

August 2023



## MULTIDISCIPLINARY (CLUSTER) HIRING INITIATIVE in BIOMANUFACTURING

Biomanufacturing | Supporting Biosciences | Enabling Technologies

This is a capacity-building game changer for the university that will support the research enterprise in the broad area of biomanufacturing. The faculty hiring initiative will be led jointly by the Office of the Provost and the Office of the Vice President for Research.

Starting in the 2023-24 academic year, we will create **TWELVE NEW T/TT FACULTY POSITIONS** at Kansas State University with connections to biomanufacturing (and related bioscience and enabling technologies<sup>1</sup>); recruitment will begin in fall 2023, with start dates as early as summer/fall 2024. Funding is available to be able to hire faculty at *all ranks*, a goal of this cluster hiring initiative.

These are intended to be research-intensive T/TT appointments and deans are expected to set research tenths at an appropriate level<sup>2</sup> when forwarding any hiring requests.

A bold, multi-college, and highly targeted/strategic cluster hiring initiative will move the dial immediately in (a) growing research, (b) increasing instructional capacity, (c) building industry engagement opportunities, and (d) contributing to economic development in Kansas.

In preparation for this initiative, and as part of our investment in research (current and future) related to biomanufacturing (and supporting biosciences), we will also be issuing an RFP for new research equipment open to all K-State faculty. \$1M - \$1.5M will be allocated for this competitive program. Awards will be announced this fall.

Those faculty hired into this multidisciplinary faculty cluster (and any future clusters) will be able to specify their home department (and secondary appointment, where appropriate) as part of a cross-college interview process. They also will be invited to specify the makeup (department representation) of their RPT committee. This will be particularly compelling and important to those candidates working across traditional departmental boundaries.

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<sup>1</sup> Biosciences (biology, biochemistry, chemistry) and enabling technologies (bio-analytics, bioinformatics, AI, ML, IoT, etc.)

<sup>2</sup> Rather than a typical 60/40/20 (research, teaching, service) appointment, for example, something along the lines of 75/15/10 or 80/20 would be appropriate for these new positions.

The intention of this cluster hiring initiative is to recruit research active faculty, at all ranks, into multiple departments and colleges. This approach, that has worked well at other public research and land grant universities, will strengthen our capacity for interdisciplinary research and education.

The distribution of new faculty positions in colleges will depend on applicant interest and the depth/quality of the applicant pool at different ranks, meeting the overall objectives of the cluster hiring initiative, and successful candidate recruitment by departments and search committees.

When positions in this faculty cluster become vacant (due to departures or retirements by those hired as part of this cluster hire), the positions revert back to the Provost/VPR for future allocation within the cluster (i.e., the “faculty line” does not remain attached to any particular department or college).

This multidisciplinary faculty hiring initiative or “cluster” (salary AND startup for the twelve positions) is funded substantially using the State’s new \$5M allocation for a “Biomanufacturing initiative” with only a small matching commitment coming from the colleges that hire these faculty, as shown below:

	<u>University covers:</u>
9-month salary plus benefits	100%
Startup costs	50% up to \$600K

Since these funds have been provided by the State to develop and sustain programs and facilities for biomanufacturing research, training and education at K-State, all positions in the cluster must have a well justified connection to biomanufacturing. As such, several of these faculty members would be expected to be able to cover instructional needs in biomanufacturing (whether in BTEC or in undergraduate or graduate classes). This reduces the need to hire instructional staff dedicated to BTEC.

While searches will be led/conducted by departments and colleges, the Provost and VPR will give final approval for hiring into the cluster<sup>3</sup>. This is a new model that maximizes the potential for greatest success/impact/cohesion of the research-focused cluster.

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<sup>3</sup> The VPR and Provost will work with the **deans and select faculty** to (a) refine the search process and focus areas, and (2) develop the search committees; and with the **search committee chairs** to build out recruitment strategies and instructions on how/when to advance finalists for hiring consideration with the department chair and dean’s approval. Hiring requests of identified finalists must specify the candidate’s expertise/research domains, intended hiring rank, how they will contribute to the cluster, anticipated start-up needs, and strategies that were used to identify/recruit candidates. The VPR and Provost will have final hiring approval of any Biomanufacturing cluster finalist identified by the search committee and advanced by the department chair and dean.

## Timeline:

