

University Small Research Grant Application Detail and Common Questions

What Is a USRG?

University Small Research Grants (USRG) are designed as **seed grants** to support **research, scholarly activity, and other creative efforts**. These small grants can cover graduate or undergraduate student hourly assistance (but not assistantships), small equipment, supplies, materials, services associated with the activity, computing for data processing, and travel to a site where the activity will occur (not travel to meetings or conferences). Computer software can be requested to support scholarly activities in USRG applications.

University Small Research Grants **do not** support sabbatical travel, construction, publication costs, faculty salaries, classified salaries, or graduate student assistantships. Proposals will not be accepted to reimburse costs incurred prior to the review of the grant. Awards will not be given for activities normally considered departmental responsibilities (e.g., designing a new curriculum, surveying alumni). Because the USRG program parallels the Agricultural Experiment Station (AES) and the Engineering Experiment Station (EES), eligibility is restricted to faculty **not** eligible for AES or EES support.

Who Can Apply and When?

New faculty (assistant professors and above) can apply each round of funding (spring and fall) for their first two years at KSU (a maximum of six proposals). Faculty members at KSU two years or more may apply every other round (i.e., there must be one intervening round between submissions).

It is expected that applicants will routinely seek outside support. Thus, lower priority is given to those who have previously received FDA and USRG awards but have not subsequently attempted to obtain extramural support. Applicants with extensive outside support also receive a lower priority.

Those most likely to receive support are:

1. new faculty members;
2. those in disciplines where outside support is minimal but who pursue available opportunities;
3. those shifting research fields or specialties who need to demonstrate mastery of new techniques or to conduct pilot projects that will enhance their chances of securing extramural funding; and
4. faculty who do not already have other commitments from K-State (e.g: startup funds).

If you seek support for travel that will occur before July 1, apply in the **fall** competition.

If you seek support for travel that will occur after June 30, apply in the **spring** competition.

Fall competition funds must be committed before the close of the current fiscal year (June 30).

Fall competition funds will be allocated after the beginning of the next fiscal year (July 1).

THE USRG APPLICATION Packet is accepted when it includes all of the following:

1. The original application form with appropriate signatures on page two;
2. Narrative (4 page maximum) in addition to short narrative on application form;
3. Detailed budget justification including pertinent pages from agency price quote(s);
4. Letter of support from your Department Head and/or Dean;
5. Short vita (2 page maximum);
6. Additional documentation to help explain your request; and
7. Three (3) additional copies of everything listed above (that's **FOUR** [4] sets).

Completed proposal must be submitted to:

**The Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, 102 Fairchild Hall
BEFORE 5:00 P.M. on the deadline date.**

Fall Deadline is the first Monday in October.

Spring Deadline is the first Monday in March.

Things to Remember When Filling Out the Form

Rank/Title – include your **FULL** name (applicant **MUST** be an Assistant Professor or above)

Email Address – include your **FULL** K-State E-id (ex: joe@ksu.edu)

Office Address - building name **AND** room number

Title – include **reason for travel**, conference name (if applicable), location and travel dates

Budget Itemization and Description - breakdown costs with explanation for expenditures (travel requested in USRG proposals must be justified in relation to the specific scholarly effort) awards are rarely made for projects within 100 miles of Manhattan unless the project requires many trips or overnight accommodations and the purpose served by the travel is well justified in the narrative. **Any proposal involving travel should include a travel agency itinerary detailing cost and travel plans** (if applicable).

Supplemental Funding - identify co-sponsors (including department) and itemize the amount of the contribution. The Committee looks favorably on projects that are co-sponsored (while recognizing that disciplines differ in their opportunities for additional funding). Funding from multiple sources is neither required to receive an award nor is it a guarantee of funding. If funds are requested from a co-sponsor and denied, this should be explained. If applicant uses personal funds to cover part of expenses, this can be listed. Personal funds is neither expected nor encouraged by the Committee.

List All Proposals prepared in the past 3 years by title, source and amount of request (include FDA, USRG and any extramural activity). Place all funded proposals in section 1. Pending and/or not funded proposals should appear in Section 2.

Give a brief, one paragraph Report on Status/Outcome of previously funded FDA or USRG awards received in the past 3 years on a separate page.

Abstract/Brief Description of Proposal should be limited to the space on the application form. Include a **separate narrative** (maximum 4 pages) so reviewers, unfamiliar with your discipline, can understand. Abstract clarity and conciseness are important.

Signatures: The applicant, the department head, any co-sponsors **and the dean of your college must sign the original proposal.** If an individual is unavailable for signature, please contact the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (785-532-6195) to make alternative arrangements.

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION

The Narrative: The applicant should write a separate narrative clearly stating the purposes, goals, and importance of the proposed activity. The narrative is NOT to exceed four (4) pages in length. Be aware that not all reviewers are completely familiar with the discipline or background of the proposed effort. In reviewing proposals, consideration is given to the importance of the proposed activity to the applicant's field, the applicant's ability to complete the work, and the probability that the work will lead to scholarly contributions such as publications, exhibitions, etc. Awards are contingent upon approval of the relevant University compliance committees for research involving vertebrate animals, biohazardous materials, radioactive materials, and/or humans, if appropriate.

USRG proposals requesting research travel should make clear why the research cannot be carried out without travel and should give evidence that proposed travel is cost-effective. Travel to meetings or conferences should be requested through the Faculty Development Awards program.

The Vita: A short curriculum vita should be provided that indicates the previous scholarly or creative work of the applicant pertinent to the proposed effort. Following federal funding agency guidelines, the length should be two pages or less. If there are particular past activities that require more extensive treatment, describe them in the narrative section.

What Happens Next?

Proposals are reviewed by a committee of experienced researchers composed of representatives from all colleges on a rotating basis. Three primary reviewers are assigned to each proposal. These reviewers give their recommendation to the committee and then the committee discusses the strengths and weaknesses of the proposal. Proposals are evaluated on scholarly merit, the qualifications of the applicant, and the potential that the proposed activity will lead to outside funding (in fields where such funding is available) or positive impact on work at K-State.

Once the committee reviews are complete, the information received is analyzed against the available budget. Decisions are made on whether the proposal will be funded and if so, the amount of the award by the Associate Vice President for Research. Decision letters and copies of the primary reviewers' comments are mailed to each applicant. If an award is given, a change-in-budget transaction is made and this information is forwarded to the departmental accountant. If the award is in the spring round, the money will be transferred at the beginning of the following fiscal year, after July 15th.

Prior to submitting your proposal:

- **Verify that application is complete and signed;**
- **Verify that all attachments are included; and**
- **Make sure your dean has evaluated, approved and signed the proposal.**

INCOMPLETE PROPOSALS WILL BE RETURNED.