonpartisan facilitator for academic, business and nongovernmental stakeholders;
- **Outreach:**
 - **Facilitation of faculty and student exchanges:** Provide opportunities for learning and information exchange among students, faculty and visiting scholars with other regional universities, nonprofits, and research organizations.
 - **Educational development and workforce development:** Develop educational tools and methodologies consistent with its mission. It will also support training and workforce development with relevant stakeholders including regional utilities and energy equipment providers and strive to facilitate stakeholder collaboration and public-private energy partnerships.

Focus on Leveraging and Collaboration: The center will draw upon extensive expertise across multiple constituencies in the region, including academia, utilities, industry, key national labs, and other public and private stakeholders. The center will leverage funds from both the public and private sectors. Potential collaborators include ORNL, and major universities in the region. Proposals that nurture regional collaborations and that leverage or accompany external sources funding are particularly encouraged.

The center is currently focusing on two primary means to achieve these objectives, (1) Directed funding of studies, on topics identified from an advisory council and center leadership, (2) Open calls for proposals of a regional policy nature to complement studies, initiate regional collaborations, and other means. **This RFP is directed towards the second approach.** Up to date information on all existing EPICenter studies can be found at:

<http://www.energy.gatech.edu/pilot-studies>

**Appendix B: Summary of RFP Summer 2017 Awards
(For REFERENCE ONLY)**

The Energy Burden in the Southeast- Solution through Community and Business Engagement	
<i>Led By</i>	M. Oxman (PI), B. Toktay, M. Brown
<i>Key Collaborators</i>	Southeast Energy Efficiency Alliance (SEEA), American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy, Collective Wisdom, and Milepost Consulting
<i>Research Objectives</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Establish a thorough understanding of the current and potential approaches to reduce the significant energy burden (on low-income households) in the SE; ○ Explore and validate a selected approach through multi-stakeholder engagement and in-depth financial analysis; ○ Develop actionable recommendations for local organizations and GT.
<i>Deliverables and Timing</i>	Phase I: August-December 2017 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Deliverable- Word or PowerPoint synthesis; Recommendations for next steps Phase II: January-May 2018 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Deliverable- Summary report of findings; Validated and revised financial model

Grid Integrated Vehicles in the Southeast: Engineering, Business Models, Costs and Benefits	
<i>Led By</i>	M. Brown (PI), D. Divan
<i>Key Collaborators</i>	Southern Company, TVA, University of Tennessee- Knoxville, Oak Ridge National Lab, Nuvve, and Georgia Tech’s Center for Distributed Energy and Ray C. Anderson Center for Sustainable Business
<i>Research Objectives</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Evaluate alternative mechanisms for expanding the deployment of EVs through technology, infrastructure, and business model improvements; ○ Examine adaptability of NE models to the vertically-integrated structure of the SE; ○ Produce a policy brief, final report on analysis, drafted business plan, and conduct multiple meetings.
<i>Deliverables and Timing</i>	Phase I: August- January 2018 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Deliverable- Policy brief on the business case; Draft of engineering and business plan Phase II: February- July 2018 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Deliverable- Meeting with key stakeholders; Final report on analysis and findings

Smart Cities and the Role of Data Transparency in Evidence-based Energy Policies at the Urban Scale	
<i>Led By</i>	D. Lam (PI), J. Clark, E. French
<i>Key Collaborators</i>	City of Atlanta (Office of Sustainability), GreenLink Group, MetroLab Network, City Energy Project Network, Envision Charlotte, EnergySmart (New Orleans), and Georgia Tech’s Center for Urban Innovation (CUI) and Institute for People and Technology (IPaT)
<i>Research Objectives</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Explore multiple cases of data and energy benchmarking policies in SE cities; ○ Identify open data used for and derived from local EE policies (primarily for buildings) to better understand processes and approaches for data policies; ○ Produce a formal report and a regional workshop held at GT.
<i>Deliverables and Timing</i>	Phase I: November- March 2018 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Deliverable- Project stakeholder meeting; Presentation of preliminary findings Phase II: April-June 2018 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Deliverable- Final summary report of findings; Internal presentation to stakeholders and participants

See also: <http://www.energy.gatech.edu/pilot-studies>