

Application Guidelines

Introduction

The Office of Graduate Education and Research, through the Division of Sponsored Programs, provides support for faculty and professional librarians to engage in research, scholarship and creative activities. University Funded Scholarship (UFS) grants are competitively awarded based on the review and recommendations of the University Research Committee (URC).

Faculty may apply for either of the following two options:

- **Faculty Mini Grants** provide up to \$3,000 to support faculty scholarly and creative activities where resource needs are modest and in areas where opportunities for external funding are limited.
- **Major Project Awards** provide up to \$10,000 as seed grants for the purpose of obtaining significant external funding. Applicants must identify a targeted external funding agency in their application, and if funded, must agree to submit a proposal to the agency within one year of project completion.

The program's highest funding priority is to provide assistance for tenure-track faculty in establishing their research programs and the basis for future external support. The second priority is to support faculty who have maintained a productive research program and have continually sought external funding for their research. University-Funded Scholarship competitions are held semi-annually with submission deadlines in October and February.

Faculty and professional librarians may collaborate in joint efforts with other faculty and/or students when appropriate. Cross-departmental efforts are encouraged. Student participation in projects is encouraged and should be described in the Project Narrative, even if no funds are requested to support student employees.

Eligibility Criteria

1. Grants are awarded only to full-time, tenured or tenure track, teaching faculty, professional librarians, and administrative staff holding faculty rank. Visiting, part-time, and adjunct faculty and staff are not eligible to apply.
2. Research of any nature within an applicant's academic specialty may be funded in accordance with the Budget Guidelines section of this document. The Committee may reduce the maximum amount of grants in the event of budgetary deficiencies.
3. Academic degree work for faculty/staff, institutional research (i.e., research that represents a self-study of a department, college, or academic program), curriculum development, professional development, and proposals that emphasize student recruiting as a primary focus are not eligible for support.
4. Applicants are only eligible to receive one University-Funded Scholarship award within any twelve-month period. However, an applicant may also serve as a co-investigator on one other cross-departmental project.
5. If an applicant has been previously funded through a UFS program, a new proposal will be considered only if the final report for the previous award has been received.
6. Applicants who have received funding during the two previous consecutive years will not be eligible to apply again for a twelve-month period.
7. After an applicant has received a Major Project Award, a new proposal for UFS funding will only be considered if the applicant has submitted a proposal for external funding to the agency identified in the UFS-MPA proposal resulting, at least in part, from the Major Project Award.

Submission Deadline

Submission deadlines will be published annually and can be expected to be the third Monday in October and February. When the third Monday in October falls during fall break, the deadline date will be postponed until the following Monday. No exceptions will be made for the published deadlines. Completed proposals must be submitted online no later than 4:30 p.m. on the due date. The application submission system will no longer be available after this time. Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit applications prior to the deadline day.

Funding Timeline

All awarded projects are expected to be completed in approximately twelve months. For applications submitted by the October submission deadline, the grant period will begin on the date of the award notification and will expire on December 31 of the following year. For applications submitted by the February submission deadline, the grant period will begin on the date of the award notification and will expire on June 30 of the following year. Unexpended funds remaining at the project's expiration will be returned to the University Research Committee account.

Review Procedures

Proposals will be initially reviewed by Sponsored Programs staff. Applications submitted that are not in compliance with the guidelines will be returned to the applicant and not reviewed by the Committee. If an applicant wishes to revise a returned proposal, the resubmission must be completed by the submission deadline. Applicants who wish to have their applications pre-reviewed for conformity to the guidelines must request a review by Sponsored Programs at least five business days in advance of the submission deadline. Changes cannot be accepted after the deadline.

Applications determined to be in compliance with the guidelines will be sent for endorsement by the applicant's department chair and then forwarded to members of the University Research Committee, who will recommend funding based on the evaluation criteria and the amount of funds available. Reviewer comments will be returned to all applicants. Applicants who are not selected for funding are encouraged to use reviewer comments to guide revisions for resubmission.

During the review process, the Committee may request additional information from the applicant to enhance the review or may seek advice from other scholars in the applicant's field.

Formatting Requirements

The Application Template is formatted with 0.5" margins and twelve point Arial font and must not be altered by applicants. The narrative section must be double-spaced with twelve-point Arial font. Applicants are required to ensure that any text copied and pasted into the Application Template is formatted in compliance with these guidelines. The Application Template specifies page limits for individual sections as explained in the following section. There are no exceptions to these limits.

Application Procedures

To apply, applicants must submit all application materials online, including the Application Template (which includes Items I-VI below). One additional file of appendices is allowed in accordance with the instructions below (Item VII). Item VIII applies only for revisions to previously submitted applications. No handwritten copy will be reviewed (including forms).

