NWII Discovery Program Solicitation (FY2017)

Release Date: Monday, November 7, 2016

**Vision**
The National Wind Institute’s mission is to serve as Texas Tech University’s intellectual hub for interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary education, research, and commercialization related to wind science, wind energy, wind engineering and wind hazard mitigation. The Institute supports Texas Tech faculty and students, and external partners involved in these activities and other peripheral areas of interest.

The vision of NWI is to educate the next generation of wind workforce and researchers, stimulate discovery and innovation, provide and implement solutions to wind-related problems, and establish multi-dimensional relationships within the wind field.

**Program Synopsis**
In 2012, the National Wind Institute was formed from its predecessor organizations, marking the beginning of a new era of wind research at Texas Tech University. As a part of the establishment agreement, the Institute receives annually matching fund from Office of Vice President for Research (OVPR) based on F&A generated from NWI-affiliates grants and projects. Using the matching fund, the first Discovery Program was announced in February of 2015, resulting in four awards with a total funding of $130k.

The FY2016 Discovery Program was released in August 2015 and maintained the same objective: to support innovative, early-stage, and entrepreneurial concepts proposed by the Institute’s faculty affiliates. The goal was to initiate and/or advance the Institute's presence in strategic areas while setting a high standard for accountability and transparency. Three projects received a total funding of $77k; two projects received $52k in cost matching/sharing, and seven high performing researchers were awarded $36k as incentives.

Based on the success of the two previous rounds as well as feedbacks from NWI faculty affiliates, the FY2017 Discovery Program will be pivoted towards the following priority areas:

1. **Course buyout**
   One of major barriers for increasing faculty’s research productivity has been identified as high teaching load. For faculty, teaching multiple courses per semester, in addition to service activities, wouldn’t leave them with sufficient amount of time to supervise graduate students, conduct research, attend meetings and conferences, publish, and more importantly write more proposals. Due to budgetary constraint, many departments are not acting aggressively to relieve the teaching load of their faculty members who are research active. To help rectify this situation, NWI will provide a lump sum of $8,000 to the department to "buy out" one course assigned to a research active NWI faculty affiliate for the spring semester of 2017. NWI expects that this faculty affiliate will use released time to advance the goals outlined in NWI’s Strategic Plan in a meaningful way. Proposed activities include, but not limited to, leading large proposals, expanding interdisciplinary collaboration, engaging in technology transfer, organizing
symposiums and conferences, and contributing to industrial standards (e.g. ASCE, ASTM, IEA). The receiving department then will be committed to using the fund to pay an instructor to cover that course.

2. **NWI Visiting Professorship**
   The scholarly activities of NWI has always been enriched by people who come and spend time as visiting professors, scholars, and students. Their collaboration with our faculty, experience in our world-class research facilities, and exposure to the breadth and depth of our wind enterprise continue to elevate NWI's reputation nationally and internationally. To encourage and coordinate such efforts, NWI will provide supplementary funding of $1,000 a month for a visiting professor (who holds a tenured or tenure-track position in a U.S. or foreign university) up to 6 months. In addition, $1,000 will be provided toward travel expenses for attending conference. The visiting professor will be expected to participate in NWI meetings and seminars, publish in journals and conference proceedings, and promote inter-university collaboration. It's highly desired that this visiting professor can work with two or more NWI faculty affiliates.

3. **NWI Faculty Fellowship**
   To recognize the outstanding contribution made by our top performers, NWI will establish multiple short-term Wind Faculty Fellowships. Fellows will be selected from our faculty affiliates based on the amount of F&A return they generated in FY2016 and each of them will receive a minimal of $5k for self-directed, research-related activities.

**Eligibility Information**
Any tenure track or tenured TTU faculty member who had one or more active NWI-affiliated grants in FY2016 is eligible to apply.

**Proposal Form and Submission Instructions**
The proposal form is attached for use. It shall be printed, signed and emailed back to daan.liang@ttu.edu by Friday, November 18, 2016.

**Proposal Review Criteria**
The proposal will be reviewed by the NWI's Research Committee based on its merit, impact, and PI's research productivity in FY2015 & 2016. The number of final awards will depend on fund availability.

**Award Administration**
Notification of the award is made on or about November 30, 2016. Once approved by the NWI Director, the award will be accepted contingent on the disbursement of F&A to NWI by OVPR.

The NWI reserves the right to change any of the terms and conditions contained in this document or any policies or guidelines governing the award, at any time and in its sole discretion.