The objective of this program is to provide seed funding to faculty teams (2 faculty minimum) to engage undergraduates, preferably from underrepresented groups including women, into interdisciplinary research during the academic year. This program is intended to increase VT’s proposals to NSF’s Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU) Site program and International Research Experiences for Students (IRES) program. Faculty teams receiving the awards are expected to apply for these NSF programs (deadline August 2017). Since NSF expects to have a well-defined common focus in REU Site or IRES programs, faculty teams will be expected to propose research opportunities with a coherent intellectual theme.

ICTAS officials will organize a half-day workshop in April 2017 (date: TBD) to: (i) showcase research work of undergraduate students in a poster session, (ii) bring PIs/co-PIs with experiences in running successful REU sites/IRES program to share their experiences with the participants. In addition, assistance will be provided in developing the project evaluation section of the proposals.

ICTAS will offer $10,000 per faculty team. Each team is expected to engage at least 2 undergraduate researchers. The funds may be used for supporting undergraduate research students, materials and supplies, and travel costs of students. It is expected to make up to 5 awards of $10k each during the fiscal year 2017.

In order to request funding, please submit a 1-page proposal with following information:

1. Faculty members: Names, Departments, Colleges
2. Coherent intellectual theme:
3. Number of undergraduate researchers:
4. Number of undergraduate researchers from underrepresented groups:
5. Brief description of proposed research and mentorship plan:
6. A commitment statement to participate in April 2017 workshop and submit a proposal (REU Site or IRES programs) to NSF in August 2017.

The deadline to receive applications is October 18, 2016 (Tuesday; 5:00 p.m.). Awards will be made by November 1, 2016. Research work can take place November 2016 through April 2017. Please submit your request to Vinod Lohani (vlohani@vt.edu), ICTAS Faculty Director for Education and Global Initiatives. If you have questions, please feel free to ask Vinod, or Stefan Duma (duma@vt.edu), ICTAS Interim Executive Director.

Note: Investigators are encouraged to review RFPs of the NSF/REU Site and IRES programs.