**POLICY STRATEGIC GROWTH AREA**

***2017-2018* Request for Contributions ─ Policy Research**

The Policy Strategic Growth Area (PSGA) is accepting applications for awards to pilot the research activities integral to a unique VT hub for advancing innovative and ground-breaking policy knowledge, education, and practice. The awards will enhance or accelerate an ongoing, policy-oriented research project, or stimulate a new project.

The overarching goal of the PSGA is to integrate, connect, and expand policy knowledge and experimentation to foster new approaches to problem engagement and complex collective decision making. The PSGA is identifying sponsored and published research across campus in order to obtain a picture of current activities in the policy field. Now, we seek to support two innovative research projects that will produce specific policy-relevant scholarship and demonstrate ways to leverage Virginia Tech’s policy strengths for greater impact. We welcome applications from researchers who want to be a part of growing Virginia Tech’s presence in policy analysis and decision making. The awards will be up to $30,000 to be expended during FY 2018. **Applications are due Wednesday, May 24, 2017.**

**POLICY STRATEGIC GROWTH AREA (PSGA)**

# Focusing on key contemporary issues, the PSGA seeks to advance VT-shaped learning through research and scholarship, curriculum development, and community engagement. Specifically, the PSGA will create a unique cross-cutting, campus-wide system that advances the generation of new knowledge concerning policy-related issues and artful integration of scientific evidence with policy practice in order to anticipate, respond to, and manage social change. The scholarship and educational approach of the PSGA is three-fold:

***Integration*:** working across disciplines to build transdisciplinary problem solving.

***Translation*:**movingscholarship to practice through the decision processes of policy making, implementation, and evaluation.

***Specialization*:** applying substantive empirical work to solve complex social problems.

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# The PSGA is guided by a Stakeholder Committee and is administered through the Institute for Society Culture and Environment (ISCE). Co-chairs of the Stakeholder Committee are Dr. Anne Khademian, Director, School of Public and International Affairs (SPIA) and Dr. Karen Roberto, Director, ISCE. The PSGA Stakeholder Committee has research and curriculum subcommittees.

# **RFC DESCRIPTION AND GUIDELINES**

The PSGA is interested in supporting **interdisciplinary teams of faculty from across departments and colleges** whose research or scholarship addresses key policy issues. Funded projects are expected to produce deliverable(s) specified in the application that inform a complex policy decision process, enhance public understanding of policy issues and choices, or provide insights into the dynamics of collective policy decision making. Potential deliverables include, for example, a scholarly article, a proposal submitted for external funding of an expanded project, and research-based events and activities that directly contribute to policy deliberations.

The funded projects will also engage with the PSGA Stakeholder Committee to foster a learning process for the PSGA to develop best practices for integrating scholarship with evidence-based policy practice, identify opportunities to connect the research with DAs and other SGAs and with curriculum development, and develop optimal support processes for researchers to advance the research goals of the PSGA.

The PSGA anticipates making two awards of up to $30,000 per project. The award period is July 1, 2017 − June 15, 2018.

# **APPLICANT QUALIFICATIONS**

Applications are welcome from faculty members in all departments, centers, and programs at Virginia Tech. The PI is expected to be a full-time, tenure-track/tenured faculty member. Other team members can include VT and non-VT participants.

# **APPLICATION GUIDELINES**

Applications must include: a) project narrative of up to five pages; b) 200 word abstract describing the research topic/project in language suitable for the general public; and c) signed cover sheet and itemized budget sheet (both attached) with budget justification.

Required information for the narrative portion of the application includes:

1. Overview and significance of the issue, problem, or situation.

2. Specific aims and analytic design of the proposed investigation.

3. Timeline with list of key project activities and milestones.

4. Primary team members, including identification of the team leader and roles/expertise of other members and consultants (do not submit curriculum vitae).

5. If the deliverable is a proposal for further external funding, please submit a one-page appendix to your narrative, listed at the end of this document.

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**EVALUATION CRITERIA**

Applications will be evaluated on the following criteria:

1. *Coherence*: Does the project clearly describe and set forth reasonable and attainable goals, approach, and milestones?

2. *Policy distinctive content:* Does the project identify distinct policy-specific content?

3. *Deliverables*: Are there specified deliverables with potential impact?

4. *Transdisciplinarity*: Does the team propose a genuinely multidisciplinary project?

5. *Translation*: Does the project offer achievable potential insights for policy and practice, particularly in terms of addressing a significant, complex collective decision making problem?

6. *Fundability*: Does the project offer the potential for securing external funds in support of further research?

7. *Curriculum:* Does the research create related cross-cutting curriculum opportunities (for example, certificates, courses, degrees, or revamping of existing courses)?

8. *Connectivity to DAs and other SGAs*: How strong is the potential for making links to Destination Areas (IS, GSS, DADS, IIHCC, ABB) or other Strategic Growth Areas (IE, ESDHC, ESM, CTE)? (<http://provost.vt.edu/destination-areas.html>)

As part of the review process, the top-ranked applicants may be invited to prepare an informal presentation and engage in a discussion with the Stakeholder Committee.

**EXPECTATIONS AND OUTCOMES**

In anticipation of the project outcomes and contributions to the development of the PSGA, the teams are expected to:

1. Produce the deliverable(s) specified in the application.

2. Recognize PSGA support on any presentation or publication resulting from the award.

3. Engage with the PSGA Stakeholder Committee during the project duration to address the three development objectives listed above.

