

Overview of UCF Seed Funding Program: 2020-2021

Proposal Submission Deadline: October 30th at 5pm. Proposals submitted after the deadline will not be considered.

The Office of Research is sponsoring the second round of a university-wide Seed Funding Program for UCF faculty that encompasses multiple and diverse approaches directed at promoting competitiveness in attracting external funding and enhancing the visibility and recognition of our faculty members.

A total of \$1 million will be centrally allocated (from the Office of Provost and the Office of Research) for this program to consolidate the following seed award categories:

Exploratory Research (ER) Awards (total funding = Up to \$600,000)

These awards are intended for UCF researchers (up to two PIs) to initiate **new high risk, high reward** activities, which will strengthen faculty credentials and make them more competitive by allowing them to collect preliminary data appropriate to their discipline prior to submission of external grant funding applications. Proposals seeking continuation of existing projects (determined by past funding, including startup or publication record) will not be funded. The program is divided into two sub-categories: ER1 - to fund preliminary data collection, and ER2 - to apply for time on shared research facility equipment, responds to editorial review comments, collect data, or test feasibility of partnerships with industry.

Funding allocation and expected number of awards by category:

- ***ER1 Track: Exploratory Research***

Up to \$580,000 will be awarded upon availability of funds. Fifteen to twenty proposals are expected to be granted during the current fiscal year.

- ***ER2 Track: Shared Research Facility Usage***

Up to \$20,000 will be awarded upon availability of funds. Approximately ten proposals are expected to be granted during the current fiscal year.

Interdisciplinary Research (IR) Awards (total funding = Up to \$400,000)

To encourage new or expanding interdisciplinary teams to engage in convergence activities that lead to externally funded, large grant proposals requiring preliminary data and proof of established multi-PI engagement. This program will promote research that can only be achieved through collaboration. Funding should be commensurate with the total number of PIs composing the teams. Teams of 3-4 members are encouraged and must be composed of faculty from multiple disciplines. Larger teams will be considered if well justified. Proposals focused on conceptualized approaches for transition of existing interdisciplinary team into an externally funded research center or equivalent will also be considered.

- ***IR Track: Interdisciplinary Research***

Up to \$400,000 will be awarded upon availability of funds. Four to eight proposals are expected to be granted during the current fiscal year.

Notes:

- Application instructions for each track are included in the following pages of this document as well as at the InfoReady website.
- A **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)** document related to this program will be available at the funding opportunity pages in InfoReady.
- A **webinar** will be held on October 15th to answer questions related to this program. An invitation will be sent out soon to the UCF community to allow for RSVPs.
- [A complete list of past awardees](#) of the Seed Funding program is available.

UCF Seed Funding Program: 2020-2021 Application Process

Exploratory Research (ER) Awards - ER1 Track: Exploratory Research

Description: The Office of Research is sponsoring an exploratory research awards program for UCF researchers (PIs) to initiate new high risk, high reward activities, which will strengthen faculty credentials and make them more competitive by allowing them to prepare preliminary data for submission of external grant funding applications appropriate to their discipline. All proposals must clearly address this objective. Proposals for activities related to the applicant's past published research must show how the proposed research differs from past research, and clearly enhances and diversifies the faculty member's research agenda.

Eligibility: All UCF employees eligible to submit proposals through the OR and who are exploring new areas of research (except for past Seed Program awardees) may submit. Past awardees of the Seed Program cannot participate in any new applications. This is intended to be single PI proposal. Two faculty can also team up for this program if well justified to explore a new research area by combining complementary expertise. Each faculty member may submit or be included in only one ER proposal.

Funding: A total of up to \$580,000 will be awarded upon availability of funds. Fifteen to twenty proposals are expected to be funded during the current fiscal year. Funding will be allocated proportionally across the College/Centers/Units.

Required Application Process: All sections of the application should be single spaced, Times New Roman 11 pt or Arial 10 pt, 1" margins. Complete applications must be submitted through the [InfoReady](#) portal by the deadline. A Notice of Intent (NOI) prior to the full submission deadline is **not** required for ER Award submissions.

Proposal Submission Deadline: October 30th at 5pm

Each application must contain the following components in this order:

1. InfoReady Form Fields: Complete all required fields that appear in the submission portal for this opportunity.

2. Application Cover Page (1 page): PI/Co-PI(s) Information (Name, Title, Affiliation, Email, Phone), proposal title, proposal start and end dates, budget total. Expected performance time is one year, however, no cost extensions will be granted if well justified.

