

SettleNet

A Regional Settling-in Partnership of PhD-Hiring Institutions

SettleNet will provide PhD's and their families the information, resources, and assistance needed to settle in to their positions using a regional partnership that brings together PhD-employers in the Capital District.

Components

The costs associated with failing to recruit or failing to retain these candidates can be staggering. To address the needs, the SettleNet Project has four basic components:

- A one-stop guide to **SETTLING-IN RESOURCES** for the region.
- Personalized **RELOCATION ASSISTANCE** for PhD-hold employees and their families through the first year of their move to the Capital District.
- A regional **CAREER NETWORK** that will provide information about and contacts for employment opportunities at member institutions.
- Confidential **CAREER COACHING** for PhD-holding employees and their partners through the first three to five years.

Work Plan

With funding from the Elsevier New Scholars Fund, we propose to implement these goals using a three-year plan:

In the **Planning Phase** (6 months), Rensselaer will bring together the region's PhD employers for a two-day summit to understand the issues new PhD-employees, particularly women, have in settling in to the region and to develop a plan to address these issues.

In the **Pilot Phase** (18 months), Rensselaer will work with a handful of partners representing the variety of institution types (e.g. research university, liberal arts college, corporate R&D center) to test the underlying concepts and develop the appropriate services and infrastructure.

In the **Launch Phase** (12 months), we will launch SettleNet, attracting the base of partners necessary to become self-sustaining.

Innovation

Our approach is innovative in several respects. First, we take a regional approach. Second, we broaden membership beyond higher education to all PhD-hiring institutions. And third, we address this need for active participation using the model of energy credits to create active incentives for participation by reducing membership fees with credits granted for contribution to settling-in efforts. Finally, we take a family life cycle perspective that encompasses all of the stages in which the families of PhD's typically find themselves in the post-doctoral career by providing both dual career and relocation assistance.

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute