



September 28, 2022

## **Announcing SPROUT Awards**

Cornell Engineering's Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies is pleased to announce a new, internal funding opportunity directed at supporting teams of investigators pursuing novel research at the intersection of multiple fields. From early demonstrations of collaborative success through establishment of an external funding stream, these awards are intended to grow research partnerships that span disciplines within Cornell Engineering and university-wide. This investment is expected to result in submission of a proposal to an external agency.

Funding of up to \$65K-\$75K per award cycle is available to demonstrated, but fledgling, collaborations to help mature these efforts to successfully pursue competitive, external funding which will fully sustain the project. Teams will be eligible to receive two cycles of funding under the SPROUT award mechanism. Submission of a full proposal to an outside agency before the end of the first funding period automatically enters your project in the competition for a second cycle of support. You may submit a renewal application if you show the intent to submit a proposal during the next cycle, but you are not automatically entered in the competition.

Criteria for application: two or more faculty must be invested in the project. The faculty lead for the project must have an appointment in the College of Engineering. If the additional faculty participants have appointments in departments on the Ithaca campus, a maximum award of \$65K per cycle can be requested. For teams including faculty at other Cornell campuses, a maximum award of \$75K per cycle can be requested.

### **What is a SPROUT?**

A SPROUT represents the emergence of a new idea, demonstrated either through: a recent proposal that reviewed well, but was not selected for funding; a jointly authored, peer-reviewed, recent (since 2020) journal publication from a presently unfunded collaboration; or, another similar metric that demonstrates early success.

### **How can I use the funds?**

Funds are intended to support researchers to advance the project to full proposal stage. Example uses include: graduate student support, postdoc support, and travel between institutions. If more than one researcher is supported, they must be in different labs. Faculty summer salary is not an eligible expense. The goal of this investment is to nurture interesting projects whose scope is outside of the work supported by presently funded sponsored projects.

## How do I apply?

Submit a two-page proposal to [enr-research@cornell.edu](mailto:enr-research@cornell.edu) with the subject line “SPROUT proposal submission.” It must describe the project, its impact, and how the [priority research directions](#) in the College are advanced.

Name each faculty member, department and college, and state their contribution to the project. Justify why the whole is greater than the sum of the parts, and provide the approximate relative weight of contribution from each faculty member.

Explain how this project is interdisciplinary, and how this cross-disciplinary effort can advance the field beyond traditional approaches.

Articulate the planned path to compete for external funds to support the project in its next stages after the SPROUT funding. This may include listing a funding opportunity or agency whose sustained support will be sought.

Provide a demonstration of prior attempt to fund this collaboration and result of review (no need to submit reviews, but justification for the funding decision is required, such as “received three excellents and one vg, but was not funded”), or provide the abstract to a peer-reviewed, published (or accepted) paper in which the collaboration is central. (The abstract, or extended text for this part, does not contribute to the two-page limit for the proposal.)

Include a budget, subject to the budgetary constraints quoted above.

### Timing:

For the first, pilot cycle of the program, the receipt date for proposals is November 15, 2022. Selections will be made by December 15, 2022 and funds will be available shortly thereafter. Funds must be expended by June 30, 2023. Note that at this level, it is possible to support two graduate students, *in different labs*, for the Spring 2023 semester. The next cycle of the program will run for a full year; funds will be available from July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024.

For additional FAQs, please visit [sprout.engineering.cornell.edu](http://sprout.engineering.cornell.edu)