To submit an application online, applicants are required to log in to the [InfoReady Review System](#). From the home page, applicants must select the "University-Funded Scholarship Grant Application" competition and then click "Apply" from the right sidebar. This competition will only be listed when the application window is open for new submissions and will not appear after 4:30

PM on the deadline day. Applicants must log in to the system using their ECU credentials (user name and password, not email address), complete basic information, upload the Application Template and other required files, and click Submit. Applicants will receive an email from the system confirming receipt of their submission. Applicants will also receive an email to notify them whether the application has been accepted or declined following the initial compliance review. Applicants whose applications are declined may revise and resubmit their applications, but must do so by 4:30 PM on the deadline day. Applicants are encouraged to submit early.

Proposal Components:

Item I. Application Cover Page: The application cover page includes general information about the applicant and the research project and requires a project summary. Applicants for Major Project Awards must identify an external funding agency and program to be targeted for future support.

Item II. Review of Applicant Funding and Past Productivity: This form requires information on the results of previous grants from the University Research Committee, if applicable, and attempts to secure external funding. This form is required for all proposals, regardless of whether the applicant has previously applied for UFS awards or external funds. The form provided must be used and may not be altered. One form is required per applicant. For projects that include Co-PIs, this form must be copied for each.

Item III. Project Narrative: The narrative section must be double-spaced with twelve-point Arial font. The narrative is limited to six (6) pages for Mini Grant applicants and ten (10) pages for Major Project Award applicants. Applicants are required to ensure that any text copied and pasted into the Application Template is in compliance with the formatting requirements.

The narrative constitutes the principal basis for judging the merit of the proposed project. As the Committee is interdisciplinary in membership, applicants are expected to ensure that the narrative can be understood by a lay audience and should avoid using professional jargon. The narrative must include a clear and concise presentation of sections A-D below in the order indicated. Subheadings must be clearly labeled. The Project Narrative is worth a total of 90 points. An additional 10 points may be earned from the Detailed Budget.

A. Introduction and Background (20 points)

- Provide an overview of research project or creative activity, including a clear statement of the problem and the objectives of the proposed project
- Describe the background of the project, including an appropriate literature review
- Justify the significance of the research or creative activity to the discipline

B. Project Description (45 points)

- Describe the goals and objectives of the project
- Provide a detailed description of project activities
- Justify how the project's design is appropriate to meet the project's objectives

C. Management Plan (15 points)

- Describe the experience and expertise of the applicant and the involvement of undergraduate students, graduate assistants, and /or co-researchers
- Demonstrate the adequacy of the management of the project, including available

- time, facilities, equipment, and other resources
- Provide a timeline that details the scope and sequence of the project

D. Utilization of Project Findings (10 points)

- Describe a plan for the dissemination of findings, through presentations at professional meetings, publications in scholarly journals, or the pursuit of external funding to expand and/or continue research in the research area.
- Applicants for Major Project Awards must also describe a plan for applying to the funding agency named on the cover page of the application, including how UFS funding will increase their competitiveness in doing so.

Item IV. Bibliography: The bibliography is limited to one page of current and/or most relevant literature and may be single- or double-spaced.

Item V. Biographical Sketch: The form provided must be used and may not be altered. The Biographical Sketch is limited to two pages. One form is required per applicant. For projects that include Co-PIs, this form must be copied for each.

Item VI. Detailed Budget Form: The form provided must be used and may not be altered. Please see the details below for descriptions of budget categories and allowable costs.

Budget Guidelines

Mini Grants are limited to a total of \$3,000, and Major Project Awards are limited to a total of \$10,000. Costs may be requested only in the categories outlined below, subject to the limitations and restrictions noted.

1. **Student Wages:** Funds may be requested for undergraduate student workers at a rate of up to \$9 per hour and/or for graduate student workers at a rate of up to \$12 per hour. All hiring of student workers must be in compliance with University policies governing student employment. Funds may not be used to hire part-time or other employees.
2. **Fringe Benefits:** If student wages are requested in the budget, student benefits must be included at the [current rate](#).
3. **Travel:** Travel costs must be requested at the current University mileage and per diem rates, which are available [online](#). Only travel necessary for the completion of the project will be supported. Funds for conference travel, professional memberships, or conference fees will not be funded.
4. **Supplies:** Supplies costs are restricted to consumable items necessary for carrying out the proposed project that are not available from other sources (i.e., department, college, etc.).
5. **Equipment** (allowable only for Major Project Awards): Because of the high cost and the fact that the program assumes that the requesting department has adequate facilities to conduct the research, requests for equipment (capital items in excess of \$5,000) are generally not supported. Exceptions will be made in cases where the applicant can demonstrate that the equipment is essential to the project and the department and/or college is willing to commit to cost sharing of 2:1 (\$2 in department and/or college funds for each \$1 requested through the UFS program).

