



FIU to lead \$2.3 million NSF-funded project to advance international collaboration in Internet research and education

MIAMI, FL (Oct. 15, 2007) – Florida International University announced today that it received a \$2.3 million grant from the National Science Foundation's highly competitive Partnership for International Research and Education (PIRE) program, to advance global partnership in information technology research, innovation and education.

Building on its successful experience in international collaboration, the School of Computing and Information Science at FIU will launch the five-year grant, which will support travel abroad for computer science faculty and students to do collaborative research at top universities in Mexico, Spain, Argentina, China, India, Japan and France as well as in world renowned IBM International Research Labs and the supercomputing center in Barcelona, to create a Global Living Laboratory for Cyber-Infrastructure Application Enablement.

The research conducted under this grant will flow from a central question: How to better utilize the cyber-infrastructure to solve complex societal problems?

The Global Living Laboratory for Cyber-Infrastructure Application Enablement will be based at FIU and work in collaboration with Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton. The project was one of 20 selected by PIRE from more than 500 proposals submitted by the nation's major research universities.

"We are very excited about receiving this very competitive grant. It is a recognition both to the competitiveness of our faculty and student research and to our leadership and innovation in international and industry partnerships," said the FIU Computer Science Dean Yi Deng, who is the Principal Investigator for the project. "This partnership, with the support from NSF, will not only help to advance the state-of-the-art in computing research, but also make a major impact in further enhance the quality and competitiveness of our students, particularly Hispanic students in computer science."

A recent national survey by the Computing Research Association revealed that the total enrollment in computer science Ph.D. programs was of 12,500 students. Only 158 of them are Hispanic; 26 of them are at FIU.

"This award represents a truly extraordinary opportunity for our computer science students of all levels to have a significant study abroad experience while pursuing research at outstanding foreign universities and industry research labs," said Vice Provost for International Studies Douglas Kincaid. "For most of them, the opportunity to travel and experience other cultures in the context of their professional field would not be possible otherwise."

Deng said that the project builds on the successful experience over the last two years of the Latin American Grid (LA Grid) Consortium, a unique international partnership for collaborative research, innovation and workforce development co-founded by IBM and FIU, whose members include 11 universities in Florida, Puerto Rico, Mexico, Spain and Argentina, as well as IBM Research Labs worldwide and the Barcelona Supercomputing Center, the largest supercomputing center in Europe.

This partnership allows researchers to work together and explore ways to harness the computing power of thousands of computers around the world to solve problems. The PIRE project will focus on areas such disaster mitigation, healthcare and life sciences. For example, one of the problems at hand, according to Deng, is the localization of weather forecasting down to the zip code.

"When a hurricane approaches we have a general idea of what it will bring," said Deng. "We are looking to answer questions like how will it impact a specific location and at exactly what time."

For more information on the project <http://pire.fiu.edu>

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