Washington University in St. Louis

Office of the Provost

Race and Ethnicity Cluster Hire Initiative

Call for Preliminary Proposals
Washington University in Saint Louis
Deadline September 21, 2020

The Cluster Hire Review Committee (CRC) invites schools and departments on the Danforth campus to submit preliminary proposals to hire faculty members whose research area focuses on race and/or ethnicity. We are beginning with a call for preliminary proposals for both faculty searches and target of opportunity hires, *i.e.*, faculty hires done without a search.

Through this cluster hire initiative, Washington University in St. Louis aims to build a world-class research program on race. The University already boasts preeminent scholars engaging in path-breaking research on race and endeavors to further enhance the University's distinction in this area. With this set of hires, the University will increase its capacity to examine some of the most pressing questions of our time; complement and advance the expertise of outstanding researchers and departments; and embed a suite of varied methodological approaches to race in the intellectual life of the Danforth campus. The real and tangible effects of this initiative will not be limited to faculty alone as students will gain greater opportunities to pursue rich inquiry in the field of race. The success of this endeavor will be visible in not only the visionary research and innovative course designs but in the scope and scale of its impact in helping to forge an equitable and just future for our city, our nation, and our world.

Process

The CRC is committed to running a transparent, fair process. Our call for proposals is an open one, and we welcome proposals from all fields. All of our schools contribute meaningfully to research on race and ethnicity using diverse methodological approaches, and we encourage proposals from all disciplines, departments, and schools. Our approach is "bottom-up" and we aim to harness the talent and vision of the faculty of the Danforth schools. The CRC is dedicated to respecting the time and effort of all who submit proposals. The CRC will carefully read each proposal and dutifully evaluate the proposal in accordance with the criteria listed below. At times, such evaluation may require members of the CRC to consult with individuals outside of the committee to gain greater

insight into a particular topic or to better understand the contours of a field of study. At the same time, members of the CRC will recuse themselves from the initial review of proposals from their own principal academic units. (They will, however, be able to participate in discussions of any searches that move forward.) The cluster hire process represents a multi-year initiative. Over the course of the next three years, through both searches and target of opportunity hires, the CRC will work with units to hire 12 new faculty members doing world-class research on race. Proposals not chosen in year one may be resubmitted the following year.

The selection of the faculty hires will be the result of a multi-step process involving the CRC, the Deans of the Danforth schools, and the Provost. Preliminary proposals are due by September 21st. The CRC will first evaluate preliminary proposals in accordance with the criteria listed below. The CRC will coordinate with the schools so that evaluation of the proposals includes consideration of the strategic priorities of the schools. By September 25th, the CRC will announce search semifinalists as well as any target of opportunity semifinalists. These semifinalists will be given feedback on their preliminary proposals and asked to submit full proposals by October 5th. From these semifinalists, finalists will be selected by the CRC, and their proposals submitted to the Provost who will select proposals to move forward with searches, as well as any target of opportunity recruitments that have been approved (see below). Approved searches and target recruitments will be notified on October 8th . Individual search committees will then be convened at the departmental level and proceed with the hiring practices appropriate to the School. Cluster hiring best practices will inform the work of the hiring committee. A representative from the CRC will sit on each hiring committee as a voting member.

All proposals will be evaluated according to the criteria below.

Criteria

Any academic unit that holds tenure lines is eligible to submit a proposal. Units that do not hold tenure lines may submit proposals in conjunction with a tenure-line holding unit.

We encourage departments and schools to actively collaborate in proposing searches. The proposal could take several forms, *e.g.*, multiple units submitting a proposal for a single hire or multiple units submitting a proposal for a "mini-cluster." Although we do not anticipate approving searches for joint appointments for assistant professors, we encourage creative ways of engaging faculty across units, departments, and disciplines.

Preliminary proposals should demonstrate how the proposed position will help the University to meet its aims for this cluster hire. Preliminary proposals should not exceed 500 words.

Proposed positions should demonstrate one or more of the following four characteristics:

- **Contemporary and/or Social Valence**: Research that addresses salient issues and may include (but is not limited to) policing, immigration and migratory issues, racial/ethnic disparities and equity, race and the city of St. Louis, the history and meaning of race, structural racism, and environmental racism.

- **Connectivity**: Research that connects to Washington University's existing early to mid-career faculty members and/or clusters of new faculty working in a particular area on race and/or ethnicity.

- **Methodological Supplementarity**: Research that broadens and diversifies methodological approaches to the study of race and/or ethnicity at the University.

- **Distinction**: Research that further distinguishes the national reputation of the department as a place of academic distinction in both research and teaching excellence.

A successful preliminary proposal should:

- Show how the proposed position meets one or more of the above characteristics

- Describe the scope of the impact of the proposed position's research

- Explain the manner in which the proposed position builds on the excellence of the department

- Relate previous efforts, if any, for securing such a hire

- Align with the strategic priorities of the department and School

- Indicate potential avenues of collaboration with other units

- Identify existing resources or infrastructure that may support this position

In an Appendix (this will not count towards the 500 words):

- Define a mentoring plan appropriate to this position (for hires at the assistant and associate ranks)

- Provide an expected hiring timeline and process

For search requests, those proposals selected as semifinalists will be asked to submit full proposals. Full proposals will cover much of the above in greater breadth and depth. More space may be devoted to issues such as mentoring, retention plans, and resource requirements. Of

especial interest for the full proposal will be how the hire would meaningfully connect, immediately and over time, to the University's strategic interest in developing its research force in race/ethnicity, including existing faculty, academic units, and centers, especially the Center for the Study of Race, Ethnicity & Equity. The job announcement should be included as an Appendix to the full proposal.

Target of Opportunity Hires

While we expect a majority of approved Cluster Hire proposals to involve searches, we realize that some units may have already identified a candidate who meets the above criteria. As such, the CRC invites proposals for target of opportunity hires that would not require a search. We request that the submissions include the candidate's cv and a preliminary proposal of 500 words or less, This proposal will explain how the candidate's work exemplifies one or more of the above four characteristics and reflects the strategic priorities of their department. Such proposals may also relate previous efforts, if any, for securing such a hire; indication of the likelihood that the candidate will accept an offer; indicate potential avenues of collaboration with other units; and identify existing resources or infrastructure that may support this position. Target hire proposals will be evaluated through the same staged process outlined above and in accordance with noted Cluster Hire criteria. All target hires must follow their School's procedural guidelines for target hires.

All searches will be expected to use the Interfolio search system, unless an exemption is requested and approved in advance. Target of opportunity hires that are approved this fall need not use this system.

Both search and target of opportunity proposals that are not approved this year may be rolled over as requests for next year.

Funding

Cluster hires lines will be funded as follows: 100% by the central fiscal unit (CFU) for years 1-4; 50%/50% by the CFU and the School for years 5-7; in year 8, the Schools will absorb 100% of the cost. To retain faculty, Schools may apply to the cluster hire retention fund. Should the faculty member leave the University the line will revert to the CFU.

Consulting and Questions

At any point in the process, and especially as they are considering and crafting proposals, departments and schools are invited to consult with any member of the CRC for guidance.

Cluster Hire Review Committee Members

Beverly Wendland, Provost (Ex-officio)

David Ahn, Professor, Olin School of Business

Jean Allman, J.H. Hexter Professor in the Humanities, African & African-American Studies; Director, Center for the Humanities, College of Arts & Sciences

David Cunningham, Professor and Chair, Sociology, College of Arts & Sciences

Adrienne Davis, Vice Provost & William M. Van Cleve Professor of Law, School of Law; Director, Center for the Study of Race, Ethnicity & Equity (co-chair through May 2021)

Bettina Drake, Professor of Surgery, School of Medicine

Cynthia Feliciano, Professor, Sociology, College of Arts & Sciences

Joe Jez, Spencer T Olin Professor in Biology and Chair, Biology; Howard Hughes Medical Institute Professor, College of Arts & Sciences

Pauline Kim, Daniel Noyes Kirby Professor of Law, School of Law

Hedwig Lee, Professor, Sociology, College of Arts & Sciences; Associate Director, Center for the Study of Race, Ethnicity & Equity

Stephanie Li, Lynne Cooper Harvey Distinguished Professor of English, College of Arts & Sciences

Eric Mumford, Rebecca & John Voyles Professor of Architecture, Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Arts

Tim Portlock, Professor and Chair of Undergraduate Art, Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Arts

Jon Silva, Associate Professor, Biomedical Engineering, McKelvey School of Engineering

Rodrigo Siqueira Reis, Professor; Associate Dean for Public Health, Brown School

Vetta Thompson, E. Desmond Lee Professor of Racial and Ethnic Diversity; Co-Director, Center for Community Health Partnership and Research, Institute for Public Health, Brown School

Geoff Ward, Professor, African & African-American Studies, College of Arts & Sciences; Associate Director, Center for the Study of Race, Ethnicity & Equity (co-chair)

Rebecca Wanzo, Professor and Chair, Women, Gender & Sexuality Studies, College of Arts & Sciences

Carol Camp Yeakey, Marshall S. Snow Professor of Arts & Sciences, Education; Founding Director, Interdisciplinary Program in Urban Studies and Center on Urban Research & Public Policy, College of Arts & Sciences

Please submit proposals in pdf format to _**Sarah LeCave**_ **(mailto:slecave@wustl.edu)** .

**For questions, please contact:**
Adrienne Davis (mailto:adriennedavis@wustl.edu) , co-chair
Geoff Ward (mailto:gward@wustl.edu) , co-chair

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