Even a Well-Crewed Ship Strays Without a Captain

CROs Struggle to Find Suitable Faculty Leaders for L&C Projects

Importance of Faculty Leaders for L&C Awards

- ✓ Provide credibility through their disciplinary reputation and funding track record

- ✓ Help build research teams using networks and connections

- ✓ Manage varying scientific perspectives using their content expertise

- ✓ Bridge communication gaps between research office and faculty research team

Challenges of Finding Equipped Leaders

- x Research offices are unclear on which factors to consider when identifying leaders

- x Faculty are not recognized or rewarded for developing leadership skillset

- x Existing leadership trainings fail to address L&C proposal management

- x Faculty resist research office directives

Opportunities for CROs

Use quantitative and qualitative data to identify faculty best positioned to lead L&C research teams

Develop trainings specifically for faculty leading L&C research teams

Funding Credibility

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Faculty must have successful funding track record for sponsoring agencies to view them as credible leaders.

Key Indicators:

- Total sponsored research funding (by relevant agency)
- Number of awards (by size and complexity)
- Number of times served as a lead or co-PI
- Number of co-authored publications
- Reputation and name recognition

Interest Level

Faculty must be willing to invest time and effort required to lead a collaborative team.

Key Indicators:

- Time and capacity
- Number of postdoc and graduate students advised
- Internal leadership positions (within department, college, center, institute)
- External leadership positions (within professional associations and agencies)
- Engagement with research office

Personal Attributes

Faculty must possess the skills and disposition needed to effectively lead research teams.

Key Indicators:

- Personal disposition
- Networks and connections to other researchers, institutions, partners
- Communication skills
- Management skills

Building Research Leadership Capacity

Purdue's FLAIR Program Provides Targeted Research Leadership Training

Faculty Leadership Academy for Interdisciplinary Research (FLAIR) Program Focus

Foundational Leadership Skills in Research Context

- ✓ Team assembly
- ✓ Communication and media use
- ✓ Group dynamics
- ✓ Vision setting
- ✓ Time management
- ✓ Conflict resolution

Targeted Skills Needed For Leaders Of Large and Interdisciplinary Research Teams

- ✓ Federal agency knowledge
- ✓ Complex RFP analysis
- ✓ Budget and funding strategy
- ✓ Coalition building
- ✓ Outreach and engagement
- ✓ Complex proposal development

Program Details

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Agenda Creation

Selected agenda topics based on gaps in current programs and personal knowledge of VPR, research staff, and past leaders of large research teams

Application Process

Received 24 completed applications (each included a one-page statement of interest, a one-page description of research, and a CV)

Fellow Selection

Chose a diverse cohort of 12 associate and full professors from across a broad range of disciplines and colleges

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2019 FLAIR Sessions

All sessions are Mondays, 1:30-3:30pm
ME 2180, SCHL B038, GRIS 10

Session 1 – Marching in the Same Direction:
Forming Large, Interdisciplinary Centers
and Institutes

Panel:
- Director of Center for Plant Biology
- Director of Institute for Global Security and Defense Innovation
- Former Director of Purdue Institute for Integrative Neuroscience

Sub-Topics:
- Garnering faculty interest with limited resources
- Balancing inclusion with focus
- Organizational structure
- Campus outreach, partnering, and bridge building
- Generate a sustainable funding strategy

Bi-weekly sessions with consistent time and place

Sessions are 2 hours: 1 hour for expert presentations and 1 hour for Q&A

Panel includes variety of speakers with real-world experience leading interdisciplinary teams

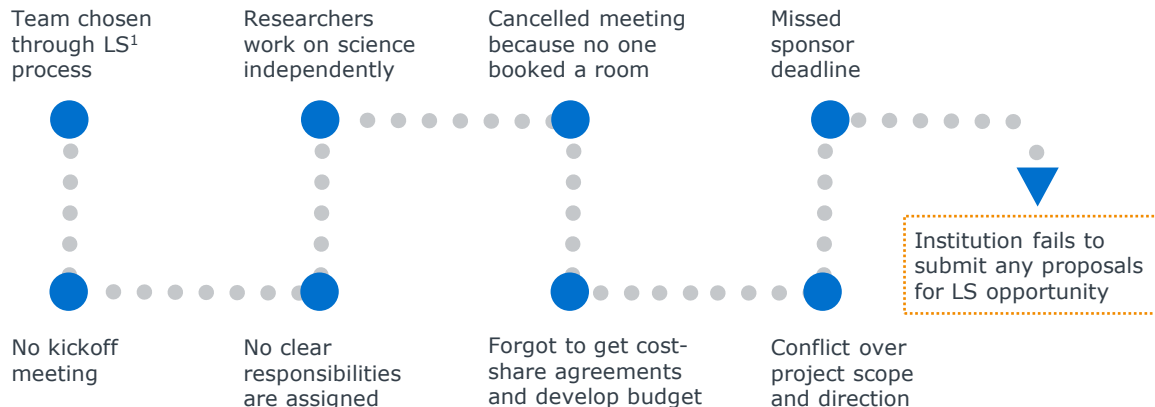Topics are broadly focused, but panelists are given a list of potential sub-topics

Results

Program averaged 80% fellow attendance per session and has built strong reputation across campus

When the Ball Gets Dropped

Faculty Tend to Prioritize Science over Administrative Requirements

Common Failure Points in Coordinating Team Proposals

Team chosen through LS[1] process

Researchers work on science independently

Cancelled meeting because no one booked a room

Missed sponsor deadline

Institution fails to submit any proposals for LS opportunity

No kickoff meeting

No clear responsibilities are assigned

Forgot to get cost-share agreements and develop budget

Conflict over project scope and direction

Research Project Management Resources

Self-Service Toolkit

Ad Hoc Support Team

Dedicated Project Manager

1) Limited submission.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.