

# **W.M. Keck Foundation Research Program Area Limited Competition Briefing**

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# Overview

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# Keck Foundation Background

- Established in 1954 by founder of Superior Oil Company
- Mission is to provide far-reaching benefits to humanity through imaginative grants supporting scientific discoveries and new technologies
- 2017 Assets: \$1,274,710,000  
Total 2017 Giving: \$64,655,000
- Keck makes awards only to 501c3 nonprofits so UNM Foundation is UNM's applicant agency for Keck
- Betsy Till is Keck Liaison for UNM and UNMF
- [www.wmkeck.org](http://www.wmkeck.org)

# Program Areas

- Science and Engineering Research\*
- Medical Research\*
- Undergraduate Education
- Southern California Program

*\* Main/Branch campus researchers may apply only for Science and Engineering program grants.*

*\* HSC researchers may apply only for Medical Research program grants. Contact Corey Ford for more information.*

# Grant Criteria

- The Keck Foundation's goal is to change the course of 21<sup>st</sup> Century science.
- Keck supports ***high-risk/high-impact*** research to lay the groundwork for new paradigms, technologies and discoveries that will save lives, provide innovative solutions, and add to mankind's understanding of the world. Both Senior and Early Career investigators are encouraged to apply.
- Their priority is to invest in pivotal, difficult work; work that overcomes some obstacle; and work that falls outside the mission of public funding agencies and that (typically) presents too much risk for NIH or NSF to yet fund.
- <http://www.wmkeck.org/grant-programs/research/eligibility-and-priorities>

# Grant Process

- Two grant cycles per year.
- Will give feedback on four concepts in each program area per grant cycle.
- Submit one Phase 1 proposal per cycle.
- If invited, will submit a full, Phase 2 proposal.

# Typical Grant Characteristics

- Keck funds basic science, fundamental research.
- Work should not be conceptual, what are the projects?
- Impact and Methodology (and “Why Keck”) sections are most important.
- Key question is “What is the breakthrough?” How will the work further/advance the field?
- Have federal funders been approached before Keck? If reviewed, need to add comments to Phase I proposal.
- PIs must have at least called agencies and include summary of comments in the Phase I proposal.
- If you don’t have comments/feedback from agencies, project unlikely to be competitive.

# Budget Information

- Grants are multi-year (typically three years).
- Keck will not fund indirect costs but can use as imputed overhead.
- PI time limited to 10% but will pay 100% of post docs or grad students (but not tuition).
- Max grant amount = \$1 million.
- No international funding.
- No funding for federal/national lab salaries, but can pay for post-doc work at labs, contract services, etc.
- To be competitive, UNM must provide cost-share (imputed IDC, salaries, equipment, etc.).

# Step 1 – Concept Paper

- <http://www.wmkeck.org/grant-programs/research/application-process-14030/214-grantprograms/shared/1482-concept-papers>
- Single-paged concepts should be in 12-point font with 1-inch margins and include:
  - an overview of the proposed project emphasizing any unique aspects and pilot studies for Research Program concepts;
  - a description of the methodologies and key personnel;
  - a brief justification of the need for Keck support, including justification that the work would not be funded by another agency; and
  - an estimated budget broken down, if possible, by major areas, e.g., personnel, equipment, consumable supplies, etc. (budgets can be rough approximations at this stage).
- If there's room, authors are free to add other details (e.g., background to put the research into perspective, description of the institution's prominence in the field, etc.). Avoid illustrations in these single-pagers – you will need all the room for text. If a reference is necessary, abbreviate it as (Science, 323, 45, '11). DO NOT USE (Jones et al., 2011).

**Follow Instructions!!**

## Step 2 – Phase 1 Proposal

- Limited comp committee will choose one Phase 1 proposal to submit for the deadline.
- Phase I application process:  
<http://www.wmkeck.org/grant-programs/research/application-process-14030>
- Phase I application:  
<http://www.wmkeck.org/grant-programs/research/application-process-14030/phase-i-application-2974>
- Review the requirements for the Phase I proposal and budget as you write your concept paper.

# Keck Grants are Highly Competitive

- Keck grants fill a special niche in the research community and are prestigious and highly competitive. Per grant cycle, Keck usually receives:
  - 150-200 concepts
  - 65 Phase 1 applications
  - Invites 15-20 Phase 2 applications
  - Conducts 8-10 site visits
  - Makes 5-6 awards

# Recent Keck Foundation Grants

<http://www.wmkeck.org/grant-programs/research/medical-research-grant-abstracts>