Application information for University Small Research Grants program

Common questions

What is a University Small Research Grant?

A University Small Research Grant, or USRG, is designed as a seed grant to support small research projects, scholarly activity, and other creative efforts. These small grants can cover graduate student support, undergraduate student hourly assistance, small equipment, computer hardware/software, supplies, materials, services associated with the activity, computing for data processing and travel to a site where the activity will occur. Travel to meetings or conferences will not be covered. If a request duplicates existing university resources, the proposal should state why the existing resource is not adequate.

What items are NOT supported by USRG awards?

The USRG program does not support sabbatical travel, construction, publication costs, faculty salaries or classified salaries. 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 such as designing a new curriculum or surveying alumni. Travel to present your research at professional meetings is not supported under this program. If the meetings are outside the United States, you should instead apply to the Faculty Development Program to obtain funding to cover those expenses.

Who can apply and when?

To apply, faculty must be either tenure track or tenured and have at least some percentage of their appointment devoted to research. This percentage must be documented in the department head's letter. New faculty — assistant professors or equivalent and above — can apply for funding in both spring and fall for their first two years at K-State. Faculty members who have been at K-State for more than two years may apply every round; however, once funding is attained through either the FDA or USRG program, a faculty member is not eligible for the next round of funding. There must be at least one round between submissions.

For projects occurring **between January 1 and June 30,** faculty should apply in the fall competition. For projects occurring **between July 1 and December 31,** faculty should apply in the spring competition.

What if an opportunity arises outside the competition timeframe?

Out-of-round funding is not available for USRG proposals.

What are award approval contingencies?

An award may be termed as contingent upon certain criteria being met. A contingent award can be made if the research involves:

- Vertebrate animals with approval from the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee
- Bio‐hazardous or radioactive materials, with approval from the Institutional Biosafety Committee
- Human subjects — including surveys — with approval from the Institutional Review Board

While the university compliance committee will not have completed compliance approvals, proof of approval will be requested by the ORD office prior to release of funds.

What are the priorities of the USRG program?

Funding priority is given to an applicant who:

- Is a new faculty member.
- Is in a discipline where outside support is minimal but who is pursuing available opportunities.

- Is shifting research fields or specialties and needs to demonstrate mastery of new techniques.
- Will conduct pilot projects that will enhance their chances of securing extramural funding.
- Does not already have significant startup or other commitments from the university.

Applicants are expected to routinely seek outside support. Lower priority is given to previously funded USRG awardees who have not attempted to obtain extramural support. Applicants with extensive outside support also receive a lower priority.

What is the typical funding range?
The typical funding range is $2,000 to $4,500. Awards will not exceed $4,500.

How many URSG proposals can I submit to this current call for proposals?
Due to the limited funding available to this program, a PI may submit only one USRG proposal per competition. PIs should not submit to both the FDA and USRG programs in the same competition.

How are proposals reviewed?
Proposals are reviewed by a committee of experienced researchers representing a range of disciplines. Three primary reviewers are assigned to each proposal to review and score. Reviewers meet to discuss the proposals as a group. Proposals are then ranked in the session based on the final review assessment by the panel. The panel gives its funding recommendations to the Office of Research Development, which makes the final decision on who is funded and the level of funding, based on the funding available.

Proposals are evaluated on scholarly merit and qualifications of the applicant. The potential that the proposed activity will lead to outside funding — in fields where available — or positive impact on work at K-State will also be considered. A copy of the review form is available on the ORD website.

When will I know whether I have received an award?
Award notifications will be sent by December 1 for the fall round and by May 1 for the spring round.

What are the requirements of a USRG grant awardee?
By accepting the USRG funding, you agree to the following:
- The money awarded will be spent within a year as specified in your proposal. You cannot use the funds to conduct a different project than the one outlined in your submission.
- You will provide a short final report that summarizes the project that was carried out, outlines your results, and addresses the outcomes of your project and the benefits that you and K-State have, and will, receive from this funding. The report should also summarize the progress you have made in developing:
    o A proposal for an outside funding source,
    o A show/exhibit for your work,
    o Or a scholarly work for publication.
- You will serve on an FDA/USRG proposal review panel if asked.

You will also need to attach a copy of your expenditure summary or procurement card voucher (do not include supporting documentation).

Reports should be submitted on or before December 1 of the year following the award for fall submissions and on or before May 1 of the year following the award for spring submissions. PIs who do not submit this report are not eligible to receive funding from the FDA/USRG programs until this report is turned in.

If published or verbal information is communicated about your supported travel, you must cite the FDA program as the funding source.

