Fund through a National Science Foundation ADVANCE Institutional Transformation grant (NSF 1209115), with additional support provided by the university, the AdvanceRIT project \( \text{(http://nsfadvance.rit.edu/)} \) is a long-term, multi-faceted project designed to increase the representation and enhance career advancement of women faculty at RIT in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) disciplines which include social and behavioral science (SBS). The project team examines the unique challenges experienced by women faculty of color and Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing faculty, and adapts interventions to address the needs of these key sub-populations. Members of this large project team combine research with programming and policy/practice enhancements to drive long-term changes that will transform RIT’s culture, promote inclusion, and expand the representation of women on our faculty and among our campus leadership.

The AdvanceRIT project goal is to increase the representation, retention, and career advancement of women faculty in STEM and SBS fields with a focus on women faculty of color and deaf and hard-of-hearing faculty. Project objectives in support of this goal include:

1. Refine and strengthen targeted institutional structures, and install practices promoting representation and advancement of women faculty.
2. Improve the quality of women faculty work life, professional development, and incentive/reward structures.
3. Align institutional, administrative, and informal systems of power and resources to support and sustain progress by shaping the political frameworks that impact representation and advancement of women.
4. Enhance the working environment and support career development for women faculty using symbolic measures which emphasize issues of meaning within the organization.

**Connect Grants Overview**

*Connect Grants* are offered through funding from AdvanceRIT and the Office of the Provost with advisory support from The Wallace Center’s Faculty Career Development Services, the Division of Diversity and Inclusion, and Sponsored Research Services to support leadership and career development for all tenured and pre-tenured faculty at RIT.

The *Connect Grants* drive discovery and learning within an environment that supports the development of project proposals and the process of peer review. These mini-grants encourage leadership and career development, mentoring, networking and research collaboration, while enhancing and advancing the university’s multifaceted initiatives and scholarship infrastructure.

The *Connect Grants* Program is available to individuals, faculty groups (formal or ad hoc), and academic units. Successful grant proposals must support one or more of the AdvanceRIT project goals and objectives. The *Connect Grants* are designed to broaden faculty opportunities and enhance plans of work associated with tenure and promotion preparation and overall career advancement. Creative department or unit-level efforts to engage in cultural change, guide and manage faculty through various career stages and project-oriented work to facilitate institutional transformation are encouraged. Approximately $40,000 is available for the overall *Connect Grants* program with the number of awards depending upon the review and evaluation of the proposals in relation to the selection criteria. Refer to the AdvanceRIT *Connect Grants* webpage for the FAQ and past *Connect Grant* awards.
Successful Connect Grant proposals:

- Support one or more of the AdvanceRIT project goals, objectives, and ongoing activity/initiative areas (see page 1, Connect Grant Rationale attachment, and project website)
- Relate to career advancement and/or leadership development opportunities associated with a faculty members’ ability to advance and achieve career and professional goals
- Include explicitly the name of a project mentor with a clear summary of the role the project mentor will serve over the project’s duration (department heads shall not serve as project mentors)

Special Interest for Current Funding Round:

- Proposals which describe creative department/academic unit level efforts to guide and manage faculty through various career stages and project oriented work to facilitate institutional transformation are encouraged (be sure to indicate departmental/faculty support as part of recommendation letters.)

Networking

- Strengthen faculty’s professional visibility in national/international networks
- Utilize social resources including the development of professional websites to support new networks among RIT faculty and within professional disciplines

Research

- Support successful research proposal development or re-submission efforts for external funding
- Expand research and/or writing capabilities to enhance competitive proposal development and submissions
- Promote interdisciplinary and trans-disciplinary research and teaching collaborations among faculty peers external to RIT. RIT faculty may identify a mentoring relationship with a prominent female or male scholar from outside RIT to support their professional development. This may include formal peer-to-peer reciprocal visits to mutual institutions

Professional Development

- Sponsor and coordinate a women’s visiting scholars colloquium series
- Present research at national/regional conferences
- Specialized training to support research and teaching (i.e. computer software)
- Engage the assistance of an external career/leadership coach

Community Building and Engagement

- Department/College -level creation, implementation and dissemination of Best Practices and Professional Development Models
- Leadership-in-Action type grants designed to support organic efforts, organizational development, research to inform change or other self-identified areas of need
- Sponsorship of keynote speakers and workshops on topics such as building transparency, negotiating dual career hires, the changing funding environment, establishing career goals, network development, unconscious bias, recruiting best practices, and broader impact issues

Eligibility: All current tenured and pre-tenure RIT faculty are eligible to apply for a Connect Grant. The AdvanceRIT project supports the funding of awards for eligible women faculty within STEM/SBS disciplines. The Office of the Provost has provided support to expand the Request for Proposals to all full-time, tenured and pre-tenured faculty in all disciplines.

Grant Schedule for AY 2016

| Request for Proposals: December 12, 2016 | Proposals Due: February 13, 2017 |
| Decisions Announced: March 16, 2017 | Funding Available: May 1, 2017 |

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Award Obligations

- Awardees must be willing to disseminate project outcomes and experiences through participation in university-wide workshops, panel discussions, and presentations.

- Awardees must attend a project initiation meeting with grant sponsors and Sponsored Programs Accounting.

- Awardees must submit event or activity evaluation materials as appropriate to the project and required for NSF reporting.

- Awardees must complete a final online report summarizing activities and impacts. A final report (with unique identifiers removed) may be disseminated through the AdvanceRIT website and included within NSF reporting requirements.

Connect Grant Application Submission

Connect to http://nsfadvance.rit.edu/application-login.php to download the application template and complete the application form. Please direct questions regarding proposals to ADVANCEwomen@rit.edu. You will be asked for the following information and documents:

A. Proposal form downloaded when you login to the application form and submitted as a .pdf (maximum four pages).

1. Proposal
   a. Executive summary,
   b. Detailed project description,
   c. Detailed, clear implementation plan (For all grant proposals, identify a mentor),
   d. Timeline for proposed activities,
   e. Evaluation plan including intended/desired goals and outcomes as well as measures,
   f. Description of project participant roles,
   g. Description of relevance to faculty members’ plan of work, faculty group scope of work, or the academic unit’s mission and goals,
   h. Detailed budget justification,
   i. Description of project relevance to the goals, objectives, and ongoing activity/initiative areas of AdvanceRIT project,
   j. Description of the broader impact of the proposed work (see the NSF ADVANCE Merit Review Criteria on the NSF program solicitation site for more on broader impacts),
   k. Description of the intellectual merit of the proposed work (see the NSF ADVANCE Merit Review Criteria on the NSF program solicitation site for more on intellectual merit),
   l. List of references using APA format.

B. Two page (max.) CV or NSF style biosketch for PI including current rank, department, and contact information.

C. Recommendation Letters: For Faculty/Faculty Group grants, the letter is from the Department Head of the PI. For academic unit-oriented grants, the letters are from the College Dean and from constituents/department faculty indicating department support as appropriate. Letters should concisely describe the potential impact of the proposed effort on the proposer(s) and on their academic unit, college, and the university.