Connect Grant AY 2019 RFP
(Funding Round 8)

Connect Grants Overview (updated 26 NOV 2019)

The Connect Grants program supports faculty career development and advancement as well as academic unit-level culture change initiatives and faculty recruitment approaches through awarding mini-grants. Funded projects align with the goals and objectives of the AdvanceRIT program. Connect Grants are offered through the AdvanceRIT program within the Office of the Provost with advisory support from Faculty Career Development, the Division of Diversity and Inclusion, and Sponsored Research Services. The program’s target audience is all tenured and pre-tenured faculty at RIT and proposals are accepted from individual faculty and from academic units.

As of the fall of 2019, seven past rounds of Connect Grants have been awarded ($330K overall with average award of $5.7K) with 58 awards supporting 111 unique faculty members. Scholarly products commonly result from this funded effort including funding proposals, peer-reviewed publications, short animations and films, etc. There have been a total of 143 tenured and pre-tenured faculty awardees serving as grant PIs and Co-PIs over the past seven funding rounds, 80% self-identify as female. Of the 58 awarded grants to date, 95% of PIs self-identify as female. The grant “award rate” overall is 55% and the award rate for the last round (Round 7) was 42% (8/19).

The Connect Grants are designed to broaden faculty opportunities and enhance overall career advancement. Creative unit-level efforts to engage in cultural change, guide and manage faculty through various career stages are encouraged. During this current round, approximately $30K is available for the Connect Grants program with the number of awards depending upon the review and evaluation of the proposals in relation to the posted selection criteria. Refer to https://www.rit.edu/nsfadvance/connect-grants-funding for more.

Examples of Past Proposed Efforts (visit the website for more details):

Networking
- Strengthen faculty’s professional visibility in national/international networks.
- Utilize social resources to support the creation and expansion of networks among RIT faculty and within professional disciplines.

Research
- Support research proposal development or re-submission efforts for external funding.
- Expand research and/or writing capabilities to enhance competitive proposal development and submissions.
- Promote interdisciplinary collaborations among faculty internal and external to RIT which could include formal peer-to-peer reciprocal visits to mutual institutions.
Professional Development

- Sponsor and coordinate a visiting scholar’s colloquium series.
- Present research at national/regional conferences.
- Specialized training to support scholarly collaborations.
- Engage the assistance of an external career/leadership coach.

Community Building and Engagement & Unit-Level

- Unit-level efforts focused on recruiting and retaining exceptional faculty from broadly diverse backgrounds.
- Efforts designed to support organic efforts, organizational development, research to inform change or other self-identified areas of need

AdvanceRIT Background

Originally funded through a National Science Foundation ADVANCE Institutional Transformation grant (1209115), AdvanceRIT is a long-term, multi-faceted program designed to increase and advance women faculty at RIT. Additionally, the program examines the unique challenges experienced by women faculty of color and Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing faculty and adapts interventions to address the needs of these key subpopulations. The AdvanceRIT program **goal** is to increase the representation, retention, and career advancement of women faculty with a focus on women faculty of color and deaf and hard-of-hearing faculty. Program **objectives** in support of this goal include:

1. Refine and strengthen targeted institutional structures, and install practices promoting representation and advancement of women faculty.
2. Improve the quality of women faculty work life, professional development, and incentive/reward structures.
3. Align institutional, administrative, and informal systems of power and resources to support and sustain progress by shaping the political frameworks that impact representation and advancement of women.
4. Enhance the working environment and support career development for women faculty using symbolic measures which emphasize issues of meaning within the organization.

In AY 2018, the AdvanceRIT program was incorporated within the Office of the Provost. The program continues to combine research with programming and policy/practice enhancements to drive long-term changes to transform RIT’s culture, promote inclusion, and expand the representation of women on the faculty and among campus leadership.

Proposal Submission Details

**All proposals shall identify at least one mentor, either internal or external to RIT, and include a description of their role on the proposed project.**
Use the Executive Summary from the AdvanceRIT Annual Faculty Data Report to inform and support your proposal. Using evidence to inform decision-making is critical during institutional transformation initiatives. The AdvanceRIT program has gathered and analyzed information from a variety of sources and is using the resulting “data knowledge” to support the creation and administration of various programs and initiatives. Quantitative and qualitative data sources include the 2016 Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education (COACHE) RIT Faculty Job Satisfaction Survey, results of focus groups conducted by social science researchers at RIT, and NSF ADVANCE Indicator Data. Findings within the AdvanceRIT Annual Faculty Data Report provide a compelling narrative and demonstrate the need to support leadership and career development activities for RIT faculty as well as organizational development initiatives to support an inclusive campus culture.

Proposal Template: Complete the proposal template and submit as a pdf file to connectgrant@rit.edu. See the current RFP for more information.

CV/Biosketch: Email to connectgrant@rit.edu a two page (maximum) CV or NSF style biosketch for the PI which lists current rank, department, and contact information.

Recommendation Letter(s): For proposals submitted by faculty, email to connectgrant@rit.edu a recommendation letter from the Department Head of the PI. For unit-level proposals, upload a recommendation letter from the college dean and from constituents/department members indicating department support for the proposed effort. Letters should concisely describe the potential impact of the proposed effort on the proposer and on their respective department, college, and the university.

Direct questions to ADVANCEwomen@rit.edu.

Grant Schedule for AY 2019

Request for Proposals: December 2, 2019 Proposals Due: January 31, 2020
Decisions Announced: March 2, 2020 Funding Available: April 8, 2020
Funding End Date: March 30, 2021 Final Report Due: April 30, 2021

Award Obligations

- Awardees shall be willing to disseminate project outcomes and experiences through participation in university-wide workshops, panel discussions, and presentations.
- Awardees will attend a project initiation meeting with grant sponsors and other awardees.
- Awardees must submit event or activity evaluation materials related to the grant to the AdvanceRIT program if applicable.
- Awardees must complete a final report summarizing activities and impacts. A final report (with unique identifiers removed) may be disseminated more broadly.