

## Faculty Research and Creative Work Award Policy Guidelines & Application Procedures

The USI Foundation has made funds available to support faculty research and creative work at USI. The following policy guidelines serve USI faculty in seeking an award and the *Faculty Awards for Service, Teaching, and Research (FASTR) Committee* in selecting recipients. The FASTR Committee strongly recommends that faculty attend a training workshop conducted by the Sponsored Research or schedule an individual session before preparing a FRCWA proposal.

### A. PURPOSE of FRCWA

With these awards USI encourages and supports faculty scholarly activities. Full-time USI faculty are eligible to apply either individually or as a group. Proposals to initiate new basic or applied research or creative work, continue research or work in progress, or complete a project are eligible for funding. A record of successful research or creative work will be considered but is unnecessary to receive an award. Merit of the project will be the essential factor in the award decision.

Projects must be faculty research or scholarship in nature. Public service, teaching, and faculty development projects without a strong research or scholarship component will not be funded. This grant competition will use the following definitions of research and scholarship:

Research is "...a systematic investigation, including research development, testing and evaluation, designed to develop or contribute to generalized knowledge" (CFR 45§46.102(d)).

Scholarship may be defined as any activity "...of critical, systematic investigation in one or more fields and the submission of one's findings for criticism by professional peers and the public through published writings, lectures, or other modes of presentation." (Eric J. Ziolkowski, "Slouching Towards Scholardom: The Endangered American College," *College English*, 58, 5 (September 1996), 569.).

**Note:** While research involving students may be fundable, the emphasis must be on faculty research. While students can be involved in the project, they should not be conducting the project.

### B. PROPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS & CONTENT REQUIREMENTS

#### 1. Text, Font, & Format

Regardless of discipline, all proposals should be written in clear, non-technical language readily understood by an educated lay person. The objective of the project should be clear.

- a) Double-space the text using Times New Roman font no smaller than 11-point size; no smaller margins than 1 inch.
- b) Label each section. Paginate the document starting with the *Applicant Information as page one* and ending with the last page of the Project Design. (Use the *Application Cover Sheet* form to create the proposal. The second page of the form is formatted to begin with page number one.)
- c) Provide a running header on all pages stating investigator's name, proposal title, page number.

#### 2. Content and Page Order

The required elements for the proposal narrative, the order of the required sections, and the maximum number of pages allowed for each section follow (1 page = one side of one 8 ½ X 11 sheet of paper).

- a) APPLICATION COVER SHEET (1 page) (use form provided)
- b) NARRATIVE
  - i. APPLICANT INFORMATION (2 pages)
  - ii. PROJECT DESIGN (7 pages)
- c) BUDGET (1 page) and BUDGET JUSTIFICATION (1-2 pages) (use forms provided)
- d) PROPOSAL ATTACHMENTS (as needed)
- e) ADDITIONAL SUPPORT MATERIALS

## C. PROPOSAL

### 1. Narrative

- a) **Applicant Information (2 pages max.; this is page one of the proposal)**
  - i. **Statement of interest**—a paragraph introducing the applicant and proposal topic;
  - ii. **Experience**—a paragraph citing applicant’s qualifications for proposed project;
    - include academic background, research/other experience related to the proposal, related publications, presentations, reported results within the last 3 years (single-space entries; double-space between entries);
    - list of all internal and external proposals submitted the prior three years (cite project title, principal investigator if not applicant, sponsoring agency, submission date, status, and amount requested) [single-space entries; double-space between entries];
    - explain relationship between this proposal and other current proposals, funded or pending; and include a brief discussion of how this project fits into the applicant’s overall professional development plan.

**Note:** This section of the narrative is limited to TWO PAGES TOTAL, whether individual or group project. A short C.V. for each investigator may be included in the attachments.

