



2020-2021 VPR Research & Creative Grants Request for Proposals

Deadline for Submission: Thursday, September 10, 2020, 5:00 p.m.
To apply, visit [InfoReady Review competition page](#).

Purpose

The VPR Research and Creative Grant (RCG) program provides support of up to \$10,000 for specific projects of individual tenured and tenure-track faculty members. The program's overall objectives are to promote research, outreach, and creative activities in all disciplines that will result in publications, patents, recognition, awards, or exhibitions/performances appropriate to the PI's discipline, and/or will improve competitiveness for external funding.

Research support for institutes, centers, and organized research units is not available through this program.

Attention: Since we cannot predict when COVID-19 restrictions will be eased, work proposed must be possible under current [Research Level 3](#) conditions, and travel must follow [UT Austin Travel Management guidelines](#). There will be no COVID-19-related extensions.

Eligibility

- A faculty member may receive either an RCG or Special Research Grant (SRG), *but not both*, in a given academic year (September 1, 2020, through August 31, 2021).
- Applicants must be in residence during the duration of the award.
- Professors and Chairs with greater than \$50,000 in chair, professorship, or other discretionary funds are ineligible.
- Faculty with any remaining start-up funds are ineligible.
- Each faculty member may submit only one proposal during each funding cycle.
- Applicants cannot receive RCGs for the same project in multiple award cycles. Applicants submitting a proposal closely related to a previously RCG-funded project must demonstrate that the new application is substantially different.
- Applicant PI must be committed to, leading, and actively engaged in, the proposed project.
- Faculty who received 2017-2018, 2018-2019, or 2019-2020 RCG awards are ineligible for 2020-2021 RCG funding.
- Current members of the Review Committee are not eligible to apply for RCG funding.

Ineligible Activities

- Faculty development – activities such as learning a new technique, language, methodology or completing a thesis or dissertation.
- Institutional research – studies related directly to the operation of the University that are not generalizable and have little application beyond UT.
- Public service and consulting.
- Departmental curriculum development, such as the preparation of curriculum materials, curriculum modifications, and student interest surveys. (Curriculum Development that includes empirical studies of the effectiveness of new program formats, or techniques and content that are generalizable and have application beyond UT may be considered research for this grant program.)
- Edited work. Although we allow for collaboration, the research or creative project must be the work of the named applicant.

Timeline

Deadline for Proposal Submission	Thursday, September 10, 2020, 5:00 p.m.
Announcement of Awards	Mid-October 2020
Period of Performance	Receipt of Award to August 31, 2021
Encumbrances Must be Cleared By	October 31, 2021
Final Report Due Dates	February 15, 2022; February 15, 2023

Proposal process

Proposals must be submitted on-line via [InfoReady Review](#) by **Thursday, September 10, 2020**.

Applicants will select the panel under which they would like their project to be reviewed:

Panel 1: Arts, Humanities, and Law

Panel 2: Social Sciences, Business, Communication, and Education

Panel 3: Life Sciences

Panel 4: Biomedical Sciences

Panel 5: Physical Sciences, Mathematics, Engineering, and Information

Proposals will include the following (to be submitted in the following order as a single .pdf).

Proposals not meeting these guidelines will be returned:

1. **Your title must include the panel number, e.g. “Panel 3: Your Title Here.”**
2. Brief (150-word maximum) project abstract. These will be used for promotion and announcement purposes. *Please write for the non-specialist.*
3. Project Plan (Maximum of 6 single-spaced pages). All proposals should clearly explain the merits of the research project relative to advancement of his/her discipline or field of work. Include need for compliance approval, such as IRB, IACUC, and IBC.
4. Up to two pages (separate from the text of the project plan) for references and/or graphics (Optional). Please provide a link for any video examples.

5. Detailed budget and Justification. Budgets must be itemized and listed items must total no more than \$10,000. If part of a larger project, such as a film, please provide a separate budget for the overall project.
6. Other support requested or received for the proposed project.
7. Uses and results of any previous VPR Grant support.
8. Curriculum Vitae in outline form (two pages or less).
9. A list of any collaborators on this project.

Please be aware of the following:

- Proposals related to fields for which outside funding is likely should contain clearly defined plans to obtain future funding for this project, including funding agencies to which proposal(s) will be submitted, amount(s) requested, research topic(s), and anticipated timeline for submission and results.
- For applicants with existing external funding, the proposal must demonstrate that the funds will be used to initiate new research directions or new research projects separate from existing projects.
- The review panel will comprise faculty from various related disciplines. Please write so that a reviewer from any discipline can understand and evaluate it.

Budget

- The maximum grant amount is \$10,000. You are not required to seek the maximum.
- Budgets must be itemized, and listed items must total no more than \$10,000.
- If this request is toward a larger project, please include a separate, overall project budget.

Allowable Costs

- Research assistants
- Research-associated travel (for grant holder only)
- Research supplies and materials
- Small items of research equipment. Funds to purchase equipment can often be obtained from the applicant's dean or chair, so *any equipment items requested must be fully justified.*
- Software may be purchased *only* if it is highly specialized research software fully justified by the scholarly demands of the proposed work. General purpose software is not allowable.

Unallowable Costs

- Faculty salaries
- Any expenditure prohibited from an indirect cost account
- Student tuition, fellowships, scholarships, or stipends

- Any pre-publication manuscript preparation expenses: copy editing, photos for publication, etc.
- Books, CDs, DVDs, or videos
- Page charges, reprints or subventions for publication
- Indexing
- Travel or registration expenses for attending professional meetings or symposia.
- Tuition and fees
- General-purpose software
- Computer time, computer hardware or peripherals.
- Conference registration or travel expenses
- Research-related costs incurred prior to the start date of the RCG award.

