

UCI Black Thriving Initiative Faculty Cluster Hiring Program Call for Proposals

Dear colleagues,

This historic moment around race and racial justice calls for new investments in faculty hiring. In this context, the Vice Chancellor for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, Professor Douglas Haynes, recently announced UCI's Black Thriving Initiative, an unprecedented and transformational campus response to the persistence of systemic anti-Blackness in America (<https://inclusion.uci.edu/uci-black-thriving-initiative/>). As part of this bold campuswide initiative and our ongoing commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion, we now invite proposals for the Initiative's Faculty Cluster Hiring Program.

The Black Thriving Initiative Faculty Cluster Hiring Program is a competitive multi-year effort to recruit faculty who interrogate structural racism in its myriad forms, such as the lived experience of anti-Black racism and associated inequalities in diverse institutional domains; the collateral consequences of racism, historically and in the present era; and/or public policy solutions to structural racism in criminal justice, education, the built and natural environment, health and wellness, urban planning, etc. This initiative is designed to build on the hiring priorities of academic units; pave new paths for research and creative expression, teaching and learning, and community engagement; generate interdisciplinary work and convergent thinking across academic units; and manifest our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion in research, teaching, and service.

In support of this initiative, the campus is investing in 10 Black Thriving Initiative faculty FTE over the next 3-4 years, roughly evenly split across ranks (assistant, associate, full professor). The recruitments will be organized in clusters that should include a primary hire linked to multiple less senior positions. In order to encourage interdisciplinary work and broader impact, at least one—and preferably two or three—of the lower academic rank positions should be in academic units (i.e., departments and Schools) other than that of the primary hire. Clustering positions around substantive areas of interest should increase opportunities for successful high-level recruitment by demonstrating the campus' broad and deep commitment to outstanding research and national impact related to the focus of the cluster hire. **We soon will announce the date and time of a town hall to discuss this hiring program, generate ideas, and answer questions.**

Each cluster will receive funds (\$50,000 per year for three years) explicitly linked to programming efforts that make UCI a place where students, faculty, and staff from underrepresented groups thrive. These programming efforts will be initiated by the faculty in the cluster hire, implemented in collaboration with the Office of Inclusive Excellence in ways that advance the Black Thriving Initiative, and in alignment with the UC Regents Principles Against Intolerance.

Full proposals should be submitted electronically to the Office of Academic Planning and Institutional Research by 5 p.m., Wednesday, January 6, 2021 as a complete package, to acadplan@uci.edu. The requirements for a full proposal can be found at: <https://provost.uci.edu/black-thriving-initiative-faculty-cluster-hiring-program-proposal-requirements/>. In the interest of our ability to respond quickly, proposals received after the due date will not be considered for the first round of reviews in this multi-year program. Open searches will be required for all appointments deriving from this program. Any questions about this process should be directed to Andrea Bell, Strategic Programs Manager, Division of Academic Planning, at andreapb@uci.edu.

Proposals will be subjected to an extensive review process that includes consultation with the Academic Planning Group, academic deans, the ADVANCE Program Advising Committee, and the Distinctions Committee for senior level candidates as appropriate. Each of these groups will provide a recommendation to me that includes an assessment of the proposed cluster's potential to advance the university's standing in strategically significant ways, including by contributing to the Black Thriving Initiative in particular and UCI's commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion more broadly.

Making this signal investment—and making good on all of our aspirations related to diversity, equity, and inclusion—will require courageous and sustained leadership, campuswide support, significant financial commitment, and hard work. When these critical ingredients combine, our highest aspirations can be realized. Now is the time to show UCI's institutional will to transform this campus in ways that speak directly to addressing anti-Black racism in particular and systemic racism more generally.

Thank you in advance for your assistance in helping us identify and recruit this new group of outstanding faculty leaders. Please direct questions about cluster hire proposals to Valerie Jenness, Acting Vice Provost for Academic Planning and Institutional Research, at jenness@uci.edu.

Sincerely,

Hal S. Stern, Ph.D.

Interim Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor
Chancellor's Professor, Department of Statistics