

Provost's Challenge Research Seed Fund

Overview

The Faculty Research Awards Committee (FRAC) is excited to announce a new seed fund opportunity to enhance externally sponsored research growth at Arkansas State University. Championed by the Provost, this new award will support research growth from any field of study by investing directly in faculty member success with the expectation of the funded work being used as the basis for developing competitive external research grant proposals. Please contact RTT directly at research@astate.edu or 870-972-2694 if you have questions about the Provost's Challenge Research Seed Fund.

Details about the Provost's Challenge Research Seed Fund

The Research Seed Fund will support a tenure-track faculty member's research by providing funding for two years of research support. The goal of the Research Seed Fund is to "seed" a research project that will result in a competitive grant proposal from an external sponsor. Faculty researchers should use the funds to collect and analyze data, literature, or archives, or create a work that is used as the basis for a sponsored grant proposal. Many funding agencies only fund projects after clearly demonstrating novelty and promise of an important (transformative) contribution or discovery, demonstrating a relatively low risk, and a showing a high potential for success. In other words, funding agencies want to know that their funding will result in meaningful outcomes. The best way to demonstrate potential success to sponsors is to show preliminary results. Research Seed Funds should be used to start something new that will meet the metric of providing the necessary information for developing a competitive research proposal to an external (State or Federal) sponsor. Applications that include collaborations among researchers across fields of study are encouraged. Applicants will be prioritized who have identified specific sponsors and grant opportunities that will result in external applications for funding of \$500,000 or more.

Funding cycle: Applications are due by 5pm on Friday, October 18, 2024. Awards will be announced in January 2025. Funding will begin July 1, 2025, and last for two years (through June 30, 2027).

Funding level: Application budgets should request up to \$60,000 total for two years of funding support. There is flexibility in how budgets can be structured. Funds can be used for faculty summer salary support, hiring research personnel, research supplies, equipment, and professional travel.

Number of awards: We anticipate making two awards for \$60,000 each to start July 1, 2025.

Limits on applications: An investigator cannot apply for the Provost's Challenge Research Seed Fund and any other FRAC opportunities in the same application cycle. Since the Provost's Challenge Award is for two years, awardees are ineligible to apply for FRAC funding during the second year of funding.

Request for Proposals—Application Instructions

1. **Cover Sheet** – Must be typed on attached template; select whether you are applying for the traditional Faculty Research Award or the Provost’s Challenge Research Seed Fund. Include an abstract of 300 words or fewer. Abstract should be appropriate for publication on the RTT website. Handwritten forms will be returned without review.

2. **Narrative** – Provide a project narrative that is a maximum of a six-pages. Page limit includes all tables and graphics but does not include references which may be attached on separate pages. Please minimize the use of highly technical language, and express ideas in language and graphics accessible to faculty outside the field of study. Be concise and include:
 - a. Scope (what), significance (why), and objectives (how) of the project;
 - b. Brief review of related work by PI and/or others, including theoretical framework;
 - c. Methodology/Plan of work, including analysis plan or evaluation/assessment plan;
 - d. Expected results and plan for addressing potential challenges;
 - e. Timeline of activities from initiation to completion;
 - f. Dissemination plan, including plans for state, regional and/or national dissemination;
 - g. Impact of this project on ability of PI to obtain future external funding (specify plans for state, regional & national funding proposals). This section must include the future sponsor and program areas you plan to apply to because of obtaining the Provost’s Challenge Research Seed Fund.

3. **References / Literature Cited**

4. **Budget and Budget Justification** – Provide a detailed budget using the A-State Budget Template spreadsheet and a detailed budget justification using the budget justification templates. Limit the budget justification to 2 pages.

5. **Curriculum Vita** – Provide an abbreviated CV (limited to 4 pages) for the principal investigator, using the attached template.

6. **Supplementary Information Regarding Research Compliance** – Unless a project qualifies for exemption, Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) or Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval is necessary prior to any expenditure of funds, but not required for submitting with the application. If IACUC or IRB application has already been approved, please attach approval letter. No other supplementary materials will be accepted.

Provost’s Challenge Research Seed Fund Rubric Used by FRAC Members in Proposal Review

	Objective not met = 0	Objective scarcely met = 1	Objective partially met, but with significant weaknesses = 2-3	Objective mostly met; shortcomings minor = 4	Stellar = 5
Overall Proposal Presentation: Is the narrative no more than six pages? Is it easy to read with limited jargon?					
Narrative: Is the proposed work significant / important?					
Narrative: Is the project clearly filling a knowledge gap?					
Narrative: Are the proposed methods sufficient to clearly answer the project questions?					
Narrative: Are the timelines clearly defined and reasonable for the scope of the proposed work?					
Narrative: Will the project outcomes be effectively disseminated to broad audiences?					
Narrative: Does the proposed work have high probability or resulting in externally sponsored funding?					
References: Are the references appropriate to put proposed work in context?					
Budget: Is the budget appropriate for proposed work?					
Budget justification: Is the budget clearly justified?					
CV: Is the researcher equipped to successfully complete the proposed work?					

TOTAL SCORE:

Out of 55 total points.

Please specifically comment on the potential for this Provost’s Challenge proposal to serve as seed funds for externally sponsored funding:

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS / NOTES: