Office of Research & Economic Development Internal Funding Programs

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Overview

The Research and Scholarship Development Grant (RSDG) is an underline internal funding program that accepts applications from all units except the College of Medicine. In 2024-25, five awards will be made of up to $25,000 each.

We have requested pre-proposals from applicants that will be reviewed in order to invite up to ten applicants to submit a full proposal. You are asked to consider the merit of the applications in light of the program guidelines and evaluation criteria provided below. Note that ten invited full proposals is a recommended quantity, and screeners may recommend fewer or more than that number depending on the quality of the pre-proposals.

Instructions to Reviewers

21 applications were received for the 2024-25 competition. The review includes five questions:

- conflict of interest disclosure;
- description of any conflict;
- recommendation whether the proposal should be considered for a full review;
- brief rationale for your recommendation;
- optional applicant feedback for any constructive comments you would like to pass along, particularly in the case of applicants who are not recommended for full review.

Our target is to invite ten proposals to the full review stage; however, you are not required to select exactly ten if you find that either fewer or more proposals merit a full review. You should reference the pre-proposal instructions and evaluation criteria (below) before reading the applications. You should read through all the applications before submitting any reviews. Note that the evaluation criteria are only used for Stage 2 scoring; you are not required to report any criteria scores or ranks. The criteria are provided for your reference.

For **conflict of interest**, our general guidelines for internal reviews are that simply being a member of the same department does not automatically disallow a review. Current close collaboration, such

REVIEW DEADLINE

November 3, 2024 @ 11:59pm

HOW TO DOWNLOAD

Log in to InfoReady at https://southalabama.infoready4.com/.

Under the "Reviews" tab is a button that allows you to "Download All Unreviewed Applications."

USE THE INSTRUCTIONS & EVALUATION CRITERIA

Prior to reviewing, consult the pre-proposal instructions and evaluation criteria included in this document.

SUBMIT REVIEWS ONLINE

Reviews should be submitted for each proposal in InfoReady.

as being co-PIs on a proposal, or being longtime close collaborators, are disqualifying conflicts in many cases. The same goes for any kind of shared financial interest, either professional or personal, as well as personal relationships such as marriage or kinship. If you have any questions about what constitutes a conflict of interest for the purposes of this competition, please contact ajordan@southalabama.edu or 251.460.6507.

As for comments to be returned to applicants, extensive feedback is not expected, although in the spirit of faculty development and collegiality a few lines of feedback would be welcome for those who are not recommended for a full review.

Pre-Proposal Instructions

LENGTH: One page for the narrative, and an additional one page for a draft budget. As long as applicants did not exceed two pages total, they were not declined for exceeding more than one page for their narrative.

CONTENT: In at least three paragraphs, briefly address the required components of the full project description as given below: significance and goals; methodology; and timeline and expected outcomes. You will need to both use accessible language that an educated non-expert can understand, and include enough detail that reviewers (who will be faculty from across the university) can assess the project's potential.

FULL PROPOSAL PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The project description should not exceed three pages. The research/scholarly project description should contain at least the following in three separate sections:

> *a. The significance of the project relative to research/scholarly activities in the field stated in language that can be understood by an educated non-expert. This is particularly important because the interdisciplinary review panel is comprised of faculty from across the university. Applicants who do not adhere to this direction typically receive lower scores from the panel. Questions to address include: What is the current understanding in the field? How does the proposed work improve or extend the current understanding of the field? What is innovative about the proposed project?*

> *b. Define the specific goals/aims of the project, the timeline for achieving the goals/aims (include milestones) and expected outcomes - discovery, product and dissemination.*

> *c. Clearly describe the plan of work and the approach/methodology (experimental, scholarly, analytical, as appropriate) to be used.*

BUDGET: In no more than one page, provide a draft budget and brief narrative justification for your project expenses.

SUPPLEMENTARY DOCUMENTS: No additional documents are required.

Evaluation Criteria (for use in Stage 2 reviews)

INTELLECTUAL MERIT: To what extent do the proposed activities suggest and explore creative, original, or potentially transformative concepts? What is the potential for the proposed activity to advance knowledge and understanding within the field or across different fields?

1 = Excellent. Certain potential; exceptionally creative, original and/or transformative.

2 = Very Good. Very likely potential; very creative, original and/or transformative.

3 = Good. Satisfactory potential; creative, original and/or transformative.

4 = Fair. Low potential; creative, original and/or transformative elements are lacking.

5 = Poor. No potential; not creative, original and/or transformative.

PERSONNEL AND ENVIRONMENT: Is the individual and/or the team qualified to conduct the proposed activities? Are resources and/or equipment necessary to complete the project available?

1 = Exceptional. Exceptional qualifications, excellent resources.

2 = Good. Well-qualified, significant resources.

3 = Satisfactory. Suitably qualified, adequate resources.

4 = Less than Minimal. Under qualified, not adequately resourced.

5 = None. Not qualified, no resources.

OUTCOMES AND POTENTIAL FOR EXTERNAL FUNDING: Are demonstrable outcomes clearly defined and a timeline, with milestones, provided? Has the PI identified potential sources of external support and presented a plan for securing external support?

1 = Excellent. Demonstrable outcomes, clear timeline with defined and reasonable milestones; external sources of funding pursued/planned.

2 = Very Good. Defined outcomes, clear timeline with milestones; external sources of funding identified.

3 = Good. Discernable outcomes, timeline with milestones, external sources of funding discussed.

4 = Fair. Outcomes discussed, timeline presented, brief/incomplete discussion of plans to seek external sources of funding.

5 = Poor. No outcomes or timeline presented, no mention of plans to seek external funding.

QUALITY OF PROPOSAL DOCUMENT: Is the plan for carrying out the proposed activities and the approach/methodology well-reasoned? Is the proposal well-written and organized? Is the rational or driving hypothesis compelling? Is the budget appropriate for the proposed activities?

1 = Excellent. Great organization, compelling presentation, convincing methodology, no spelling/grammatical errors, tight work-scope to budget mapping.

2 = Very Good. Organized, well – reasoned and logical, very reasonable methodology, minor spelling/grammatical errors, tight work-scope to budget mapping.

3 = Good. Somewhat organized, reason and logic are discernable but could be better; methodology is suitable, several spelling/grammatical errors, loose/undefined work-scope to budget mapping.

4 = Fair. Disorganized, reason and logic are not discernable; methodology is confusing, distracting spelling/grammatical errors, budget documentation is confusing.

5 = Poor. Not organized, no logical presentation, methodology not presented or not suitable, unacceptable spelling/grammatical errors, unacceptable budget or no budget documents presented.

OVERALL RANK: Unlike the previous four review categories that ask you to consider the merits of the individual proposal, "Overall Rank" asks you to consider the proposal in relation to the other applications in the pool. You are asked to provide a UNIQUE RANK order for each application, with 1 being the strongest. Your rank should be based on a holistic evaluation of a proposal's quality, relative to the other applications you have reviewed. While you are not being asked to consider a specific set of criteria for rank, you should have a rationale for your ranking that you are prepared to discuss at the review panel meeting. Again, each application should have a UNIQUE RANK ordered from 1-10; *these are NOT scores*. There should be no 'ties' between applicants, e.g. for the number one spot.