The purpose of this MOU is to identify the roles and responsibilities of the NIH K and New Investigator R01 Proposal Preparation Program Participants and to confirm commitment of both the Participant’s sponsor and department in supporting their full participation and completion of the Program.

Program mission: The NIH K and New Investigator R01 Proposal Preparation Program is designed to assist Virginia Tech junior faculty, fellows, and post-docs in the preparation of Career Development (NIH K) award applications and early career investigators in preparation for their first R01 grant. The goal is for participants to enter the program with a research idea in mind and use program resources to prepare their formal proposal for submission by the end of 2016.

Program structure: The program will start early in Spring Semester 2017 and will conclude in May 2017 prior to the NIH June submission deadline. The programs consist of four (R01) or five (K Award) workshops: (1) two Specific Aims Workshops, (2) one Significance/Innovation Workshop, (3) one Effective Communication Workshop, and (4) two Developing the Research Proposal Workshops and (5, K awards only) two Career Development Plan Workshops. A major component of the program will include cohort peer reviews and an internal review by Virginia Tech faculty that have successfully submitted similar NIH grants.

Expectations for Program participants (To be initialed by the Participant):

Prior to the Program orientation, the Participant is expected to have his or her Specific Aims vetted by the mentor or supervisor within their Department or Institute. The project aims should be sound, sufficient, and suitable for incorporation into a grant application.

During the Program and prior to grant submission, the participant is expected to contact the Program Officer or Program Director at the NIH center/Institute most likely to support the proposed project. Project Aims, eligibility, and appropriate K/R01 mechanism should be discussed. Project aims and career goals should be viewed positively by the PO/PD and/or revised to reflect the outcome of these discussions before the grant application is submitted to NIH.

The programs consist of three (R01) or four (K Award) workshops: (1) two Specific Aims Workshops, (2) one Significance/Innovation Workshop, (3) one Effective Communication Workshop, (4) two Developing the Research Proposal Workshops and (5, K awards only) two Career Development Plan Workshops. Program Participants are expected to be present and prepared for each of these workshops. The number of workshops is limited, and new workshops cannot be added to accommodate participant schedules.

Program Participants will have available to them 17 sessions throughout the 4 month duration of the Program. Participants are expected to attend at least 15 of the 17 sessions. They will come prepared and will participate fully. Schedules for the
sessions have been made available on the Program website, and participants should adjust their schedules accordingly.

The Program includes an internal grant application review in the format of an official NIH review. To ensure that the internal reviewers have adequate time to provide a quality review, the Program Participant, is expected to submit their complete draft grant application by **April 14, 2017**. Extensions cannot be given.

**Mentor commitment (To be initialed by the Primary Mentor for K Participants)**

As the Primary Mentor (K Participants)/Department Head or Supervisor (R01 Participants), I have read the “Expectations for Program Participants” above and agree to support the Participant in adhering to these commitments.

I have reviewed the participant’s project aims and find them to be scientifically sound and are felt to be competitive for peer review.

I have evaluated the participant’s candidacy (relevant experience and productivity), relative to the Participant’s career goals and NIH expectations, and find them suitable for the grant mechanism and likely to lead to research independence.

As the primary Mentor, I recognize the Program is a 4 month commitment with minimal required classroom time, but significant necessary time for writing, career reflection, review of feedback, and scientific contemplation. These commitments will be seen as a priority throughout the duration of the Program.

**Departmental commitment (To be initialed by Department Chair, Institute Director, Division Chief, Dean, or Supervisor for R01 Participants):**

As the Department Head/Institute Director/Division Chief/Dean/Supervisor, I have read the “Expectations for Program Participants” above and agree to support the Participant in adhering to these commitments.

The participant’s project aims and candidacy have been reviewed within the department and are felt to be competitive for peer review.

The Department will provide the pre- and post-award infrastructure to guide the Participant through the technical aspects of grant budgeting, submission, and management. The participant will also be expected to work with the appropriate pre-award administrator in the Office of Sponsored Programs for assistance with these aspects.

The Department is committed to success of this applicant, who we feel is well suited to this project, highly productive, and likely to be successful in establishing an independent career based on this project.
As the Department Head/Institute Director, I recognize the Program is at least a 4 month commitment with minimal required classroom participation, but significant necessary time for writing, career reflection, and scientific contemplation. These commitments will be seen as a priority throughout the duration of the program.

Participant Signature __________________________ Date ____________

Participant Printed Name __________________________

Primary Mentor Signature __________________________ Date ____________

Primary Mentor Printed Name __________________________

Department Head/Director Signature __________________________ Date ____________

Department Head/Director Signature Printed Name __________________________

Beth Tranter, Associate Vice President for Research Planning Signature __________________________ Date ____________

Beth Tranter, Associate Vice President for Research Planning Signature Printed Name __________________________