3. Project Description (3 pages): For all internal competitions, it is the PI's job to have a convincing argument that would be sufficiently understandable to experienced researchers, but not necessarily experts in their field. The Project Description may not exceed 3 pages and must contain the following elements:

(i) *Background Statement:* Include a brief statement on related prior work in the field (how is it done today), existing challenges or limitations of the current approaches, and how the proposed research will address those challenges.

(ii) *Statement of Objectives:* Explain the objective of your proposal (what are you trying to do) without any jargon. Identify a clear relationship with background statement

methodology and note significance of anticipated results. Explain what difference it makes if your proposed research is successful.

(iii) *Plan of Work*: Provide an appropriate plan for meeting objectives, with a clear explanation of procedures, activities, risks, timeline and milestones; if appropriate, include plan for effective human/animal use and safety. For multi-PI proposals, identify the contribution of each PI and provide a clear *plan of collaboration* among PIs.

(iv) *Description of follow-up activities*, such as a proposal for externally funded research, a book, or juried exhibition must be included in the plan. For planned proposal submissions include the following: Title of large RFP / funding program, agency, projected deadline date, description of how your research relates to the RFP or program's goals. Include all possible funding sources.

4. References Cited (no page limit): This section must include bibliographic citations only and must not be used to provide parenthetical information outside of the 3-page Project Description.

5. Budget with Justification: Complete the **Standard** budget template provided under "Available Documents". All requested funds (e.g., student support, consumables) must be integral to the research and not available within the department, college, institute, or center. Funds may not be used for travel to attend conferences. Funds may not be used for dual compensation or overload. Funding request for PI salary is discouraged.

6. CV For PIs/Co-PIs (required) must follow [NSF](#) or [NIH](#) format. For **Senior/Key Personnel** (1 page): *If applicable*, a summary of other key personnel may be included, in addition to the PI and Co-PI biosketches.

7. Current and Pending Support (C&P): A record of current and pending support for each investigator is required. FTE information for support is not required.

8. Letters of Collaboration (if applicable, no page limit): If collaborators are not PI/Co-PI, letters of collaboration are allowed. No budget information is needed but justify why they are essential to the success to the project. Letters of support are not allowed.

9. History of previous internal funding received from any UCF internal sources (OR/college/department) during the last 3 years and outcome (how many external proposals written and whether funded). OR internal sources include *VPR Advancement of Early Career Researchers (AECR)* and *Salary Support for Large Proposal Development*. These internal sources **do not make PIs ineligible**.

Submission Instructions:

- Go to the InfoReady website at: <https://ucf.infoready4.com/>
- Select the opportunity "Seed Funding - *Exploratory Research (ER) Awards*" from the InfoReady landing page.
- Once you open the ER opportunity, click on "Apply"
- Click on "University of Central Florida Login" blue box and type in your NID and password

- Fill out all required information
- Upload the full application, including the budget
- Submit application
- You will receive an automatic email confirming your application has been submitted.

Review process, criteria, and announcement of awards:

Review Criteria: Proposals will be evaluated according to the following criteria: i) Potential impact of the proposed research on the field as well as on the faculty member's research program, ii) Intellectual merit (novelty) of the proposed research including the feasibility and quality of the plan of work (what new will be learned/achieved if the proposed program is successful) , iii) broader impact to society (what difference does it make if your proposed research is successful) and iv) Feasibility of future funding appropriate to discipline.

Review Process: Individual reviews will be used to evaluate the merit of proposals. Submissions will first be reviewed from within submitting units, and recommendations will be made to the OR. A panel will then jointly discuss evaluations and presentations to produce a recommendation for funding of the most competitive proposals. The VP for Research will make the final decision.

Announcement of Awards: Awards will be announced no later than December 18th.

Deliverables: Recipients of funding for this program must submit a progress report in InfoReady at the designated deadline. A final report must be submitted to the Vice President for Research within 30 days of the end of the award period. This report should include an abstract of the completed work. [A suggested template for the final report](#) is available.

The UCF Faculty Senate Research Council will perform an annual assessment of the value of this program to the university by conducting a review of the final reports of the previous year's awards, aided by additional follow-up material requested from their authors. This review will be made available to the Chairs, Deans of the Colleges, Center Director, Vice President for Research, Provost, and President.

Failure to comply with the indicated deliverables will result in disqualification in participation in OR seed funding programs in the future.