- b) **Project Design (maximum 7 pages double spaced)**
  - i. **Introductory statement of the activity**—Provide a rationale for the project that defines its scope.
  - ii. **Background information**—Describe the history of the applicant’s concept for this project, the current status of the applicant’s research in this area, and a definition of terms needed to facilitate a lay reader’s understanding of the project.
  - iii. **Review of literature**—Provide a brief overview of the current literature available on this topic highlighting the most relevant references.
  - iv. **Specific goals and objectives**—Discuss the scope of the project, clearly stating the goals and objectives (measurable outcomes) of the project;
  - v. **Significance of problem or impact of goal addressed**—Discuss the benefit(s) to the applicant and the impact of the project on the applicant’s discipline, other disciplines, faculty, students, the university, the community, and beyond. While this project may not have significance for all these entities, show the value or consequence of having conducted the project.
  - vi. **Research methods & timeline**—Provide the work plan for the project. Include specific details regarding the research methods (including data analysis techniques) to be used, timetable, and feasibility of the research. For an emerging research design give sufficient details of the procedure to clarify the means of achieving the intended outcome.
  - vii. **Evaluation of expected outcomes & means of dissemination**—Describe plans for evaluating the success of the project and disseminating the expected results or

the information generated by the project. Include potential external funding sources for future related projects.

## 2. Budget and Budget Justification (2-3 pages—use forms provided)

### a) Budget

The goal of the budget section of the proposal is to identify the type and amount of funds required to carry out the project. Include all details necessary to understand the budget as it relates to the proposal. The connection between the budget items and their contribution to the proposed project should be clear. For the *Budget Form*, give total amounts for each category. Round up to the next whole dollar amount.

### Category Definitions

- *Salary & Wages*—Wages to pay someone to assist in this project (usually a student).
- *Materials & Supplies*—Office supplies, postage, software, laboratory supplies, books, etc. needed to complete the project.
- *Equipment*—Any piece of durable equipment.
- *Travel*—Any expenses directly related to travel—Airfare, lodging, mileage, per diem, etc. incurred during the time frame of the research project (includes dissemination).
- *Other*—Anything that does not fit into one of the above categories or categories listed on the *Budget Form*, such as rental or usage charges for equipment at another institution or payment to research subjects.

### b) Budget Justification

- i. Explain completely the amounts listed on the Budget Form.
- ii. Explain rationale for (i.e., “justify”) figures in budget itemization.
- iii. Name and explain the source(s) of any cost share contributions (in kind or cash) to the project.

**Note:** Keep in mind the following when preparing the Budget and Budget Justification.

- Provide for sufficient resources to carry out the project.
- Relate budget categories to project objectives. If an item is in the budget, discuss it in the proposal narrative; if it is in the proposal narrative, list and explain it in the budget.
- Explain in sufficient detail how the budget items were calculated and budget amounts justified.
- Identify the source for project funds not requested from this FRCWA grant.
- The following items are ineligible for FRCWA funding: *departmental curriculum development, institutional research, faculty salaries, public service and consulting services for other organizations.*

### c) Budget Stipulations and Regulations

- i. All requested budget items must conform to accepted University accounting policies and procedures.
- ii. All equipment, tangible materials, and books purchased on a grant are property of the University.
- iii. FRCWA funds may not be used to pay faculty salaries.
- iv. Mileage and per diem are based on current University rate.
- v. Student wages are based upon the current University hourly wage.

## 3. PROPOSAL ATTACHMENTS

Include the following required and optional materials as attachments.

- a) **Literature references** (*Required*. 1 page maximum. Use format standard for publishing in applicant's field.)
- b) **Documentation for external grants not submitted through SRO** (*Required if applicable*)
- c) **Short Curriculum Vitae** (*Optional but recommended*) (Max. 5 pages)
- d) **Appendix of related materials** (e.g., survey questions) (*Optional*)
- e) **Additional letter(s) of support from faculty or other agencies.** (*Optional but recommended if an outside agency is involved in any capacity.*)

#### 4. ADDITIONAL SUPPORT MATERIALS

Occasionally, a proposal can be strengthened by the inclusion of Additional Support Materials, including, but not limited to, the following types of information.

