

## Vibrant Virginia Seed Funding

Vibrant Virginia (VV) invites seed funding proposals from Virginia Tech faculty and faculty-mentored graduate students that explore a range of community and economic development concerns facing Virginia's regions. The VV seed funds are designed to encourage applied research and projects into emerging or persistent public policy challenges that cross the traditional boundaries of Virginia's urban, suburban, and rural communities. Due to Virginia Tech's investments in developing campuses in strategic areas of the Commonwealth, the VV initiative is initially focusing attention on four distinct regions - Southwest Virginia, Hampton Roads, Northern Virginia, and Southside Virginia. However, VV projects may serve any portion of the state.

Examples of VV projects funded to date include:

- An initiative to build a coalition of action around the development of regional partnerships to use theory and practical application to create long lasting partnerships in Southwest and Southside Virginia.
- A project to promote education and workforce development in Southwest Virginia by creating internship opportunities for public school students by connecting their teachers with area businesses and fostering a classroom environment that prepares students to enter the workforce.
- An initiative to develop social media campaigns that allow small nonprofit organizations in Southwest and Southside Virginia to increase their online presence.
- A project to connect university population health expertise with policy and organizational assessment capabilities to build community collaborations and strategic approaches for the prevention and treatment of opioid and related substance use disorders in Southwest Virginia.

Generally, VV seed grants awards will likely range from \$5,000-\$12,000, however in certain instances, grant award amounts either above or below that range may be provided. Proposed projects must include active engagement with citizens' groups, local government agencies, private businesses or nonprofit organizations in Virginia regions who are directly involved with the issue. Priority will be given to those projects that focus on multiple communities and address the nexus of rural, urban, and suburban life.

Because VV encourages faculty and graduate students to engage beyond Blacksburg, *strong consideration will be afforded to those applicants who plan to focus on places outside of the Southwest Virginia, New River Valley and Roanoke Valley regions.* Applicants are also encouraged to incorporate Virginia Tech's vast statewide footprint of Commonwealth Campus Centers, Cooperative Extension offices, Agricultural Research and Experiment Station centers, and other satellite research and education facilities.

As part of their project, selected faculty members will be expected to:

- Substantively engage with appropriate community stakeholders or groups in Virginia regions directly involved with the issue (and/or to engage students)
- Prepare a report for the organization or agency where appropriate

- Prepare a 3500-word manuscript for a future Vibrant Virginia academic publication.

Graduate students who apply must do so in tandem with a faculty co-applicant. Application materials consist of a short (150 words maximum) abstract; a 3-5 page letter; and the CV's of project team members. The abstract should clearly and succinctly describe the policy issue, the research strategy, and the expected outcome(s). The abstract may be used in Vibrant Virginia publications, press releases, or promotional materials.

Applicants should also include a letter that includes the applicant's background and familiarity with the topic; an indication of consultation with the regional agencies, groups, or organizations that will be involved with the project; and a consideration of the potential public policy implications of the research. Letters must also include the total funding amount requested, how funds will support project, and an approximate timeline and plan of work for completing the project. Projects are expected to be completed by June 30, 2019.

Applications should be submitted by email to: [atate1@vt.edu](mailto:atate1@vt.edu). Please place Seed Funding Proposal, Vibrant Virginia in the subject line. For questions, please contact Scott Tate at [atate1@vt.edu](mailto:atate1@vt.edu) or (540) 231-2351.