

TEXAS SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY

RESEARCH SEED GRANT GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

INTRODUCTION

The Office of Research is prepared to receive Seed Grant applications/proposals for the current fiscal year. Texas Southern University is classified as a research-intensive institution by the Carnegie Foundation. Characteristically, seed grant funds are geared towards meeting the strategic goals of the university as well as the research goals of each college or school.

Priority this funding year will be given to meritorious proposals that demonstrate excellence in conceptual approach, investigative depth, and scholarly content. Proposed research should contribute to the acquisition of knowledge within the investigator's field, college or school, and enhance the profile of the Texas Southern University's research portfolio.

INSTITUTIONAL GOALS

The institutional goals for the Research Seed Grant awards are to:

1. Support research projects that enhance discovery and lead to the acquisition of cutting-edge knowledge addressing national, university and/or local community issues;
2. Encourage the refinement of research methods and techniques necessary to develop projects and proposals that attract support from external funding agencies; and
3. Increase the production of research-based academic scholarship in the form of referred books, journal articles, professional papers, juried artistic productions, or other peer-approved format.

TECHNICAL REVIEW CRITERIA

1. Proposals must be prepared and submitted according to established guidelines and procedures.
2. Applications should be submitted to the Department of Research Enhancement and Regulatory Services in the Office of Research, which will forward them to the college or school's Research Advisory Committee.
3. Proposals must include all supporting documents; incomplete proposals will not be reviewed.
4. All required signatures must be original on at least one copy of the submitted proposal.

5. Proposals at the higher funding level (\$25,000) will be evaluated by external reviewers while those requesting funding at the lower level (\$10,000 - \$15,000) will be forwarded to internal peer reviewers.
6. Texas Southern University is not obligated to pay for research-related costs incurred prior to a Seed Grant award. Awards and levels of funding are contingent upon funds availability.

ACADEMIC REVIEW CRITERIA

As stated above, priority will be given to projects with direct relevance to the University's mission and strategic goals. Proposals will therefore be reviewed according to the following academic criteria:

1. Alignment of the proposed project's theme with the institutional priorities outlined in the current application/request for proposals (RFP).
2. Soundness of the proposed research's description, which should identify specific goals, project significance, measurable outcomes, and contribution to the field.
3. Soundness of the proposed project's implementation and assessment plans.
4. Feasibility of the proposed research as it relates to investigator expertise and experience.

Proposals will be assigned to reviewers knowledgeable in the proposed subject area to the greatest extent possible. In the event that reviewers are not experts in your specific sub-specialty, provide descriptions that would be lucid to general scholars in your discipline.

FUNDING CATEGORIES AND AMOUNTS

Faculty must choose a funding category and submit one application only to the Department of Research Enhancement and Regulatory Services.

- 1. up to \$25,000** Proposals funded at this level possess strong intellectual merit and a high potential for additional funding by external agencies. Upon completion of the funded Seed Grant project, awardees must submit a proposal related to the Seed Grant project to an identified external funding agency. Awardees of funding at this level must also submit an article to a peer-reviewed journal for publication or book prospectus to an academic or trade publisher.

2. up to \$15,000

Proposals funded at this level possess strong intellectual merit and a high potential for publication as a scholarly article, book chapter, chapbook, performance, or other peer-reviewable format. Upon completion of the Seed Grant funding period, awardees should complete a publishable work based on the Seed Grant project and submit it to the professional journal or publisher identified in the Seed Grant proposal. Moreover, awardees must commit to exploring additional funding from an external agency for an extended or subsequent research project.

ELIGIBILITY

Individuals who apply for funds through the Office of Research must meet the following criteria:

1. Applicants must hold faculty status and be employed on a full-time basis at Texas Southern University. Research faculty members are eligible to apply for a seed grant, but priority will be given to tenured and tenure-track faculty.
2. Previous awardees must have submitted all required progress and final reports for seed grants, travel grants or start-up fund grant projects prior to the release of the current RFP. Incomplete, hastily prepared, or insufficient reports are not acceptable and will result in ineligibility.
3. Persons ineligible for Seed Grant awards include the following:
 - a. Individuals holding externally funded research grants (as PI[®])
 - b. Visiting faculty members
 - c. Postdoctoral employees
 - d. Research associates
 - e. Research assistants
 - f. Visiting scientists
 - g. Faculty members who have previously received two Texas Southern University Seed Grants at the lower funding category but have not submitted proposals for external funding or published manuscripts.
 - h. Faculty members who have received a seed grant in the higher category but who have not demonstrated substantial progress towards acquiring external funding or produced evidence of a substantial number of publications.

[PI[®] refers to the primary recipient of a grant; this includes situations involving multiple PIs. A coPI is not necessarily ineligible, but the proposed seed grant project from a coPI on an externally-funded proposal must be distinct from the research being conducted under some other form of funding. The proposed project cannot overlap that of the grant on which he/she is a coPI.]

GRANTEE RESPONSIBILITY

The grantee is responsible for carrying out the activity as described in the grant proposal and for fiscal accountability within the terms of the budget. The grantee should become acquainted with all required procedures, especially those relating to the deadline for the obligation and expenditure of funds.

FISCAL AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY

Procedures for Seed Grant expenditures and accounting are governed by the same regulation as all other university budgets in which state funds are involved. The grantee assumes full responsibility for authorizing only those budget item expenditures provided for within the amounts and categories specified in the budget.