- a) Books or posters
- b) Examples of published material, such as copyrighted surveys, etc.
- c) Other items that would help the review committee evaluate the proposal, but may not be possible to provide electronically.

#### D. SUBMISSION

A complete proposal submission includes:

1. **Unbound signed original** (secured with paper clip or binder clip) consisting of the completed application cover sheet, the proposal narrative, the budget, and all proposal attachments.
2. **One electronic copy** complete except for signatures.
3. **Required/Optional Additional Support Materials packet.**
  - a) Place one set of *Additional Support Materials* in a large envelope and label with your name, department, date, and FRCWA proposal.
4. **Instructions for electronic submission:**
  - a) Send the electronic version of the proposal as two (or more) attachments to [usi1sro@usi.edu](mailto:usi1sro@usi.edu) by 4:30 P.M. on the Monday after Spring Break.
  - b) The proposal and budget forms should be separate attachments. Name the documents thus: *YRFRCWA LASTNAME F* and *YRBudget LASTNAME F*—e.g., "10FRCWA Smith J" and "10Budget Smith J."

**Note:** The original hard copy proposal including signatures must be submitted to SRO in order to be eligible for an award. The submission deadline is 4:30 P.M. the Monday after Spring Break to the Sponsored Research Office.

#### E. REVIEW CRITERIA

The FASTR Committee will evaluate all proposals meeting guidelines and assign them an order of priority, carefully evaluating compensation for travel, equipment, materials and supplies, and personnel. Awards may partially or fully fund a proposal. Academic Affairs will notify the applicants of award decision by letter one month after the application deadline. The Provost will base awards on the Committee's recommendations.

The FASTR Committee will evaluate proposals on the following criteria.

##### 1. Applicant's Qualifications

- a) How relevant is the applicant's academic background to conduct the project? If not, how thorough is the justification?
- b) How well does the applicant demonstrate productivity (publications, performances, presentations, past and/or present efforts to procure external funding, etc.), experience, and/or potential to implement the project as defined?

## **2. Proposal Background**

- a) How well does the proposal describe the history of the concept for the project?

## **3. Significance/Goals & Objectives**

- a) How well does the proposal show the significance of the project to the discipline and practice, the University, the community, and beyond?
- b) Does the proposal show the importance of the project to the applicant's scholarly goals?

## **4. Research Methods**

- a) How well does the proposal demonstrate that the project can be completed with the available resources and in the time specified (feasibility)?
- b) How clearly does the proposal describe a plan for development and implementation (e.g., development of creative design, or data collection and statistical analysis)?

## **5. Budget**

- a) How appropriate, accurate, and justified is the budget and use of resources?
- b) How reasonable does the budget seem for both the effort and anticipated results described?

## **6. Evaluation**

- a) How well are the expected outcomes described?
- b) How well does the proposal describe a plan to evaluate those outcomes?

## **7. Adherence to Format**

- c) To what extent does the proposal narrative adhere to the format described in the guidelines (page limits, type fonts, margins, running header, etc.)?
- d) How lucid is the text and how understandable is the language in which it is written?
- e) How accurate are the grammar and spelling?

## **F. FUNDING PRIORITIES**

**Priority I** *Supplies and expenses (e.g., postage, paper, photocopying), travel to research sites, and support services (student workers and clerical assistance).*

**Priority II** *Minor equipment (e.g., computer software and moderately priced hardware), consulting, professional services.*

**Priority III** *Travel to Disseminate creative work and results of research.*

## **G. FUNDING GUIDELINES**

### **1. Supplies and Expenses (Priority I)**

The cost of expendable supplies necessary to carry out a Faculty Research and Creative Work Award (FRCWA) project should be included in the estimated project costs. Cost estimates should also include the cost of required services performed on a reimbursable

basis by service elements of the University and the costs of services and supplies procured from sources outside the University. External procurements must be carried out in accordance with existing regulations governing University procurements.