NOTE: For 2020-2021 Research & Creative Grants -

- **There will be no COVID-19-related extensions for these awards.**
- **Since we cannot predict the extent of the pandemic for the coming year, all proposals must be achievable in the current UT COVID-19 environment. You must assume that all current travel restrictions and laboratory shutdown conditions will continue during the coming fiscal year.**

Proposal Review

Criteria

Competing proposals will be ranked by a committee of peers. All applicants will be judged on the following criteria:

- Intrinsic, scientific, scholarly, or creative excellence of the work.
- Evidence of work plan soundness and investigator's ability to carry out the project.
- Importance of proposed work to the knowledge of the discipline.
- Impact on the completion of the scholar's creative activity. How much will this funding make the project better? How much will this impact the project?
- Likelihood of obtaining external funding and/or generating activities consistent with the highest standards of the discipline will be given the highest priority.
- A clearly-defined plan for using RCG funding to leverage future funding (for fields where external funding is likely).

Review Process

Applicants will request a specific review panel:

Panel 1: Arts, Humanities, and Law,

Panel 2: Social Sciences, Business, Communication, and Education

Panel 3: Life Sciences

Panel 4: Biomedical Sciences

Panel 5: Physical Sciences, Mathematics, Engineering, and Information

Each panel will provide scores and comments using the following scoring scale:

- Outstanding (Point value: 5): Vitrally important project undertaken by a qualified investigator who can be expected to make substantial progress and has potential for generating activities consistent with the highest standards of the discipline. This rating should be reserved for truly excellent proposals, but should be used when warranted.
- Excellent (Point Value: 4): Proposal considered superior, both for the intrinsic merit of the project and the ability of the investigator. Should be supported.
- Very Good (Point Value 3): Proposal considered superior, both for the intrinsic merit of the project and the ability of the investigator. Should be fully or partially supported with recommendation for scope or budgetary adjustment.
- Good (Point Value: 2): Worthwhile project by a competent investigator, but routine in nature. May be supported if funds are available.
- Fair (Point Value: 1): Proposal has serious deficiencies that decrease the probability of successful completion. Might merit consideration in future competitions if resubmitted with major changes.
- Poor (Point Value 0): Clearly not deserving of support or is written in language that prohibits adequate merit evaluation by reviewers.

Applications with the highest average point value will receive funding depending on availability.

Award

General Terms & Conditions

- Funds will not be released until appropriate compliance approvals such as IRB/IACUC/IBC have been received (if applicable).
- In no case will approval be given for expenditures in excess of the total amount of the award or after the closing date of the grant period.
- Funds expire and must be used by August 31, 2021. All encumbrances must be cleared by October 31, 2021, after which remaining funds will be swept. No extensions or carryovers of these funds will be permitted, and unused funds must be returned to the VPR. UT has end-of-fiscal-year deadlines for purchasing, which you must follow. Do not wait until mid- or late-August to make purchases or submit travel receipts for reimbursement. Fiscal regulations governing expenditure of UT and State funds must be observed, and all purchases must be made using University and State guidelines. More information and assistance are available at <http://www.utexas.edu/business/accounting/> or from your departmental accounting contact.
- This is not a cash award. Funds are made available through an account established for your department by the VPR and the Office of Accounting. This is not a personal account, nor should it be used to deposit funds aside from those deposited by the VPR for RCGs.

- If the research leads to a submission and a positive funding decision during the award period, the remaining RCG program funds must be returned when external funding commences.
- **Any and all changes to the funded budget included in your proposal must be approved in advance and in writing by the VPR. Please submit requests to modify with specific dollar amounts and justification via [e-mail to VPR](#).**
- Out-of-pocket expenses paid for with personal funds will not be reimbursed from RCG funds except in the case of travel outside the Austin area.
- All awards are subject the [intellectual property policy of The University of Texas System](#).
- Travel expenses paid from RCG funds are subject to State regulations, and are only allowed for the RCG holder. Please follow guidelines established in your department for travel. The account number can be charged directly if you choose to arrange your travel through one of the University's approved travel agents.
- Any funds remaining after completion of the project will be returned to the VPR.
- Employment of personnel must be in accordance with established University regulations. Please note that, fringe benefit costs are automatically covered, but ITS core data and network charges are not. Cost is calculated per FTE. Professors awarded RCGs may not be paid any monies from grants except reimbursement for travel per University regulations.
- RCG award recipients will be expected to serve as reviewers on future RCG review committees.

Reporting requirements

A final project report will be due by February 15, 2022, with a follow-up report due February 15, 2023, using the report form available in the application packet. This report will include results *directly related to the RCG*:

- Summary of results during the course of the project and how they addressed the goals stated in the application.
- Budget report outlining utilization of funds.
- Resulting publications, performances, conferences, exhibits, including titles, dates, venues, bibliographic information
- Progress in applying for external funding, including titles, agencies, date submitted (past and future), amounts requested, status, awarded amount
- Recognition: awards, honors, prizes, reviews

Additional follow-up information may be requested outside of the progress report to determine the ongoing efficacy of the RCG program.

Submit reports to VPRcompetitions@austin.utexas.edu

Please note that awardees who have not submitted all RCG and SRG reports will be ineligible for future VPR award competitions.

Acknowledgement

RCG program awards must be acknowledged in any resulting publications or exhibitions, including press releases, using the following suggested language:

- “This project was funded (or partially funded) by The University of Texas at Austin Office of the Vice President for Research through the VPR Research and Creative Grant Program.”
- Links to the VPR Web site would also be appreciated. VPR: <https://research.utexas.edu>.
- An electronic copy should be submitted to vp-research-sr@austin.utexas.edu.