The purpose of the Pathway to Interdisciplinary Research Centers competitive grant program is to foster or support interdisciplinary research teams at UNL and enhance their competitiveness for large-scale or center grants. These large-scale or center grants are designed to help UNL increase total research expenditures to $300 million by 2017 as outlined in Chancellor Perlman’s 2011 State of the University address.

Interdisciplinary research teams that build collaborations across departments, colleges, campuses, and with other institutions of strategic importance are critical to enhance competitiveness of UNL faculty. Interdisciplinary research teams include expertise across two or more disciplines and leverage an integrated or holistic approach to solve complex societal problems. Applicants are strongly encouraged to review and reference recent reports from the National Academy of Sciences or federal agencies to become familiar with national priorities and critical societal issues. Examples include, but are not limited to:


For the purpose of the Pathway to Interdisciplinary Research Centers program, interdisciplinary research teams must be broader than collaborations between molecular biologists and computational biologists, agronomists and plant pathologists, physicists and molecular biologists, basic and applied engineers, theoretical and physical chemists, organic and analytical chemists, social and cognitive psychologists, theoretical and comparative political scientists, economists and risk analysts, survey scientists and statisticians, or anthropologists and linguists. The rationale for the nature of the interdisciplinary research team should not be based solely on the use of various research techniques.

For new interdisciplinary teams with no history of interactions, the program provides a series of three funding opportunities to help build interdisciplinary research teams that will be competitive for large-scale or center grants. New interdisciplinary research teams are strongly encouraged to follow this path:

- **Phase I**: Planning Grants ($10,000/year for one year);
- **Phase II**: Interdisciplinary Research Team Seed Grants (up to $75,000/year for up to two years); and
- **Phase III**: Interdisciplinary Research Team Center Grants (up to $100,000/year for one year with the potential for a second year of funding).

Existing interdisciplinary research teams that already have developed a Concept Paper may apply for Phase II grant without first applying for a Phase I grant. However, before applying directly for a Phase II grant, the Principal Investigator must have discussed the team’s Concept Paper with the Office of Research and Economic Development.

In addition, some interdisciplinary research teams at UNL may have already received funding through the FY2011 UNL Life Sciences competitive grants program, the Water for Food competitive grants program, or the Nebraska Center for Energy Sciences Research competitive grants program. These
interdisciplinary research teams may be ready to apply for a Phase III grant without first applying for a Phase I or a Phase II grant. Principal Investigators of these teams must contact the Office of Research and Economic Development before applying directly for a Phase III grant.

Funds must be used to support interdisciplinary research teams where there is a \textit{known opportunity} for obtaining competitive funding from a federal agency or a foundation.

A large-scale or center grant is defined as a competitive, full Facilities and Administrative (F&A) cost-bearing funding opportunity of at least $1 million per year (total costs) for a minimum of three years.