Questions: For questions regarding this program, please contact Debra Reinhart, Associate VP for Research and Scholarship (debra.reinhart@ucf.edu)

Exploratory Research (ER) Awards - ER2 Track: Shared Research Facility Usage

Description: The Office of Research is sponsoring a seed funding award program for UCF researchers to apply for time on shared research facility equipment, gather preliminary data for proposals, obtain editorial review comments, or test feasibility of partnerships with industry.

Eligibility: Full-time UCF faculty without budget for shared facility use. Requests to supplement existing funded projects for which analysis funding has been exhausted do not qualify.

Funding: A total of up to \$20,000 will be awarded upon availability of funds. Approximately 10 to 12 proposals are expected to be granted during the current fiscal year.

Submission Deadline: No deadline, apply any time.

Required Application Process: All sections of the application should be single spaced, Times New Roman 11 pt or Arial 10 pt, 1" margins. Complete applications must be submitted to Debra Reinhart (debra.reinhart@ucf.edu). A Notice of Intent (NOI) prior to the full submission deadline is **not required** for ER Award submissions.

Submit a one-page application with the following information:

1. PI information (Name, Title, Affiliation, Email, Phone)
2. Project title
3. Project start and end dates.
4. Project description up to 500 words
5. Expected outcomes, including future proposal submission if applicable (Title of RFP/funding program, agency, manuscript, projected deadline date)
6. Budget for instrument use
7. Trained user(s) or shared facility employee(s) to operate the instruments

Additional Information: Please submit (i) CV (in [NSF](#) or [NIH](#) format) and (ii) List of proposals submitted during the last two years period (Title, agency, project period, amount, status).

Deliverables:

Recipients of funding for this program must submit a final report to the Vice President for Research within 30 days of the end of the funding period. This report should include an abstract of the completed work along with the following information, as applicable:

1. Proposal submitted
2. Publication with acknowledgment of seed funding
3. Summary of results from use of facility

Failure to comply with the indicated deliverables will result in disqualification in participation in OR seed funding programs in the future.

Questions: For questions regarding this program, please contact Debra Reinhart, Associate VP for Research and Scholarship (debra.reinhart@ucf.edu)

Interdisciplinary Research (IR) Awards - Interdisciplinary Research

Description: The Office of Research is sponsoring a program for UCF researchers to encourage new interdisciplinary teams to engage in convergence activities that lead to externally funded large grants requiring preliminary data and proof of established multi-PI engagement. This program will promote research that can only be achieved through collaboration. Funding is intended to enhance the capabilities of convergent research teams to develop compelling strategies for future funding. The topic must have national importance and be relevant to UCF

research priorities. Proposals focused on conceptualized approaches for transition of an existing interdisciplinary team into an externally funded research center or equivalent will also be considered. Award activities of projects focusing on conceptualization approaches for expansion of the team into a research center or equivalent may include collection of preliminary data, brainstorming meetings, organizational meetings, scientific workshops designed to define a research theme, team expansion activities, development of partnerships, collaborations with industry, integration of research with education, and promotion of national and international partnerships.

Eligibility: All UCF employees eligible to submit proposals through the OR (except for past Seed Program awardees) may submit. Past awardees of the Seed Program cannot participate in any new applications. Each faculty member may submit or be included in only one IR proposal.

Funding: A total of up to \$400,000 will be awarded upon availability of funds. Four to eight proposals are expected to be granted during the current fiscal year. Funding should be commensurate with the total number of PIs composing the teams. Teams of 3-4 members are encouraged; larger teams must be well justified.

Notice of Intent (required): A Notice of Intent (NOI) to submit to this program should be received by the Office of Research by **October 1st**. The NOI should list the PI/Co-PI names, departments involved, interdisciplinary topic, keywords, and note whether this is a new or existing collaboration, and it should be emailed directly to Debra Reinhart, Associate VP for Research and Scholarship (debra.reinhart@ucf.edu). The OR will provide quick feedback on the appropriateness of the proposed activities considering the scope of this program.

Required Application Process for Full Proposal: All sections of the application should be single spaced, Times New Roman 11 pt or Arial 10 pt, 1" margins. Complete applications must be submitted through the [InfoReady](#) portal by the deadline.

Proposal Submission Deadline: October 30th at 5 pm.

Each application must contain the following components:

1. InfoReady Form Fields: Complete all required fields that appear in the submission portal for this opportunity.

2. Application Cover Page (1 page): PI/Co-PI(s) Information: (Name, Title, Affiliation, Email, Phone), proposal title, proposal start and end dates, budget total. Expected performance time is one year, however, no cost extensions will be granted if well justified.