4. Present the results of the project to the PSGA Stakeholder Committee and at a colloquium sponsored by PSGA in Spring 2018 (toward end of project year).

5. Submit a brief final report, including a paragraph broadly describing faculty hires necessary for VT to extend or gain preeminence in the area of policy research and education that is the focus of the project.

# **SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS/DEADLINE**

Applications are to be prepared using 1-inch margins and Arial 11 font. Submit an e-copy of the complete application to Ms. Katie Williams (kathw@vt.edu) by 5 PM, **Wednesday, May 24, 2017**.Acknowledgement of receipt of applications will be made within 48 hours.

# If you anticipate submitting a proposal, it would be useful for university reporting purposes of the PSGA to receive a (non-binding) advance-notice outline of the team members, tentative title, and 1-2 sentence project description. Please submit this by May 1, 2017 if feasible (it is not required for subsequent application eligibility).

**NOTIFICATION OF AWARD/AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS**

Notification of the awards will be made by Monday, June 19, 2017. Funds will be available July 1, 2017 − June 15, 2018. Any unallocated funds as of June 15, 2018 are to be returned to the PSGA.

# **ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FROM THE PSGA**

The PSGA Research Subcommittee will coordinate the Stakeholder Committee interactions with the project teams. The ISCE conference room is available for use by teams. It can host 12-16 people and is equipped with wireless internet and Polycom videoconference capability. Office space and conference facilities are also available at the Arlington Research Center.

**BUDGET GUIDELINES**

Examples of appropriate use of funds include, but are not limited to, faculty summer stipends, course buy-out, graduate assistantships and tuition, student wages, travel related to data collection, interaction with funding agencies or policy engagement, and external consultation/technical assistance. Summer stipends may not exceed $8,000 inclusive of fringe benefits (see [http://www.policies.vt.edu/4296.pdf](http://www.policies.vt.edu/4296.pdf.for) for university guidelines). Course buy-outs may not exceed $7,500. Buy-out policies vary by college; check with you department head for specific requirements.

**APPENDIX FOR APPLICATIONS WITH PROPOSALS AS DELIVERABLES**

Submit an appendix of no more than 1 page indicating whether you: a) are responding to a specific request for proposal, program announcement or other initiative (if so which one and its timeline); b) have spoken to an agency, organization, foundation, or corporate official to determine their interest in your concept and approach (if so describe the communication); c) have examined current projects funded by the entity you are targeting (if so how does your study compare with similar projects); and d) have gathered information about the evaluation criteria and likely reviewers (if so describe briefly).

# **QUESTIONS**

Please contact:

Patrick Roberts David Orden

Co-chair, PSGA Research Subcommittee Co-chair, PSGA Research Subcommittee

Associate Professor, Center for Director, ISCE Global Issues Initiative

Public Administration & Policy Virginia Tech Research Center

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Alexandria, VA 22314 571-858-3060; orden@vt.edu

202-599-0562; robertsp@vt.edu [www.gii.ncr.vt.edu](http://www.gii.ncr.vt.edu/)

This Request for Contributions is available at [www.isce.vt.edu](http://www.isce.vt.edu/) and [www.spia.vt.edu/](http://www.spia.vt.edu/)

**Policy Strategic Growth Area: Request for Contributions ─ Policy Research**

**Project Title:**

**Total Budget Request:**

**PI and Team Members [Please Print/Type]:** I agree to the conditions of participation in the 2017/18 PSGA Policy Research Program and understand that unallocated funds will be returned to PSGA by June 15, 2018. Add additional signature page if needed.

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| Name (PI) | Department | email |
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| Name | Department | email |

**Signatures of Department Head/Chair/Center Director AND College Dean**: I support the faculty member’s participation in the 2017/18 PSGA Policy Research Program and understand that the PSGA will transfer funds to the identified department/center to be used for designated expenses in accordance with University policies. Unused funds will be returned to PSGA.

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| Signature |  |  | Date |
| Dean [print/type] | College |  |  |
| Signature |  |  | Date |
| Head/Chair Name [print/type] | Department |  | email |
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| Dean [print/type] | College |  |  |
| Signature |  |  | Date |
| Head/Chair Name [print/type] | Department |  | email |
| Signature |  |  | Date |
| Dean [print/type] | College |  |  |
| Signature |  |  | Date |

**Policy Strategic Growth Area: Request for Contributions ─ Policy Research**

1. **Itemized Budget (Total budget may not exceed $30,000)1**

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| **Request** | **FY 18** **(July 1, 2017 – June 15, 2018)** |
| **Faculty Summer Stipends (Name/Role)** |  |
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| **GRA Stipend/Tuition** |  |
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| **Student Wages** |  |
| Graduate Student |  |
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| Undergraduate Student |  |
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| **Faculty Course Buy-Out (Name/Role/Course)** |  |
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| **Supplies (List)** |  |
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| **Other (List)** |  |
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| **Total** |  |

1 Notes:

1. Summer stipends may not exceed $8,000; stipend amounts are inclusive of fringe benefits.
2. Course buy-outs may not exceed $7,500. Policies vary by college; check with you department head for specific requirements.
3. **Itemized Budget Justification**

Provide on additional page(s)