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Office of the Provost

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Cluster Hiring Initiative

Background

The first phase of the Cluster Hiring Initiative was launched in 1998 as an innovative university-state partnership and is managed through the Office of the Provost. This bold effort is designed to foster collaborative research, education and outreach by creating new interdisciplinary areas of knowledge that cross the boundaries of existing academic departments. In its first phase, the initiative authorized nearly 50 “clusters” and nearly 150 new faculty through several rounds of hiring. In 2017, phase two of the Cluster Hiring Initiative was authorized with a goal of supporting at least 12 (or more) clusters.

Goals and Objectives

The Cluster Hiring Initiative aims to provide an alternative to departmentally based hiring practices and norms. In essence, the initiative is an incentive plan designed to facilitate interdisciplinary strategic hiring by providing salary support for faculty positions. The initiative’s goals include:

- Enabling the campus to devote a critical mass of faculty to areas of knowledge that can only be addressed across existing departmental structures
- Providing for new research tracks and collaborative opportunities
- Addressing difficult contemporary problems
- Advancing the Wisconsin Idea by serving society’s needs through interdisciplinary research, learning and service
- Encouraging and fostering cooperation within an already strong faculty and staff
- Assisting the fulfillment of other missions of the university, particularly increasing campus diversity

Hiring Policies

Faculty Pay Tools Covered by the Initiative

Phase I – Cluster Hiring Initiative (central campus) pays a portion of the base salary adjustments of cluster faculty when applicable in cases of promotion. Cluster faculty are also eligible for increases from the [Faculty Block Grant \(https://facstaff.provost.wisc.edu/compensation-tools/\)](https://facstaff.provost.wisc.edu/compensation-tools/).

Round 4 Proposal Deadlines

Pre-Proposals

Friday October, 18, 2019

Full Proposals

Friday, January 31, 2020

Find [proposal criteria and instructions](https://facstaff.provost.wisc.edu/cluster-hiring-initiative/cluster-hiring-initiative-criteria-and-proposals/)[\(https://facstaff.provost.wisc.edu/cluster-hiring-initiative/cluster-hiring-initiative-criteria-and-proposals/\)](https://facstaff.provost.wisc.edu/cluster-hiring-initiative/cluster-hiring-initiative-criteria-and-proposals/).

Timeline

There will be multiple calls for proposals between fall 2017 and 2019. If funding remains, calls will continue beyond 2019-20.

Round 1 – Fall 2017**Round 2** – Spring 2018**Round 3** – Fall 2018**Round 4** – Fall 2019

Phase II – During the initial cluster hiring period, base salary adjustments in cases of promotion will be supported by the hiring units. After the initial funding period, units will cover salary increases. Cluster faculty are also eligible for increases from the [Faculty Block Grant \(https://facstaff.provost.wisc.edu/compensation-tools/\)](https://facstaff.provost.wisc.edu/compensation-tools/).

Salary Policy – Phase I and II Hires

When Cluster Faculty are on 100% Leave or a Position is Vacated

When a cluster-hire faculty member is on 100 percent leave from the university (whether or not they intend to return to UW-Madison), or has resigned their position, the salary funds will be returned to central campus.

Cluster Faculty Replacement

In the event a cluster-hire faculty member resigns from the UW-Madison or is not granted tenure, the position and corresponding funding is returned to central campus. Requests for replacement of faculty will be made by proposal to the vice provost for faculty and staff on a case-by-case basis; requests will be evaluated by the [Cluster Advisory Committee \(https://facstaff.provost.wisc.edu/cluster-hiring-initiative/cluster-advisory-committee/\)](https://facstaff.provost.wisc.edu/cluster-hiring-initiative/cluster-advisory-committee/).

Salary Savings

When Cluster Faculty Pay a Portion of Their Salary with Extramural Sources

In cases when a cluster faculty member has part of their salary paid on gifts and/or grants, one half that part of their salary will “go off” the cluster budget (that is, it will be returned to the Office of the Provost), and the other half may, upon request, be returned to the faculty member’s home department/school/college to be used for expenses (such as PA’s or equipment) directly related to that faculty member’s cluster-related activities.

The cluster fund returned to the unit may not be used to pay the salaries of faculty or staff that are not directly related to research or other cluster related activities by the cluster faculty member. This policy pertains regardless of the source of cluster funding (101 or 135).

Requests are made to the Office of the Provost (through the vice provost for faculty and staff).

Dual Career Couple and Strategic Hire Funds

Dual Career Couple and Strategic Hire funds are available in appropriate cases to facilitate the recruitment of cluster hires.

Cluster Evaluation Reports and Recommendations

 [2003 Provost’s Ad Hoc Advisory Committee Report – Cluster Hiring Initiative »](https://facstaff.provost.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/208/2017/05/ClusterReport2003.pdf)
(<https://facstaff.provost.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/208/2017/05/ClusterReport2003.pdf>)

 [2008 Cluster-Interdisciplinary Advisory Committee Report »](https://facstaff.provost.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/208/2017/07/ClusterReport_2008.pdf)
(https://facstaff.provost.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/208/2017/07/ClusterReport_2008.pdf)

 [Cluster Program: Suggested Principles for the Next Phase »](https://facstaff.provost.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/208/2017/07/ClusterCACMemo-2010.pdf)
(<https://facstaff.provost.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/208/2017/07/ClusterCACMemo-2010.pdf>)

Questions?

Please review the

[FAQ page](https://facstaff.provost.wisc.edu/cluster-hiring-initiative/faq/)

(<https://facstaff.provost.wisc.edu/cluster-hiring-initiative/faq/>).

If you still have questions, please contact:

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Phase I and II Clusters

Browse a list of [all UW-](https://facstaff.provost.wisc.edu/cluster-hiring-initiative/uw-madison-clusters/)

[Madison clusters](https://facstaff.provost.wisc.edu/cluster-hiring-initiative/uw-madison-clusters/)

(<https://facstaff.provost.wisc.edu/cluster-hiring-initiative/uw-madison-clusters/>).