3. Project Description (5 pages): The program supports research that is interdisciplinary in nature. This must be clearly demonstrated in the application. For all internal competitions, it is the PI's job to have a convincing argument that would be sufficiently understandable to experienced researchers, but not necessarily experts in their field. The Project Description may not exceed 5 pages and must contain the following elements:

- (i) ***Background Statement:*** Include a brief statement on related prior work in the field

(how is it done today), existing challenges or limitations of the current approaches, and how the proposed research will address those challenges. Also mention how teaming will advance the competitiveness for external funding. Describe the level of existing collaboration on this topic (e.g., new team, new topic, etc.).

(ii) *Statement of Objectives*: Explain the objective of your proposal (what are you trying to do) without any jargon. Identify a clear relationship with background statement methodology and note significance of anticipated results. Explain what difference it makes if the proposed research is successful. Please articulate if it is a high-risk high reward proposal.

(iii) *Plan of Work*: Provide an appropriate plan for meeting objectives, with a clear explanation of procedures, activities, risks, timeline; if appropriate, include plan for effective human/animal use and safety. Provide detailed plan on collaboration activities, contributions of each PI to the project, and why a team is needed to accomplish the research.

(iv) *Description of Follow-up Activities*, such as a proposal for externally funded research, must be included in the plan. For future proposal submission please include the following: Title of large RFP / funding program, agency, projected deadline date, description of how your research relates to the RFP or program's goals. Please include all possible funding sources.

4. References Cited (no page limit): This section must include bibliographic citations only and must not be used to provide parenthetical information outside of the 5-page Project Description.

5. Budget with Justification: Please complete the **Standard** budget template provided under "Available Documents". All requested funds (e.g., travel, student support, consumables) must be integral to the research and not available within the department, college, institute, or center. Funds may not be used for travel to attend conferences. Funds may not be used for dual compensation or overload.

6. CV For PIs/Co-PIs (required) must follow [NSF](#) or [NIH](#) format. For **Senior/Key Personnel (1 page)**: If applicable, a summary of other key personnel may be included, in addition to the PI and Co-PI biosketches.

7. Current and Pending Support (C&P): A record of current and pending support for each investigator is required. FTE information for support is not required.

8. Letters of Collaboration (if applicable, no page limit): If collaborators are not PI/Co-PI, please include letters of collaboration. No budget information should be listed, but justify why they are essential to the success of the project. Letters of support are not allowed.

9. History of previous internal funding received by the participating PIs from any UCF internal sources (OR/college/department) during the last 3 years and outcome (how many external proposals written and whether funded). OR internal sources include *VPR Advancement of Early Career Researchers (AEER)* and *Salary Support for Large Proposal Development*. These internal sources do not make PIs ineligible.

Submission Instructions:

- Go to the InfoReady website at: <https://ucf.infoready4.com/>
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- Fill out all required information
- Upload the full application, including the budget
- Submit application
- You will receive an automatic email confirming your application has been submitted.

Review process, criteria, and announcement of Awards:

Review Criteria: Proposals will be evaluated according to the following criteria: i) Potential impact of the proposed research on the field and relevance to national and state priorities, ii) Intellectual merit (novelty) of the proposed research including the feasibility and quality of the plan of work (what new will be learned/achieved if the proposed program is successful), (iii) Technical and societal merit (what difference does it make if your proposed research is successful), iv) Qualifications of PIs and evidence of an integrative team with an appropriate mix of perspectives (cohesiveness of the team activities), and v) Likelihood of significant externally funded research.

Review Process: Individual reviews will be used to evaluate the merit of proposals. A panel will then jointly discuss evaluations and presentations to produce a recommendation for funding of the most competitive proposals. The VP for Research will make the final decision.

Announcement of Awards: Awards will be announced no later than December 18th.

Deliverables: Recipients of funding for this program must submit a progress report in InfoReady at the designated deadline. A final report must be submitted to the Vice President for Research within 30 days of the end of the funding period. This report should include an abstract of the completed work, a list of joint publications submitted or in preparation, and proposals submitted or planned. [A suggested template for the final report](#) is available.

The UCF Faculty Senate Research Council will perform an annual assessment of the value of this program to the university by conducting a review of the final reports of the previous year's awards, aided by additional follow-up material requested from their authors. This review will be made available to the Chairs, Deans of the Colleges, Center Director, Vice President for Research, Provost, and President.

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