



2026 Early Career Faculty Grant

Application Deadline: November 3, 2025, 4:30 p.m.

Scholarship, creativity, and engagement provide the intellectual foundation for faculty life at the University of Southern Indiana. To encourage and support early career faculty, the University provides research and scholarship funding through the Provost's Office. The Early Career Faculty Grant makes a limited number of grants up to \$5,000 each available for early career faculty to pursue promising research or creative and engagement projects for one summer.

Eligibility

1. Only full-time, tenure track faculty members within the first five years of tenure eligibility are eligible for this grant.
2. Faculty members are not allowed to teach during the summer of their grant. Teaching is permitted outside of the selected summer of the grant.
3. Faculty members are eligible for only one (1) Early Career Faculty Grant.
4. Applications for course development, faculty development, departmental curriculum development, institutional research, consulting, or public service activities are not eligible.
5. Applicants must be up to date on all reports from prior internal awards.

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

Grant Information and Restrictions

Up to \$5,000 to pursue promising research, creative, and engagement projects. Budgets can include faculty compensation/stipend for hours worked on the project based on actual salary, and/or for cost-reimbursable items such as travel, materials and supplies or student workers to assist with research—all cost reimbursable items for the grant (including work hours to be compensated) must occur within the summer grant period. Grant recipients are obligated to return to USI for at least one complete academic year of service following the term of their grant. Failure to do so will result in the grant recipient repaying the grant amount to USI.

Allowable Activities and Definition of Research

The Early Career Faculty Grant provides support only for faculty research projects. Research is broadly defined as all creative, critical, scholarly, and/or empirical activity that expands, clarifies, reorganizes, or develops knowledge or artistic perception. This definition of research includes the demonstration, implementation, application, and dissemination of research results.

Selection Process

Multiple grants up to \$5,000 may be awarded. We anticipate that there will always be more proposals submitted than can be funded. All requests for funding undergo a peer review process by the Faculty Awards for Service, Teaching, and Research Committee (FASTRC) of the Faculty Senate before final approval by the Provost. Proposals are assessed on the clarity of the project description and the extent to which the project appears to help the faculty member begin to establish a scholarly record at USI. Evidence for the latter condition can be made evident by the applicant clearly defining scholarly research goals during the project period and any additional material that supports the significance of the project to the faculty member's scholarly development. The review criteria listed below will also guide the proposal assessment. All final decisions regarding funding for the Early Career Faculty Grant will rest with the Provost.

Review Criteria

1. Scholarly significance to the field supported by in-text citations.
2. Clarity of objectives and project description.
3. Feasibility: the project can be completed or substantially advanced in the project period.
4. Importance to the applicant's program of scholarship.
5. The budget and the appropriateness of how the funds will be used.
6. Ability to complete the project within the summer and final report by December 14, 2026.

Deadlines

- Submit an **Intent to Apply for internal grant application** form to OSPR no later than **October 27, 2025**. This Qualtrics form can be found on the OSPR [website](#).
- Early Career Faculty Grant applications are due no later than **4:30 p.m. on November 3, 2025**, via CAYUSE 424. Only electronic submissions through CAYUSE will be accepted.
- Submit an updated summary/timeline of work accomplished on the project to their grant accountant within **one week** of the completion of the grant period.
- A final report is due to the Provost's Office and the Office of Sponsored Projects and Research (OSPR) by **December 14, 2026**.

Application Requirements

Please include all of the following items as part of the application:

1. **Project Description** (5-page limit, with 12-point font, single spaced)

Attach a project description in the documents section addressing the following four criteria:

- a. Document the **scholarly significance** of the project. Set the proposed project in the framework of other scholarship in the discipline and establish its importance and/or originality. Support with in-text citations.
 - b. **Describe the project.** Clearly explain the objectives of the proposed project, the methods you will use, and the expected outcomes. Use language easily understood by readers from other disciplines. Include in this section if you are applying for or receiving additional funds from other sources. If so, provide the name of the agency/program, and details on what part of the work and budget is included in other proposals and what will be funded by the Early Career Faculty Grant.
 - c. Describe how much of the project can be **completed or substantially advanced** with the available resources and within the time allowed. Demonstrate what aspects of the proposed project will be completed during the grant period. If you cannot complete the entire project during the summer grant period, explain why and state when you anticipate completing the project.
 - d. Explain the relationship of the proposed project to your **overall program of scholarship**. How does the project support your professional growth?
2. Complete the Research and Related (R&R) budget in CAYUSE detailing how the up to \$5,000 grant will be used. Find CAYUSE budget instructions and other CAYUSE resources [here](#).
 3. Attach a Budget Justification that supports the line-item budget. An example can be found [here](#) on the OSPR website.
 4. Attach Letter(s) of support/site approval from any organizations you will work with on the project

5. Attach a Short CV (2 page maximum) to highlight your experience related to this project).
6. Attach other related materials, surveys, focus group protocols, etc. that will be used for the project.

