REQUEST FOR 2019~2020 MARYLAND TRANSPORTATION INSTITUTE (MTI) INITIATIVE LEADER PROGRAM PROPOSALS

DEADLINE: FRIDAY, JANUARY 31, 2020

The Maryland Transportation Institute (MTI) is accepting applications from MTI affiliates to become Initiative Leaders to launch and grow MTI initiatives that will establish new research programs/labs at MTI, raise reputation of the MTI, advance transportation research and development, and lead to multidisciplinary collaboration and major external research funding. The MTI intends to appoint Initiative Leaders to lead selected initiatives within MTI. Funding is available to support Initiative Leaders to cover related costs; further information regarding funding is below. The number of Initiative Leaders selected are subject to MTI budget allocation and a sufficient number of high-quality MTI initiative proposals submitted. MTI intends to fund 6-8 initiative areas this year.

ELIGIBILITY AND FUNDING INFORMATION

➢ MTI affiliated tenure, tenure track, and professional track faculty members at the University of Maryland – College Park are eligible to apply. Joint submissions are also eligible, however, a leader (or co-leaders) must be identified for the initiative. Check the MTI website for a list of affiliated faculty members at UMD. To become an affiliated faculty member or affiliated center, please email the MTI Director, Dr. Lei Zhang (lei@umd.edu), and copy MTI Assistant Director, Catherine LaPadula (lapadula@umd.edu) with a request to become an MTI affiliate before the submission deadline.

➢ Approximately $25K in discretionary funds are available to support each Initiative Leader and the initiative. Upon approval by both the MTI Director and the unit head of the Initiative Leader(s') home department/unit, the MTI discretionary funds may be used for teaching buyout, faculty salary, overload, GRA support, post-doc support, eligible purchases, workshops/seminars/conferences, outreach activities, etc. Equipment purchases over $5K and survey participant incentive payments are not eligible.

➢ Although funding requests up to $50k/year will be considered, it is strongly recommended that new MTI initiatives are proposed at the $25k/year funding level.

➢ The initial appointment for each Initiative Leader is expected to be 1~2 years and the appointment is renewable after the initial period of performance.

INITIATIVE LEADER RESPONSIBILITIES

Each Initiative Leader will propose an initiative area, act as the initiative leader, and will be responsible for building collaborative teams and applying for externally funded collaborative multi-disciplinary projects to ensure program growth. Initiative Leaders will be responsible for the following –

- Grow the research program and build partnerships with government, industry and non-profit organizations, with support from the MTI research infrastructure, staff, and connections;
- Set milestones for the research initiative/program;
- Coordinate and attend collaboration meetings for MTI and related programs;
- A mid-year progress report is required for all Initiative Leaders in June each year. An annual summary report is also required in December each year (report templates will be provided by the MTI upon award);
- Notify MTI Research and Outreach Coordinator and Communications Coordinator of any newsworthy items when they happen;
- Apply for and lead externally funded research proposals within the program area;
- Identify and pursue opportunities for multidisciplinary collaboration;
- Promote the reputation of UMD and MTI in related areas nationally and internationally;
- Publicize the MTI and specific initiatives/programs; and
- Archive all documents created by, used by, or given to the Initiative Leader that relate to the initiative on the MTI shared drive for program sustainability.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES AND FORMATTING

MTI Faculty Leader and Initiative Proposals should be emailed to proposals-mti@umd.edu as a single PDF document. Only the PDF attachment will be reviewed.

A research plan should be submitted that contains the items outlined below. Proposals failing to meet these guidelines will not be considered for funding.

- Title of the proposed initiative
- Proposed Initiative Leader (or co-leaders) name, title, email address, and home department/college
- Name, title, email address, and home departments/colleges of other proposed initiative team members. The Initiative Leader must identify several collaborators at UMD.
- Brief description of the proposed initiative area (no more than three pages)
    - Describe the nature and importance of the proposed initiative area, how it will be beneficial to transportation and related fields, how it relates to the MTI mission;
    - A two-year research plan detailing how the Initiative Leader will develop and grow the proposed MTI initiative;
    - External funding sources and partners for the proposed MTI initiative/program/lab;
    - Track record and qualifications of the proposed Initiative Leader or co-leaders.
- Budget for the discretionary funds; and
- Supervisor/Unit head endorsement letter that shows department/unit support.

INITIATIVE REVIEW AND SELECTION

MTI staff will screen all submitted proposals to determine whether the proposals meet the requirements. Incentive proposals will be reviewed by the MTI Director and Steering Committee. Finalists may be asked to present their initiatives to the MTI Steering Committee.

The MTI Director will make final funding decisions based on comments and ratings from reviewers. The initiative will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

➢ Importance and impact of the proposed multidisciplinary research that builds ties between colleges/departments/units at UMD;
➢ The potential of the proposed multidisciplinary research to compete for and win external funding; and
➢ Overall quality of the proposed research plan and the proposed initiative team.

It is expected that initiative proposals will be reviewed and winning proposals selected by March 2020. Each funded MTI initiative will be reviewed semi-annually and funding support may be withdrawn from MTI initiatives that have not met performance targets.

QUESTIONS

Please email the MTI Director, Dr. Lei Zhang (lei@umd.edu) and MTI Assistant Director, Catherine LaPadula (lapadula@umd.edu), if you have any questions about this program.