



The Computing Innovation Fellows Project

An Opportunity for New PhDs in Computing-related Disciplines

Project Description. The Computing Innovation Fellows (CIFellows) Project (see <http://cifellows.org>) anticipates making up to 60 grants to new PhD graduates in Computer Science, Computer Engineering, Information Science, and closely related fields. Grants will provide funding for one year of work with a mentor at a host organization. Awardees (henceforth “CIFellows”) will be eligible to apply for a second year of funding to follow the first year.

The project seeks to involve many organizations and sub-disciplines in order to encourage cross-flow and broad participation. In particular, it is anticipated that no more than two CIFellows will be awarded to graduates of the same institution in 2009 and that no host organization will host more than two CIFellows. It is expected that the project will involve approximately 50 different organizations.

Each CIFellow must have a mentor at a host organization. CIFellows may engage in research, teaching, and/or other activities, such as public policy work, that contribute to the advancement and vitality of computer science and allied disciplines.

Eligibility. A CIFellow must have completed all requirements for graduation from a U.S. PhD program between May 1, 2008 and August 31, 2009. The PhD must be in Computer Science, Computer Engineering, Information Science or a closely related field. Preference will be given to U.S. citizens and permanent residents, but others will be considered.

Award Size and Duration. Awards will be for \$75,000 salary for 12 months with approximately \$25,000 for fringe benefits and a \$15,000 allowance for moving, travel, and discretionary expenses. Host organizations will receive indirect costs at the 25% rate. The 12-month assignment must begin by November 1, 2009.

CIFellows Website. The CIFellows website can be found at <http://cifellows.org>. This website contains a number of resources including a FAQ, application materials and submission instructions, information for mentors, and an area for prospective mentors to indicate their interests.

Proposal Content and Format. A complete application comprises the following materials submitted by June 9, 2009:

- A one page statement of research accomplishments
- A two-page statement of goals for scholarly activity, teaching, and/or other proposed activities including a statement of the intellectual merits and broader impacts of the proposed work
- A curriculum vitae
- Two confidential letters of reference submitted directly by the recommenders following the instructions on the website; one of these letters will normally be from the applicant’s PhD advisor
- A letter from the applicant’s PhD advisor or department chair stating that the applicant will have completed all work toward a PhD degree by August 31, 2009
- A list of one to three proposed mentors who must be from U.S. institutions different from the applicant’s graduate institution. Note that the goals of the CIFellows project favor selecting mentors at a broad range of institutions.

- For each proposed mentor:
 - A one page document from the applicant indicating the sub-discipline of the proposed work with this mentor (from the CIFellows website – <http://cifellows.org>), the rationale for this choice of mentor and the expected benefits of working with this mentor, as well as the relationship of the activity to the applicant’s career goals.
 - A one page document from the proposed mentor indicating a commitment to work with the prospective CIFellow, a mentoring plan, and a summary of the mentor’s prior record of mentoring (see “Information for Prospective Mentors and Host Organizations” below).

Identifying Mentors and Mentees. The CIFellows website provides a facility to help applicants identify mentors and to allow prospective mentors to express interest in mentoring a CIFellow. Postings are organized by sub-disciplinary categories and mentors may place short postings on this site under one or more of these categories. Mentors are encouraged to include their mentoring credentials and planned mentoring activities on this site along with contact information to allow prospective CIFellows to contact them. Applicants are not required to choose mentors from this website.

Information for Prospective Mentors and Host Institutions. Once a prospective mentor has agreed to support an applicant’s candidacy, the mentor must provide the applicant with a one-page letter of support including the mentoring plan. In addition, the mentor must indicate that the mentor and the host organization are committed to hosting the CIFellow. This document comprises part of the candidate’s application materials (See “Proposal Content and Format” above).

Evaluation of Proposals. Proposals will be evaluated by a broadly representative committee from industry and academia. Applications will be evaluated based on:

- The applicant’s record of research and other accomplishments as they relate to the proposed work
- The strength of the proposed activity with respect to intellectual merit and broader impact
- The quality and suitability of the mentoring plan for the CIFellow’s future work
- Contribution to the project objectives of enhancing cross-flow between institutions and diversity of represented sub-disciplines

Since it is anticipated that at most two fellows will be selected from any institution and at most two CIFellows will be hosted by any organization, applicants are encouraged to identify up to three possible mentors at different organizations. If the application is successful, the award will be for work with a specific mentor. Applications from women and underrepresented minorities are strongly encouraged.

Awards are expected to be announced by July 10, 2009.

Award Administration. Awards will be administered through the Sponsored Projects Office at the host institution. CIFellows and their mentors will be required to complete short reports near the end of each funded year.

For Further Information, please consult <http://cifellows.org>. Additional questions may be directed to contact@cifellows.org.