Equipment remaining after the completion and/or termination of any project financed with a University-Funded Scholarship grant becomes the property of EKU for use in the originating department. A signed letter from the department chair and/or dean must be included with the application if cost share is committed, and the organization code from which the funds are committed must be identified in the letter.

6. **Other Costs:** Other costs may include non-capital equipment, software, and other items necessary to conduct the project that are not available from other university sources (i.e., department, college, etc.). Costs requested in this category must be itemized and well-justified.

The Detailed Budget Form requires an explanation of all costs included in the budget. Budgets at or near the cap that do not include sufficient justification will receive additional scrutiny.

Unallowable Costs: Requests for faculty or staff salaries, general purpose items not necessary for the specific project (laptops, general computer software, etc.), payments to non-EKU consultants and collaborators, and travel or other costs for non-EKU consultants and collaborators cannot be funded through the University-Funded Scholarship Program.

Item VII. Appendices: Only the following items may be included as appendices and must be limited as specified.

1. Cost Share Commitment Letters – A one-page letter may be included from each individual committing cost share.
2. Data Collection Instruments (i.e., surveys) – All instruments to be used should be included without limitations on the number of pages.
3. Other relevant documents – Up to 5 pages of other documents (i.e., letters of support, equipment quotes, etc.) may be included.

Appendices may not be used to circumvent the page limitation for the project narrative, and appendices will not be considered in scoring the project narrative during the review process. The Appendices file must be one single PDF attachment. Do not submit spreadsheets of data or other files that are not formatted for printing.

Item VIII. Letter Addressing Reviewer Comments from Previous Submission: If the application is a resubmission of an application that was not approved for funding in a previous competition, a letter is required explaining how the applicant has considered comments in making revisions to the application.

A [sample application](#) is available online for applicants.

Compliance Requirements

Human Subjects: Any proposal that involves the collection of data from human subjects must receive approval from EKU's Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the Protection of Human Research Subjects. Evidence of IRB approval is required prior to the release of funds for approved projects. IRB application procedures are available [online](#).

Animal Subjects: Any proposal that involves the collection of data from animal subjects must be cleared by the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC). Evidence of IACUC approval is required prior to the release of funds for approved projects. IACUC application procedures are

available [online](#).

Patent and Copyright

The Patent and Copyright section of the Faculty and Staff Handbook determines research ownership rights, ownership of inventions, discoveries, and copyright materials.

Publications

The Committee expects that the results of the research will be published in a scholarly journal or presented at a professional meeting. In all cases, the researcher must acknowledge that support for the research was made available in whole or in part by the University-Funded Scholarship Program at Eastern Kentucky University.

Equipment

Equipment remaining after the completion of any project financed with a University-Funded Scholarship award becomes the property of ECU and is made available for continued use in the applicant's department.

Project Reporting

The grant recipient is required to account for all University-Funded Scholarship funds. The following reporting requirements are applicable to all University-Funded Scholarship awards.

1. All awarded projects are expected to be completed in approximately twelve months. For applications submitted by the October submission deadline, the grant period will begin on the date of the award and expire on December 31 of the following year. For applications submitted by the February submission deadline, the grant period will begin on the date of the award and expire on June 30 of the following year. Unexpended funds remaining at the project's expiration will be required to be returned to the University Research Committee account.
2. Requests for grant extensions will not be considered by the Committee unless extenuating circumstances have been documented and submitted. If the Committee votes that an extension is appropriate, an extension will be granted for a maximum of twelve months per grant. Only one extension per grant will be considered for approval. Requests for extensions of time must be submitted online with proper justification for the request. The request must be submitted no less than 30 days prior to the project's approved end date.
3. Requests for budget amendments must be submitted online. The Director of Sponsored Programs may approve budget amendment requests up to 10% of the total budget awarded by the University Research Committee. Requests for budget transfers exceeding 10% of the total budget awarded require the approval of the Associate Vice President for Research and are considered only in unusual circumstances where sufficient justification has been provided.
4. The Final Report must be submitted online to the University Research Committee no later than 90 days following the end of the project. The grant recipient is expected to include documentation for papers, publications, or presentations resulting from the research funded through the program.

Awardees who fail to comply with the above conditions will be automatically disqualified from receiving further funding through the University-Funded Scholarship Program until all requirements have been satisfied.