

University-Funded Scholarship Grants 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).

Eligible applicants may apply for either of the following two options:

- **Mini Grants** provide up to \$2,000 to support scholarly and creative activities where resource needs are modest and in areas where opportunities for external funding are limited.
- **Major Project Grants** provide up to \$8,000 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 a research program 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. Student participation and interdisciplinary collaboration are encouraged.

University-Funded Scholarship competitions are held semi-annually with submission deadlines in September and February. At least half of the program's annual funding allotment is reserved for the spring competition. Applicants not funded in the fall competition may reapply in the spring.

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. Academic degree work for faculty/staff, institutional research (i.e., a study of a department, college, or academic program), curriculum development, service programs, and professional development are not eligible for support.
3. Applicants are only eligible to receive one University-Funded Scholarship award within any twelve-month period. An applicant may also serve as a co-investigator on one other cross-departmental project.
4. 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 submitted.
5. After an applicant has received a Major Project Grant, a new proposal for UFS funding will be considered only if the applicant has submitted a proposal for external funding as required by the Major Project Grant.

Submission Deadline

Submission deadlines will be published annually and can be expected to be the third Monday in September and February. No exceptions will be made for the published deadlines. Completed proposals must be submitted online no later than 4:30 PM on the due date. The application submission system will not be available after this time. Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit applications prior to the deadline day.

Funding Timeline

All funded projects are expected to be completed in approximately twelve months. For applications approved during the fall competition, the grant period will begin on the date of the award notification and

will expire on December 31 of the following year. For applications approved during the spring competition, 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 should submit their applications 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.

Application Procedures

To apply, applicants must submit all application materials online, including the completed Application Template (which includes Items I-V and Detailed Budget Template (Item VI). One additional file of appendices is allowed in accordance with the instructions (Item VII). Item VIII applies only for revisions to previously submitted applications. The Application Template is formatted with 0.5" margins and must not be altered by applicants. The narrative section must be double-spaced with eleven-point Tahoma 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.

Applications are accepted only through the [InfoReady Review System](#). From the home page, applicants must select the current 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 submissions and will not appear after 4:30 PM on the deadline day. Applicants must log in to the system using their EKU credentials (email address and password). The submission consists of a few basic information fields and attachment fields for the Application, Budget, and other files in accordance with the instructions. After clicking "Submit" at the bottom of the application screen, applicants will receive an email from the system confirming receipt of the 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. Applicants who submit on the deadline day should not expect an opportunity to revise and resubmit.

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 Grants 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 University-Funded Scholarship grants and attempts to secure external funding, if applicable. 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-applicants, this form must be copied for each.

Item III. Project Narrative: The narrative section must be double-spaced with eleven-point Tahoma font. The narrative is limited to six (6) pages for Mini Grant applicants and ten (10) pages for Major Project Grant 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 overview of research project or creative activity, including a clear statement of the problem and the objectives of the proposed project
 - Describe background of the project, including an appropriate literature review
 - Justify the significance of research or creative activity to discipline
- B. Project Description (45 points)
 - Describe goals and objectives of project
 - Provide detailed description of project activities
 - Justify how project design is appropriate to meet project objectives
- C. Management Plan (15 points)
 - Describe experience and expertise of applicant and involvement of undergraduate students, graduate assistants, and/or co-researchers
 - Demonstrate adequacy of project management, including available time, facilities, equipment, and other resources
 - Provide timeline that details scope and sequence of project
- D. Utilization of Project Findings (10 points)
 - Describe plan for dissemination of findings through presentations at professional meetings, publications in scholarly journals, or the pursuit of external funding to expand and/or continue research
 - Applicants for Major Project Grants must also describe a plan for applying to the funding opportunity identified on the cover page of the application, including how UFS funding will increase competitiveness in doing so.

Item IV. References: References are limited to those cited in the application 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-applicants, 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 Budget Guidelines section for descriptions of budget categories and allowable costs. The Detailed Budget Form requires an explanation of all costs included in the budget.

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 (required for applications that request funding for capital equipment).
2. Data Collection Instruments (i.e., surveys, interview protocols, etc.) – 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. Applicants may 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.

Budget Guidelines

Mini Grants are limited to a total of \$2,000, and Major Project Grants are limited to a total of \$8,000. Costs may be requested only in the categories outlined below, subject to the limitations and restrictions noted.

1. **Undergraduate Student Wages:** Funds may be requested for undergraduate student workers at a rate of up to \$10 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. **Graduate Assistant Summer Wages:** Summer wages may be requested for students who have held graduate research assistantships in the previous academic year and will continue as graduate students in the following academic year. The hourly wage for graduate assistants who will continue their research in the summer is \$16.47. Support may be requested for up to 20 hours per week for up to 10 summer weeks. Students do not receive tuition benefits during the summer.
3. **Fringe Benefits:** If student wages are requested in the budget, student benefits must be included at the [current rate](#).
4. **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. Conference travel and other expenses related to dissemination will not be funded.
5. **Supplies:** Supplies costs are restricted to consumable items necessary for carrying out the proposed project that are not available from other sources.
6. **Equipment** (allowable only for Major Project Grants): 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 may 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). Following project completion, equipment will remain property of ECU for use in the 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.
7. **Other Costs:** Other costs may include non-capital equipment, software, and other items necessary to conduct the project that are not available through the applicant's department or other university sources. Costs requested in this category must be itemized and well-justified.

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-ECU consultants and collaborators, and travel or other costs for non-ECU consultants and collaborators cannot be funded through the University-Funded Scholarship Program.

Research Compliance Requirements

Human Subjects: Any proposal that involves the collection of data from human subjects must receive approval from the 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 use of animal subjects must receive approval from 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](#).

Intellectual Property: [University Policy 4.4.2: Intellectual Property](#) governs ownership rights for inventions, discoveries, and copyrighted 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 support from the University-Funded Scholarship Program at Eastern Kentucky University.

Project Reporting

Grant recipients are 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 approved for the fall competition, the grant period will begin on the date of the award and expire on December 31 of the following year. For applications approved for the spring competition, 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 returned to the University Research Committee account.
2. Requests for grant extensions will not be considered unless extenuating circumstances have been documented in a formal request. An extension may be granted for a maximum of twelve months per grant. Only one extension per grant will be considered for approval. Requests for extensions must be submitted online no less than 30 days prior to the project's end date.
3. Requests for budget revisions 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 revisions exceeding 10% of the total budget awarded require the approval of the Dean of Graduate Education and Research and are considered only in unusual circumstances where sufficient justification has been provided.
4. A Final Report must be submitted online 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 reporting requirements will be automatically disqualified from received further funding through the University-Funded Scholarship Program until all requirements have been satisfied.