

PROJECT SUMMARY

In response to the pressing need to engage the full talent of the nation's workforce, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) proposes a systematic program to increase the gender diversity of its faculty: ADVANCE-Nebraska. ADVANCE-NE evolved from a thorough assessment of the current status of all women STEM faculty on campus and from extensive discussion and evaluation of barriers to their advancement. **Our goals** and related objectives are to:

1. **Increase the number of STEM women on the UNL faculty** by matching the composition of STEM departments' applicant pools to that of the national pool beginning Year 2 of the program and by matching hiring composition to the national pool by Year 3.
2. **Increase the retention of women STEM faculty and support their promotion into positions of professional leadership** by developing and systematizing institution-wide family-friendly and dual career policies, ensuring that this information is widely disseminated and administratively promoted, and by increasing informal networking and professional development opportunities.
3. **Conduct innovative research on what network structures best support the success of women STEM faculty**, and what factors develop supportive networks.

To achieve these goals, we will create an Office for ADVANCE-Nebraska to coordinate recruitment- and retention-enhancing programs, disseminate information to the academic community, and serve as liaison for the many groups engaged in diversity-focused activities on campus. The Project Director will

- centralize implementation of college-wide Family-Friendly Policies and Flexible Work Arrangements to make UNL more welcoming, and serve as point person for a Dual Career Partner program that networks department chairs, faculty, and administrators;
- form a university-wide committee of faculty, RECRUIT-NE, to increase recruitment of women for faculty positions, empower search committees and Recruitment Ambassadors with strategies needed to recruit diverse talent, and increase "Exposure Visits" to introduce potential recruits to the great working and living environment of Lincoln, Neb.;
- form a university-wide committee, PROMOTE-NE, to increase retention and promotion of all STEM women on campus by familiarizing faculty, chairs, and Tenure & Promotion Committee members with the impact of implicit biases on decision-making processes and strategies to minimize these impacts; and
- build on opportunities for informal networking on campus through professional development workshops, luncheons with guest speakers, and week-long writing retreats.

Informing the ADVANCE-NE office in all of its activities will be ongoing evaluative research on the nature of faculty networks within and across STEM departments at UNL and the impact of network structures on faculty productivity/promotion and satisfaction/retention.

Intellectual Merit. Network analysis is used in corporate and other work settings to identify productive workplace structures, but has not been applied to academia. We will determine the number and strengths of faculty connections with each other and identify the structure of STEM research and teaching networks that best support women's retention and success. Because institutional transformation must be supported and approved by the senior administration, the PI is UNL's Chief Academic Officer, who reports directly to the Chancellor and pledges to extend the program for five years beyond the life of the award to ensure its success. The PI and Co-PIs, evaluation team, and internal and external advisory boards position UNL to successfully transform the university through ADVANCE-NE activities and to share resulting new knowledge with other institutions nationwide.

Broader Impacts. Broadening participation of persons underrepresented in STEM is inherent in all ADVANCE-NE research and activities and is the reason UNL began systematically assessing needs for ADVANCE six years ago. We are now well-poised to broaden participation across the campus by forging effective networks through the proposed recruitment and promotion committees and increased informal networking programs. The institutional, college, and department administrations have committed to implementing policies and practices to promote all women in STEM. Dissemination is a high priority because we believe in the vision of ADVANCE. We have accepted a nationwide call to action by uniting faculty, department chairs, and administrators at UNL to offer all people the best means possible to reach their full potential in STEM endeavors in academia. We will disseminate our results in appropriate journals and at national, discipline-specific conferences. In addition, we will share all results and information with other ADVANCE institutions, persons interested in ADVANCE goals, and the public through a website and promotional materials (brochures, reports, pamphlets, press releases).