

FAIRLEIGH DICKINSON UNIVERSITY UNIVERSITY PROVOST'S SEED GRANT

Purpose

The University Provost (UP) Seed Grant Program at Fairleigh Dickinson University (FDU) seeks to cultivate faculty research that has potential for extramural support. The expectation is to advance the University's core principles through the development of ongoing, new and cross-disciplinary research initiatives that contribute to professional growth, collaborative models and educational excellence.

Research is defined as activities that will advance generalizable knowledge such as (a) scientific research grounded in logical and systematic investigation; and (b) research that investigates, acquires and expands a field of investigation based on observation, experience and perception.

Program Highlights/What Has Changed

The Seed Program competition now exclusively solicits *investigator-initiated* proposals that effectively convey (a) the potential strength of the research concept proposed, (b) the applicant's sustained commitment to seek and secure extramural sponsorship, and (c) the feasibility for conducting the research at the University. All of the following conditions must be met.

Investigator-initiated research is faculty-generated, centered within professional interests and expertise, and will expand upon the field of investigation. Remaining grounded in what you know best is a critical ingredient of success, especially for the new investigator with a relatively short track record.

Commitment The seed grant recipient is expected to make a long-term commitment to work with an external mentor as outlined below; prepare a full-scale extramural proposal to a nationally-recognized sponsor; subsequently evaluate the sponsor's critique and, if not initially funded, prepare a revised application for the next available application cycle. The entire process may take 12-18 months, and thus could extend beyond the funding period of the seed grant.

Mentorship is a new component of the revised UP Seed Grant Program. The seed grant committee will identify an external mentor or evaluate the applicant's recommendation for mentorship. The individual must have research expertise and successful grant-writing experience in an appropriate discipline and will be paired with the seed grant recipient. The mentor will offer guidance, advice and reasonable editorial support for drafting a full-scale extramural research proposal. The awardee must adhere to documented mentorship activities over the course of the funded period, and may, if they wish, suggest names of appropriate mentors in their application.

Faculty Eligibility All full-time tenured and tenure-track faculty are eligible to apply, with the exception of the faculty members serving on the Seed Grant Committee (who may apply in subsequent years if they are no longer serving on the committee). Junior tenure-track faculty are particularly encouraged. The most meritorious proposals will be considered for funding and the final recipients must provide a declaration of commitment to a sustained period of professional development that will extend beyond the period of the initial Seed grant through submission of research proposals for extramural funding.

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Special Conditions A proposal requires documented evidence of preliminary contact with a Program Officer (or equivalent) at an appropriate funding agency that will be targeted for subsequent external funding. This early communication is an opportunity for faculty researchers to discuss their research ideas with the technical divisions of sponsoring agencies, seek advice and determine whether a full proposal is within the scope and interests of the prospective sponsor. This procedure will substantiate that the specific aims proposed are consistent with the sponsor's mission-based, priority funding objectives, and is expected to improve chances for success. *As such, applicants must provide evidence in the form of emails or other documented evidence of such engagement as part of the proposal application.*

Peer-Review Proposals will be evaluated by an FDU committee of tenured faculty. Those considered *most meritorious* will be recommended for funding and a final award determination made by the University Provost. Success will be achieved through a dynamic partnership of tenured and tenure-track faculty with the guidance and support of independent external mentors; and measured through published achievements, and submission of grant proposals for extramural funding.

Funding The University Provost's Seed Grant program will be announced each year *contingent upon the availability of funds*. The award will provide up to \$3,000 to be used for various project costs. In addition, it will provide resources to ensure some research protected time and cover a stipend for an assigned external mentor. Award funding may not be used for attendance at conferences, licensing of computers or other costs that encumber the University beyond the scope of work proposed. The start date of a funded proposal shall commence on July 1st with a duration of 12 months.

Compliance The investigator's conduct of research must adhere to research regulatory compliance as mandated by the University and government sponsors. At a minimum, seed grant recipients, including research students, must complete compliance training in *Responsible Conduct of Research* and undergo *Human Subject Protections* training as applicable.