Application Submission Instructions

1. Submit an **Intent to Apply for internal grant application** form to OSPR no later than **October 27, 2025**. This Qualtrics form can be found on the OSPR [website](#).
2. Once OSPR has received the Intent to Apply notice, we will create the proposal file in CAYUSE. You will be notified by email that you have been added as a user to a proposal and can start filling in the application.
3. Access CAYUSE 424 through **myUSI** (my.usi.edu).
 - Use your USI credentials to log-in to **myUSI**
 - Search for the CAYUSE tool using the search bar at the top of the myUSI dashboard.
 - Click on “Cayuse” in the search results to open CAYUSE 424 and locate your project proposal shell.
4. Complete the R&R budget in CAYUSE detailing how the up to \$5,000 grant will be used. Find CAYUSE budget instructions and other CAYUSE resources [here](#).
5. Attach a Budget Justification that supports the line-item budget. The budget justification should be saved as a .pdf file and attached on page 3 of the R&R Budget in CAYUSE, section K. An example budget justification can be found on [this page](#) of the OSPR website.
6. Attach separate .pdf files for each of the following to the documents section under Proposal Summary in CAYUSE:
 1. Project Description (5 page maximum)
 2. Letter of support/site approval (if applicable)
 3. Short CV (2 page maximum)
 4. Other related materials

Refer to the [CAYUSE 424 resource page](#) on the OSPR website for more detailed instructions.

7. Submit the proposal for routing through CAYUSE 424 by the submission deadline noted above.

Note: To submit your proposal, you will need to approve the proposal in CAYUSE by checking the box next to your name in the routing and approval section. The CAYUSE 424 routing feature allows your department chair and dean to approve the proposal electronically following submission.

Budget Stipulations and Policies

- The amount requested should accurately reflect the cost of completing the project, up to a maximum of \$5,000.
- Grant funds may be used for the following:
 - Faculty compensation/stipend for hours worked on the project based on actual salary
 - Student workers
 - Consultant fees
 - *Materials & Supplies*: Office supplies, postage, software, laboratory supplies, books, etc. needed to complete the project.

- *Non-Capital Equipment*: Durable equipment with a unit price less than \$5,000.
- *Travel*: Use of funds for travel are subject to the current USI [travel policies](#), which are subject to change. At this time international travel will be approved on a case-by-case basis. In some instances, travel might be approved, and other trips might not be approved due to the country's travel warnings and restrictions.
- *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 or payment to research subjects.
- All requested budget items must conform to university accounting policies and procedures.
- All equipment, tangible materials, and books purchased on a grant are property of the University.
- Mileage and per diem are based on current University rates.
- Student wages are based upon the current University hourly wage ([see current rates here on the Human Resources website](#)). If the student worker is not enrolled in classes at the time of the work (such as during the summer), FICA must be included (7.65% of wages).

Policies and Regulations

University of Southern Indiana rules, regulations, and policies regarding the use of human subjects, animal care, biosafety, hazardous waste, radioactive materials, patents and copyrights, royalties and fees, as well as other appropriate University policies apply. Faculty are responsible for following the established University compliance procedures regarding these rules and regulations. Faculty may obtain additional information regarding these policies from the [Office of Sponsored Projects and Research](#) (OSPR). **All projects including human subjects must receive IRB approval prior to the start of data collection and before any funding will be released.**

Fiscal Regulations

The expenditure of funds from this program follows normal USI policies and procedures. Faculty compensation/stipends included in the grant will be paid upon completion of the grant period and following the receipt of the updated summary/timeline.

Notification

Applicants will receive notification of the status of their proposal no later than **February 9, 2026**.

Reporting Requirements

Recipients of the Early Career Faculty Grant are required to submit an updated summary/timeline of work accomplished on the project to their grant accountant within **one week** of the completion of the grant period. Faculty compensation/ stipends included in the project will not be processed until the updated summary/timeline is received.

A final report (1-2 pages maximum) or copy of the completed work will be due by **December 14, 2026**, to the Office of the Provost and the Office of Sponsored Projects and Research (OSPR). Recipients may be asked to present their research at a USI event.

Questions? Contact OSPR at sponsored.projects@usi.edu or view www.usi.edu/sponsored-projects.