GRANT PERIOD

Grant expenditures may be authorized beginning with the first day of the grant period. 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 that are unencumbered or unexpended at the close of the grant period will be returned to the general research and development account. Except under extenuating circumstances, extension of an award beyond the performance period of the grant cannot be made. Extension for extenuating circumstances only can be requested from the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs and Research

GRANT REVOCATION

The Research Advisory Council may revoke a Seed Grant for cause. Such revocation shall not affect any legitimate commitment that had become firm prior to the effective date of revocation.

GRANT RELEASE

The Seed Grant award may be released by the grantee in whole or in part. Such release should be requested as soon as possible by the grantee following his/her decision to abandon the proposed activity.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PROPOSAL PREPARATION & SUBMISSION

1. Application forms for seed grants are located on the Department of Research Enhancement and Regulatory Services (DRERS) website:
http://www.tsu.edu/About/Administration/Division_of_Academic_Affairs_and_Research/research/res-development-grants.php

2. Specify the amount requested as Category 1--\$25,000 or Category 2--\$10,000-15,000.
3. Applicant name should be typed at the top of each page.
4. Proposal outline
 - A. **PROPOSAL COVER PAGE** (found on RERS website) The cover sheet of at least one proposal copy must contain original signatures.
 - B. **PROJECT SUMMARY** (one page or less)
Include a self-contained description of the activity that would result if the proposal is funded. Write in the third-person and include a statement of objectives and methods to be employed. Clearly address in separate statements the intellectual merit and broader impacts: Proposals that do not conform to this format will be administratively withdrawn.
 - C. **TABLE OF CONTENTS**
 - D. **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**
 - i. **RESULTS FROM PRIOR SEED GRANT OR STARTUP FUND SUPPORT**
Must be included for any PI or co-PI that was funded within the past 5 years. Project title, amount and period of support must be included. Summarize the results of completed work to date and resulting publications or external awards.
 - ii. **INTRODUCTION**
Provide a basic but thorough introduction to your subject. State the overall goal and rationale. What is lacking? Provide background, significance/need, and preliminary data. Additionally, the applicant should state the importance of the project to the overall strategic goals of the university and that of the respective school/center.
 - iii. **PROJECT PLAN**
This section should state the specific aims/objectives and deliverables and proposed activities. Provide enough information on facilities and resources as well as the personnel and the expertise. In addition, specific information should be provided on (1) Methods/activities (2) Expected Results/Deliverables (3) Limitations and alternatives; and (4) Timeline/Resources (if needed).
 - iv. **MANAGEMENT PLAN** – for projects with PI and coPI(s)
Detail how the project will be managed. The PI is responsible overall for the project. However, specific roles for PI, co-PI(s) and senior personnel should be outlined. Include activities, persons responsible and timeline. Note how the project will be sustained and/or extended after the Seed Grant funding period ends.
 - v. **EVALUATION/ ASSESSMENT PLAN**
Be sure to include details about how the project and its objectives will be evaluated and how results will be analyzed.

- vi. Note how results be broadly disseminated—i.e., professional conferences, papers, special seminars, etc.

E. BUDGET (Form on Research Enhancement and Compliance Service Website)

i. BUDGET JUSTIFICATION

This section should include a detailed description of all costs.

This includes but is not limited to travel, lodging, meals, registration fees, equipment, and supplies. Also include a detailed explanation of the requested amounts and some indication of available funds from other resources.

Please note that

- a. *Reproduction or secretarial services that are normally provided by the university is not to be included in proposal budgets; and*
- b. *Seed grants are not designed to fund student stipends. A request for student support will only be granted when strongly justified--and only then for undergraduate students.*

F. PENDING SUPPORT (IF APPLICABLE)

G. FACILITIES, EQUIPMENT AND OTHER RESOURCES

H. HUMAN SUBJECTS (IF APPLICABLE)

I. VERTEBRATE ANIMALS (IF APPLICABLE)

J. CONSULTANT ARRANGEMENTS (IF APPLICABLE)

K. BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES (2 pages or less)

L. REFERENCES CITED (use consistent style – APA, IEEE, Chicago, MLA, etc.)

M. Attachments: *All documentation supporting the proposal including proof of faculty status must be submitted with the proposal application.*

REVIEW PROCESS

The application will be initially reviewed by Office of Research grant developers and then by the Research Advisory Committee in each college/school. Eligible and meritorious proposals will be recommended for further peer review by at least three (3) individuals. Proposals in the higher funding category (\$25,000) will be reviewed externally from the pool of experts around the nation while proposals in the lower category (up to \$15,000) will be reviewed by the University Research Committee or any number of a select group of *ad hoc* reviewers from within the University. Following the initial review process, the Department of Research Enhancement and Regulatory Services in consultation with the Research Advisory Council will provide the scores and make award recommendations to the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs and Research, who will make the final decision on the number of awards and the level of funding for successful applications.

NOTIFICATION OF AWARDS

The Provost/ Vice President of Academic Affairs and Research will inform applicants of the outcomes. Funded applicants will be sent a package of materials explaining the procedures

that must be followed in implementing the award along with the grant agreement and approved budget. In addition, funded applicants will attend a mandatory seminar on grants management at Texas Southern University.

SEED GRANT REPORTING

A follow-up seed grant progress report and final report must be submitted on dates specified in the grant agreement. It is expected that the reports will provide information regarding grant implementation and the achievement of expected outcomes from the research.

REMINDER: Failure to submit the required follow-up reports to the Department of Research Enhancement and Regulatory Services will make grantee ineligible for future funding.