Application Instructions

To be considered for funding, the following documentation MUST be included in your packet:

- **USRG cover sheet.**
- **Abstract** (1-page maximum).
- **Detailed budget with funding justification**: Round total requested to the nearest dollar. Include pertinent back up documentation (Expedia, Orbitz, etc.) as well as how you arrived at your costs if estimated—see guidance below.
- **Supplemental funding information**, if applicable.
- **Project timeline:** Note that projects should be completed in one year.
- **Narrative** (5-page maximum): Explain the significance of your project; include clearly stated goals and objectives as well an approach section. Also explain the benefits to you and K-State of completing the proposed project and how the project fits into your overall career/research plan; discuss your plans for:
  1. Obtaining extramural funding,
  2. Developing show or exhibition of your work,
  3. Or developing scholarly work for publication. See further guidance below.
- **Compliance approval letter (if already in place) <u>OR</u> plans for submitting compliance letter:** Needed only if working with human subjects, including surveys; animals; biohazards, including recombinant or synthetic nucleic acid molecules and infectious agents; or radioactive material. Denote plans to submit for approval in the project timeline. If using a survey, please attach it to the letter/plans.
- **Short vita** (2-page maximum)—see guidance below.
- **Funding history** (see guidance below): Include information for the past three years.
- **Department head's letter form.** Available on the ORD website.

Approval signatures for proposals will be generated using the Cayuse SP system. Before you sign and approve your proposal, you must complete seven sections of the Cayuse SP entry. Specifically, you will be responsible for completing these sections:

- Conflict of interest
- Regulatory compliance
- Export control
- Technology transfer/intellectual property
- Proposal abstract
- Location of sponsored activities
- Other consideration

All sections in Cayuse that should be completed are denoted by "(PI)". The Cayuse entry will be initiated by ORD when you have submitted your proposal with all of the above components.

<u>To submit:</u>
1. **Create ONE** PDF file of the items listed above, in the order given
2. **Email** the file as one attachment to: ord@k-state.edu
3. **Signatures will be generated by the Cayuse system**. You will receive an email from the system and should immediately log in through the link in the email and sign as PI. Your department head and dean will then receive emails requesting their signatures. Make sure your department head is aware that signing will be requested via Cayuse. **ORD must receive all signatures within a week of the proposal due date; otherwise, your proposal will be returned without review.** You will NOT receive a reminder to complete this task.

If you have any questions, email ORD or call 785-532-6195.

INCOMPLETE PROPOSALS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED

Further Guidance

1.**NARRATIVE** (5-page maximum)
This is your chance to explain why your proposal should be funded, how it will help you attain your goals, and how it will enhance your field of study at Kansas State University. Clearly state the purpose, goals and importance of your request. Make the proposed project relevant to your professional development at K-State. 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.

The review team consists of a diverse group of individuals from across campus. Make sure your proposal can be understood by faculty who may be reading out of their area of expertise but be assured they will apply the same academic rigor as to more familiar information. Proposals are reviewed for conceptualization, approach, methodology, reasoning, clarity and responsible use of resources.

2.   **FUNDING HISTORY**
Supply a list of all proposals (include extramural activity, FDA and USRG) prepared in the past three years. Separate the list into Funded and Pending/Not-Funded proposals. List each proposal by title, source, and amount requested. In a one-paragraph report, briefly explain the status/outcome of all FDA and USRG awards received.

3.   **BUDGET AND JUSTIFICATION**
Be sure to include an itemized budget with a justification that explains the expenditures and how the included costs were derived. Include information on hourly rates paid and documentation on costs of equipment that will be purchased, use fees, shipping etc. If you must travel to a research site, include Orbitz/Expedia printouts and use standardized mileage and per diem rates —
https://admin.ks.gov/offices/chief-financial-officer/travel-information-for-state-employees.

Identify any supplemental funding sources (e.g., co-sponsors, department, etc.) and itemize amount of contribution. The review committee looks favorably on projects that are co-sponsored, while recognizing that disciplines differ in their opportunities for additional funding and co-sponsorship. 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. Remember to have co-sponsor(s) sign the application form to document the commitment. If an applicant's department is providing funds, this should be documented in the department head's letter, if included. If an applicant uses personal funds to cover part of expenses, this can be listed. Personal funding is neither expected nor encouraged by the review committee.

4.   **THE VITA** (2-page maximum)
Provide a short curriculum vita that indicates the applicant's previous scholarly or creative work pertinent to the proposed effort. If particular past activities require more extensive treatment, describe them in the narrative section.

THE DEPARTMENT HEAD'S FORM
When fully completed, the upper part of the Department Head's Letter Form covers the information required for submission. In addition, the form includes a space for your department head to communicate his/her support for this project as well as what the significance of the project is in particular to you, your department and K-State.