Dear Colleague Letter: Engineering Research to Address the COVID-19 Pandemic

The Institute for a Sustainable Earth (ISE) at Mason is seeking to connect members of the Mason community and the broader scientific community. As part of this effort, we are launching a series of podcasts titled, "COVID-19 and Research: Connecting Across the Mason Community." The goal of these podcasts is to facilitate information sharing among researchers, practitioners, and relevant local, national, and international organizations.

The biweekly newsletter aims to highlight ongoing research pertaining to environmental science and sustainability. The theme for the newsletter includes pressing sustainability and resilience challenges as they relate to the COVID-19 pandemic. In light of the ongoing pandemic, the focus will be on research that addresses health and medicine, mobility, and the impact of the pandemic on economic development.

In addition to the newsletter, we are hosting a Global Virtual Conference: The Ages of Least Developed Countries. It will also address the long-term consequences of ongoing debt crises and the risks they face, of which Covid-19 is a major illustration. The conference will feature talks from experts in the field and will provide an opportunity for attendees to engage in discussions and share their research.

We are also partnering with the Mason Online Pandemic Modeling Forum to be held weekly on Fridays throughout the summer, focusing on the impact of the pandemic on various sectors and the development of strategies to mitigate these effects.

The Saltonstall-Kennedy Grant Program is currently accepting applications for projects that create and deploy AI tools to improve the way they monitor, model, understand, and ultimately manage Earth's natural resources for a more sustainable future.

Fishing community participation aimed at helping fishing communities to resolve issues related to overfishing and overcapacity. This program seeks to invest in social innovations that aim to improve the lives of fishermen and their families.

The Coastlines and People program is focused on critically important coastlines and the people who depend on them. Grants will be awarded for projects that are integrated with local efforts to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change.

The Early Career Grant offers opportunities for researchers at the beginning of their careers to develop and test their research hypotheses. The aim is to support early-stage research that has the potential for significant impact.

The Saltonstall-Kennedy Grant Program is also accepting applications for projects that focus on wildlife, human journey, or changing planet. Grants will be awarded for projects that are integrated with local efforts to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change.

The Connected Communities (S&CC) domain is designed to build a more cohesive research-to-action pipeline. The objective of this solicitation is to support Coastal Research that is integrated with local efforts to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change.

The Project: Enhancing the performance and robustness of community-scale data integration and discovery workflows such as through automated curation, end-to-end performance modeling of learning gains.

The Research Development Services (RDS) office has partnered with Mason's Institutes to launch a competition for Pilot Projects. The focus is on developing innovative solutions to complex problems. Aims of such pilot projects can include, but are not limited to:

1. Research that enables the development of technologies for mitigation, remediation, and/or adaptation strategies for climate change.
2. Research that aims to improve the health and well-being of communities affected by climate change.
3. Research that seeks to develop new approaches to address social and environmental justice issues.

Stage 1: In the first stage of this competition, up to four teams per track will be selected from Stage 1 award applications. Each team will receive a $10,000 award to further develop their project.

Stage 2: In the second stage (Stage 2), every team selected in Stage 1 will be eligible to apply for additional funding. The total amount of funding for Stage 2 will be up to $300,000 per team.

We encourage you to review the guidelines and application materials for each of these programs and consider submitting an application. For more information, please contact the Research Development Services office at RDS@mason.edu.