**2. Travel to Site of Research or Creative Work (Priority I)**

The FRCWA budget may include expenses incurred to carry out the project. Travel to the site of a FRCWA project will be reimbursed in accordance with existing university travel regulations, although limited funds usually allow only partial per diem reimbursement.

**3. Support Services (Priority I)**

FRCWA monies may be used to compensate clerical staff and must be consistent with the level established for that individual by the University. Funds may be budgeted for the compensation of student workers, and research assistants may be employed in FRCWA. Students utilized in FRCWA projects must be employed through the University student employment system. Compensation for student workers must be consistent with the framework established by the University for student workers, with allowances being made as necessary for specialized types of skills, knowledge, and expertise required by the project.

**4. Minor Equipment (Priority II)**

Because of the limited funds available, FRCWA funds may not be used for the purchase of capital equipment. Minor equipment may be requested from FRCWA funds and will become the property of the University following the completion of the FRCWA project.

**5. Consulting and Professional Services (Priority II)**

Funding may be requested for consultation and professional services such as research design, statistical analysis, and translation.

**6. Travel to Disseminate Creative Work and Results of Research (Priority III)**

Supplemental travel funds to disseminate/present creative work or results of research to appropriate forums (including scholarly and professional conferences) may be requested, provided a specific forum is identified at the time the project cost estimate is prepared. Documentation that all other funding sources have been exhausted must accompany the request for supplemental travel monies. Travel will be reimbursed in accordance with existing university travel regulations.

**H. GRANT PROCEDURES & REQUIREMENTS**

**1. Start-up**

After receiving the award notification letter and copy of approved budget from the Academic Affairs, the recipient must work with the Special Funds Accountant to establish the grant account and budget categories before the start of the funding period; usually the dean of the applicant's college serves as fiscal agent.

**2. Final Reports**

One month after the close of the funding period an award recipient must submit one original and one electronic copy of the report to the Sponsored Research Office. The report must *describe the results of the work performed, detail an itemized budget of expenditures, and include a copy of any publications or reports generated by the project.* New proposals from a past recipient will not be considered if a report is overdue. (In unusual circumstances a recipient may apply for a funding period extension by

submitting a status report to the Committee via SRO. Contact the Chair of the Committee or the Sponsored Research Office for specific information. See <http://www.usi.edu/sro/frcwa.asp> for instructions.)

### **3. Interim Status Reports**

Faculty who have an open FRCWA account but whose final report is not past due when the next funding cycle begins must submit an interim status report to be eligible for future FRCWAs.

### **4. Publicity and Acknowledgements**

The Provost and the USI Foundation may publicize awards and results of projects. The recipient will acknowledge the USI Foundation when a funded proposal leads to presentation or publication of a paper, performance, or exhibition of creative work.

## **I. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

### **1. Conflicts of Interest**

For any FASTR Committee member to submit a FRCWA proposal would constitute a conflict of interest and is disallowed. FASTR Committee members may submit a proposal when their term has ended.

### **2. Financial Gains**

If a recipient received financial benefit as a direct result of the award, then the recipient may be required to reimburse the Faculty Research and Creative Work Fund the amount of the award. In addition, recipients must comply with University policies regarding intellectual property management and conflict of interest.

### **3. Alternate Funding Sources**

The Committee advises applicants to seek any available alternate funding in order to better leverage resources and document such requests in their FRCWA proposal. Proposals can be made to multiple sources for the same project. However, awards from multiple sources cannot fund the same items. When duplicate requests are made to multiple sources, the applicant must document the requests and describe a contingency plan in the event of receiving more than one award (e.g., request to FRCWA will be reduced by specific amount, etc.).

### **4. Calls for Proposals**

At the beginning of Fall and Spring semesters, the FASTR Committee will call for proposals. The policy guidelines and proposal outline are available online from the Sponsored Research website: [www.usi.edu/sro](http://www.usi.edu/sro).

### **5. Assistance with Proposal**

The Sponsored Research Office can assist faculty with the preparation of a proposal. Contact SRO at 465-1126.