1. Could the funds be used to support international travel? For example, say a faculty member needs additional support for a PDL (Professional Development Leave), can these funds be used to support research abroad (if the proposal otherwise qualifies).

International travel would be OK as long as it strengthens the competitiveness of an IDR team for external funding.

2. If a faculty member is doing interdisciplinary research with another university, but not within BYU, does that still ‘count’?

This type of collaboration would not be a good use of funds because it could diminish or in other ways make the BYU IDR team less competitive.

3. Are external collaborators allowed? And if we do allow for external collaborators, does that mean that there still needs to be at least 3 BYU faculty involved? Or can one of the external collaborators count as being a faculty member from a different department/college? Can BYU-affiliate faculty be investigators on the project?

External collaborators are allowed. The external collaborator cannot replace a BYU faculty member as a PI. At least three BYU faculty members must be part of the IDR team. External collaborators can be part of the team after that requirement is met. IDR funds are restricted from being used for providing research contracts to other universities; consultant fees and salaries can’t be paid from IDR funds. This restriction doesn’t keep external collaborators from contracting services for testing, etc., if it is a purchase rather than a subcontract. The type of services that the external collaborators would be purchasing at BYU facilities through the grant must be described (i.e. time on our MRI facility; sequencing at the BYU DNASC; soil analysis at the EAL, etc.). BYU-affiliate faculty can be part of the project, but can’t be PI’s because their “home” affiliation is not BYU. They should be treated like external participants.

4. Can faculty participate on more than 1 proposal?

Yes but can only be the PI on one.

5. How many PIs can there be? Can all participants be PIs?

Answer: One has to be designated as the PI.

6. What department chairs have to endorse the proposal?

The only required department chair endorsement will be the signature/acknowledgement from the PI chair.

7. What is the most important, relevant part of the submittal? In our submittal, we plan to emphasize how each participant is useful, brings unique skills to the project.

That will be good to emphasize in your proposal. Also don’t forget the other criteria. [You can provide a short email of your intended format for review by the PI’s dean.]
8. **Should the application have a specific research focus?** In other words, should we propose a specific research question that might lead to a paper that would involve most or all of the multidisciplinary faculty or should we just develop the application generally?

Yes it needs to have a research focus, specifically a focus that meets the criteria described for the IDR Origination Award:

- Create strong potential for external funding following the IDR award
- Build or strengthen interdisciplinary research partnerships
- Demonstrate the potential to produce significant impacts
- Have a clearly articulated problem statement
- Identify measurements of success and achievable milestones

Having a paper published that involves faculty would be less important than submitting an application that meets the criteria.

9. **Should we provide detailed science like an NIH grant application (e.g., Significance, Innovation, Approach, etc.) with experiments outlined, etc?**

We didn’t identify any specific format so you can use whatever proposal structure you choose. Make sure your proposal describes how it meets the criteria within whatever format you choose. Doing it like an NIH or NSF or other funder-type application would be OK.

10. **Are we allowed to submit Letters of Support? Do those count toward a page limit?**

Answer: Letters of support aren’t required or encouraged. They are allowed from external organizations, recognizing that no funding from an IDR Origination award can be provided to external participants, and the focus of an award should be strengthening BYU’s IDR competitiveness, not necessarily that of an external participant. Letters of support do not count against the proposal page limit but all the letters of support should not exceed 3 pages.

11. **Are the Budget and Budget Narrative included in the 5 page requirement?**

They are not included in the 5 page limit. They should not exceed a total of 1 page for budget and budget narrative.

12. **Can we put information about personnel in the budget narrative (some external funders allow this information in budget descriptions)?**

Yes, but keep within the page limit for budget and budget narrative.

13. **If we follow a format that has Abstract with Specific Aims, does that have to be in the project description?**

The abstract submitted as part of the Letter of Intent or the abstract that is part of the cover page can include specific aims. An abstract should not be included in the project description that has the 5 page limit.

14. **Since the funds come from BYU, we don’t have to include overhead in the budget?**

That is correct. Like other internally funded awards, there is no overhead with this award.
15. Do we have to spend the budget in equal increments each year?

No, you can have different amounts that you use in either the first or second year. Total for both years has to be no more than $120K.

16. Are certain budget items ranked higher by reviewers than other items?

No but each item should be justified and tied to the objectives of the proposed project.

17. Do reviewers give a higher priority to projects that potentially have a more global impact than those that have a narrower impact?

No, you can have a proposal that focuses on a narrow problem or that is geared just towards solving a problem in your field, but it should be written in a way that shows why that problem needs to be solved—justify the urgency.

18. Are we at a disadvantage if we only have three team members?

No, as long as you meet the criteria - a minimum of 3 from 2 different colleges and 3 different departments. Your team should have a project that is innovative and compelling and each team member's role should be justified.

19. Are we at a disadvantage if we have a previously existing team?

No, if you meet the eligibility requirements. You should justify why your team, with seed money, can solve your proposed problem in an innovative way that can lead to external funding.

20. The FAQ says we can have the PI’s dean take a look at a short summary of the format we plan to use. Are there other opportunities available for feedback prior to submission?

Not one of the past winners has received an award without having an RD person look at their application ahead of time. That’s not to say that you can’t win without RD, but to let you know that the deans have given us clearance to work with these groups closely and review and provide feedback on proposals. Some of the past winners have also mentioned that they would be willing to look through project summaries and provide feedback. You won’t need much feedback on the LOI, but please involve RD before you submit the full proposal.

21. What type of format should the biosketches take? NIH style? Short and sweet?

Most faculty design their biosketches to look similar to something from the NIH. Limit it to one page per team member. I have examples if you would like to see those.

22. Funding – we are asked to explain open/pending funding. What is the purpose of this?

The deans want to know if you already have resources that could be used on the project you are proposing. They also want to know if you have the bandwidth to accomplish what you are proposing. If you just have a couple of small internal grants, you may be able to be the PI on this larger grant. If you already have a large grant from a federal funder, then they had some reservations of funding those types of applications. The IDR Origination Awards are really geared towards helping new faculty and those who have been unsuccessful in capturing external funding to
acquire funds to conduct pilot projects and gather preliminary data that can be used to make external funding proposals more successful.

23. Regarding potential proposals for external funding, we have one foundation that has already said they are interested in the research but need preliminary data before really considering the proposal. We aren’t sure how much detail to include in this section. For example:

a. **Do we need to demonstrate fit between our research and the other external funding sources?** Yes, but not in very specific detail. You identify and discuss how your work fits in with federal funders in a one-page document called “Plans for External Funding” that is separate from your project narrative. Most teams identify two or three smaller private funders and a couple of large federal funders. Some identify specific funding opportunities that they plan on apply to. That’s not necessary. You just describe how your work fits in with the mission of the funders that you are apply to.

b. **Should we be reaching out to other program officers to gauge interest?** Yes, that helps you tailor your research and gauge the interest of a particular funder. It is not necessary to state in your application that you’ve spoken with a program officer.

c. **Should we provide a timeline of when LOIs would be submitted to those various funders if we receive the IDR?** Yes. The project narrative requires that you discuss “expected outcomes” and that would include which external agencies you plan on submitting to and a rough timeline of when you would submit those applications.