Request for Interest: Neutron Nexus Site Partnership

Issued by:

Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL) – Neutron Sciences Directorate (NScD)

Document Due Date: Open call with rolling admissions

Overview

The Neutron Sciences Directorate at ORNL invites proposals from R1 universities interested in becoming a **Neutron Nexus site**. This strategic partnership aims to expand the neutron scattering user community, foster collaborative research, and enhance workforce development through sustained engagement between ORNL and academic institutions. The university doesn't have to consider themselves as having extensive expertise in neutron scattering, but there should be key faculty identified who have experience and can effectively reach out to colleagues who may benefit from the technique.

Selected Nexus sites will serve as regional hubs for neutron science outreach, education, and collaboration, with a focus on long-term impact and mutual benefit.

Eligibility Criteria

- Must be a Carnegie-classified R1 university
- Demonstrated capacity to engage regional institutions (e.g., community colleges, MSIs, PUIs, technical schools)
- Commitment to educational integration of neutron scattering
- Institutional support for collaborative research and workforce development

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Proposal Requirements

Proposals should address the following components:

1. Institutional Profile

- Overview of university research strengths and how neutron scattering can benefit the research program

- Description of existing infrastructure, faculty expertise, and interdisciplinary programs

2. Outreach Ecosystem

- Plan for engaging regional institutions in neutron science education and collaboration
- Existing partnerships or networks that support outreach

3. Educational Integration

- Strategy for incorporating neutron scattering into undergraduate and graduate curricula
- Opportunities for guest lectures, workshops, and student engagement

4. Collaborative Capacity

- Willingness to pursue joint proposals, co-supervise students/postdocs, and host ORNL staff
- Administrative flexibility for adjunct appointments or shared positions

5. Workforce Development

- Plan for student internships, site visits, and career awareness activities
- Mechanisms for mentoring and professional development

6. Sustainability & Institutional Commitment

- Evidence of leadership support and long-term commitment
- Plans for continuity beyond initial engagement

7. Evaluation & Metrics

- Proposed methods for tracking participation, outcomes, and impact
- Willingness to participate in periodic reviews and share data with NScD

Selection Criteria

Criterion	Weight
Strategic alignment with ORNL mission	20%
Outreach and regional engagement capacity	20%
Educational integration and innovation	15%
Collaborative research potential	15%
Workforce development strategy	15%
Sustainability and institutional commitment	10%
Evaluation and metrics plan	5%

Submission Instructions

It is highly recommended to contact Michelle Dolgos before developing and submitting proposal. Please submit proposals as a single PDF document to Michelle Dolgos: dolgosmr@ornl.gov

Include:

- Cover letter from institutional leadership (Dean level or above)
- Proposal narrative: max 5 pages
- Letters of support from regional universities who wish to engage in the Nexus
- CVs of key personnel
- Other relevant support letters (optional)

Contact for Questions

For inquiries or clarification, contact:
Michelle R. Dolgos
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