How to Apply

The Seed proposal must include sufficient technical information to establish sound rationale for the research, convey the potential for developing a full-scale investigation, and sufficiently convince committee reviewers and the University Provost of the potential for success in ultimately attracting extramural support. The program also *encourages* interdisciplinary models, collaborations, and student research, although these are not expected to be the primary emphasis of the seed proposal or extramural proposal. *See below instructions on accessing the online application.*

Application Limits

A faculty member may submit no more than one application for each funding cycle. The program does not support funding for continuation of a previously funded project, nor will it support program development proposals. Only one revised application (i.e., a resubmission of a project previously proposed) will be accepted for further consideration, and the investigator/faculty member must specifically address any concerns, gaps or challenges previously expressed by peer reviewers.

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Proposal Narrative

Begin your proposal narrative by identifying your research area or topic of interest and conducting a preliminary literature review, identifying a prospective agency sponsor of national reputation, and communicate with the agency's Program Officer as stated above. You should provide documented evidence of your discussion with the Program Officer.

A proposal will incorporate each of the following sections as a technical narrative/research plan, and must conform to a single-spaced format and page limitation of 3 to 6 pages including figures and tables for sections 1 through 7. Excluded from the page limitation are references cited, biographical sketches, facilities and resources statement, and a budget and budget justification.

1. *Purpose of the Study*
Clearly articulate the purpose of the study with a well-conceived and organized research proposal, providing a straightforward formulation of your research inquiry. Be sure to state your particular emphasis.
2. *Significance of the Investigation*: Describe how the proposed activities address an important problem or barrier to progress in a field of investigation. Prior to getting started, a literature review is essential in gaining balanced and sufficient knowledge of the field. Describe how your research concept will impact the field of study, and advance knowledge.
3. *Specific Aims/Objectives*: Your specific aims are the major goals and objectives you propose to accomplish. Be sure all objectives relate directly to the central purpose of your proposal. They should be well conceived and organized.
4. *Approach or Methodology*: Describe the general research methods that relate directly to the specific aims you have proposed. Describe your hypothesis *if applicable* or central purpose and how your approach, methods and analyses will contribute to the successful conduct of this investigation.
5. *Investigator(s)*: State you/your collaborators' professional qualifications and capabilities and how these will contribute to the successful conduct of the research or program activities. Explain the investigator's experience, ability and commitment to successfully prepare a comprehensive extramural research proposal. *See below requirement for the Biographical Sketch.*
6. *Innovation*: Explain how the application challenges and seeks to shift current research by utilizing novel concepts, approaches, methodologies, instrumentation or interventions. State how innovative procedures are feasible and within your sphere of competencies. Indicate if the approach is novel to one field or if the proposed research has the potential to promote interdisciplinary and collaborative proposals.
7. *Environment*: Explain if there is access to appropriate resources and how conducting the research at FDU (i.e., academic environment, subject populations and/or collaborating with colleagues) will contribute to the probability of success. If external collaborations are proposed, state how the collaborative environment/resources will contribute to the success of the proposed research.

References Cited

Reference information is required and must include bibliographic citations only and not be used to provide parenthetical information.

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Biographical Sketch

A biographical sketch is required for the principal investigator and each proposed collaborator as part of the submission package.

Budget

In addition to the provision of mentorship and resources to ensure some research protected time, the maximum allowable costs are up to \$3,000 for materials, supplies, student research assistants and local transportation. Provide a detailed justification for each line item requested. Remember, that the budget is a financial representation of your proposal.

The Seed Grant Application

The [Seed Grant Application](#) and deadline for submission are updated toward the end of each calendar year. Please feel free to contact Jane Tsambis in the Grants and Sponsored Projects office at x2221 should you have additional questions. All applications must be received by 5 p.m. of the deadline indicated; incomplete and late applications will not be accepted.

Contact Information

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