



University of Rochester Data Science Center of Excellence

To: Faculty Researchers
From: Walter Johnson – Center Executive Director
Subject: Collaborative Research (CR) Request for Proposals (RFP)
Date: March 17, 2020

Research proposals requested: The attached forms constitute a solicitation of research proposals for consideration for July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021. The University of Rochester Center of Excellence in Data Science (“Center”) is a NYSTAR (Empire State Development Division of Science, Technology and Innovation) designated Center of Excellence (CoE) funded by NY State. The Center’s goal is to stimulate economic growth in NY State by promoting technology transfer from our universities to companies operating in New York State. Accordingly, proposed projects must involve a NY industry partner that is actively engaged with the project, financially sponsoring the research, and/or providing assessment of economic impact of the project. Proposals will be reviewed on a rolling basis through December 31, 2020, and projects may commence as of the date of project approval subject to the availability of funds.

Who may apply: The Center’s Collaborative Research program is open to Principal Investigators (PIs) from the University of Rochester. Persons eligible to be PIs shall hold full time faculty positions or full-time positions enjoying similar responsibilities, rights, and privileges. Note that only university PIs are eligible for funding. The Center does not award funds to companies.

Types of projects considered: Center support spans a broad range of technologies including: Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, Deep Learning, Data Mining, Statistical and Computational Methods and Multimodal analysis in applications including, but not limited to: Image and Video Understanding, Sensors and Mobile Technologies and Multimodal Data Analytics. All proposals are required to have an industry partner that is able to document economic benefits associated with the CoE project.

Award specifics: Travel expenses are not allowed on the Center award. Equipment purchased is considered the property of the Center. F&A on Center awarded funds is restricted to 15% on payroll expenses only. While Collaborative Research awards from the Center have funded projects between \$30,000 to \$100,000, submissions for this award program will receive equal consideration irrespective of the size of the award requested. Projects must be completed by June 30, 2021. Submission of a new proposal is required for all current year funding, even for continuing projects.

Selection of proposals for awards: Proposals will be ranked and the awards will be given according to rank. When necessary we will seek outside expertise in compiling the rankings. We anticipate making awards available on a rolling basis subject to the availability of funds. The criteria for evaluation will be based on:

- a. Scientific and technical merit (50%)
- b. Potential economic impact on the state of New York (50%)
- c. Demonstrated technical accomplishments and economic impact (for continuing projects)
- d. Consistency with the technical themes and strategic interests of the Center (exceptions on a case by case basis)



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Scientific and technical merit: The scientific and technical quality of the proposed fundamental or applied research or development activities is key and may be assessed by outside expert reviewers. The proposal should clearly and succinctly state the problem, objectives, methodology, work plan and deliverables of the project.

Economic impact: Ranking will be strongly dependent on whether there is an industry collaborator and the potential jobs and/or revenues that will result from the proposed projects. Note that economic impact is equal in weight to scientific and technical merit. PIs are strongly encouraged to work closely with industrial sponsors on the Economic Impact portion of their proposals to give realistic quantitative estimates of the expected impact.

Proposal submission: All proposals must be submitted by email as attachments using the forms on the Center website at www.sas.rochester.edu/dsc/coe/funding.html. Proposals should be sent to Margaret Urzetta at margaret.urzetta@rochester.edu.

Questions: Questions about the proposals or the CR RFP process may be addressed to Center Director, Walt Johnson, at waljohnson@rochester.edu.