

GENERAL RESEARCH FUND (GRF) GUIDELINES FOR COMPETITION

OVERVIEW

The General Research Fund was established by the Kansas Legislature in 1951 for the purpose of encouraging and supporting research at the university. The General Research Fund competition provides the opportunity for faculty from each school or college to submit proposals that focus on furthering their scholarly research.

Each GRF entity appoints a Review Committee to provide peer review of funding proposals and select awardees. Each entity may choose to use these funds in the most appropriate manner to further research in their entity. Individual awards may be made to faculty investigators. Funds may also be used to increase support for graduate students or may be allocated in other ways to further research. Entities are encouraged to consider ways to allow for collaborative research.

I. ELIGIBILITY

Eligible: All tenure or tenure track faculty members of the departments on the Lawrence Campus payroll are eligible to submit **one** GRF proposal as the principal investigator.

New Faculty: New tenure track, or untenured faculty members should apply to the New Faculty Research Development Fund before applying to this competition.

II. COMPETITION DEADLINES AND FUNDING

Submission Date:

Applications must be submitted by the deadline established by the applicant's school or college. Entities may determine their own submission procedures, but they are encouraged to use electronic submissions. GRF funds are allocated for one fiscal year starting July 1-June 30. The Review Committee will review proposals and determine the award recipients before the beginning of the fiscal year. All awards are from state funds and are contingent upon approval of the University's budget by the Kansas Legislature.

III. PROPOSAL APPLICATION

- A. Each school or department may determine its own application forms, guidelines, and proposal criteria. Please contact the applicable entity for detailed application information. Poor preparation or lack of clarity may jeopardize the success of the proposal. Both scholarly and creative proposals are invited.
- B. The application form must be prepared and submitted as specified by the entity to the appropriate Dean's or Associate Dean's office by the entity's established deadline. You may access the entity contacts and deadline dates on the KU Research website at [KU Research GRF](#)

Additional explanatory information may be included. Applicants may not submit copies of applications for other granting agencies instead of this form. The Review Committee will not interview the applicant in order to understand and evaluate the proposal. The proposal itself should convey an adequate portrait of the applicant's competencies, interests, achievements, and goals. The application must contain all pertinent information necessary for a thorough evaluation. In the interests of practicality and equity, the Review Committee will not accept additional information after deliberations begin.

IV. EVALUATION PROCEDURES

The Vice Chancellor for KU Research will inform each entity regarding the amount of money available for

funding.

Entities will establish a process to select a representative committee of **at least three members** from within their ranks to review their proposals and make allocations. None of these members should be submitting proposals for review. If a sufficient number of members is not available from within the entity, the entity may select members from outside the entity.

V. REVIEW CRITERIA

The primary criterion is the merit of the proposal. The concept of merit includes more than the scholarly excellence of the proposal. It also includes the benefit to the institution and to the individual, as well as such factors as an applicant's administrative responsibilities, the need for research support for sabbatical leave, the problems of moving into a new research field, the inaccessibility of funds to younger faculty, etc.

Each entity may develop its own written evaluation criteria and establish its own process for reviewing GRF applications. A current copy of these criteria and processes should be communicated to the Office of the Vice Chancellor for KU Research. In the absence of entity-specific criteria and processes, review committees will use the following major criteria in evaluating individual project applications.

A. Major Review Criteria

1. Research Significance
 - a. What is the importance of the project to the applicant's discipline?
 - b. Could it prove seminal?
 - c. Is it routine, original, innovative, creative, or scholarly?
 - d. What is the importance of the project in theory development, research, or graduate education in the applicant's discipline?
2. Research/Creative Plan
 - a. Are the research objectives clearly stated?
 - b. Does the creative plan reflect adequate knowledge of related literature?
 - c. Does the plan describe the research/creative methods adequately?
 - d. Will this award increase success in competing for external funding and/or prestigious awards?
 - e. Does the plan address the research/creative objectives?
 - f. Is there a reasonable likelihood of successful completion within the time, budget, and facilities limitations suggested?
3. Qualifications of Applicant
 - a. Is the applicant qualified to complete the proposed research?
 - b. Has he or she shown evidence of scholarly capability and productivity?
 - c. Has past GRF support produced scholarly results?
4. Evidence of External Submission Activity

Has the applicant made attempts to obtain external funding support where such support is available?

Applications will be regarded unfavorably if the applicant has shown no record of scholarly productivity. Applications will also be regarded unfavorably if the applicant has not attempted to secure external support for research projects. The Faculty Senate Research Committee (FSRC) recognizes that outside support is less accessible in some disciplines than in others but encourages applicants to investigate funding opportunities and to apply for external funding whenever possible. Applicants who have received prior funding from the General Research Fund must state the results of the two most recent projects. If a renewal is sought, the applicant must report the progress already made and the expected completion date. If a project has been abandoned, the reasons must be stated in detail. Ordinarily,

abandoning or failing to complete a prior project without adequate explanation will cause disapproval of subsequent applications.

B. Additional Review Criteria

In addition to the major criteria listed above, certain other factors are given consideration in the review process.

1. Faculty Early in Their Professional Careers.

General Research Funds are relatively modest given the monetary amounts awarded and number of applications received. Because of this, there is a disposition to fund faculty members in the early years of professional development who have not previously received substantial support.

2. Pilot Projects.

Pilot projects represent the first step toward large-scale investigations, including the potential for external funding. Thus, proposals for pilot projects are regarded favorably. An applicant who submits a proposal for a pilot project should state the expected source of the outside funding. They must also indicate the efforts that will be made toward securing the funding. Consideration will be given to applications that are submitted concurrently with proposals to outside agencies for funding of the same project.

3. Completion of Projects Funded Elsewhere.

If a project was funded elsewhere and requires modest support for its completion or needs funds to match support already provided by the outside grant, the proposal will be given higher priority.

4. Renewals/Continuation.

GRF funding in excess of three years for large or multi-year projects normally will not be considered. If additional time is needed, special justification is required from the applicant based on a demonstration of progress. If a renewal is sought, general statements that the work is proceeding "on schedule" or is "progressing satisfactorily" are not adequate. It is not the Review Committee's responsibility to determine the status of the project and the productive use of previous GRF funds. An applicant's failure to document specific progress, in understandable terms, may jeopardize the renewal application.

5. Instructional Research.

Proposals for research in innovative and improved instructional techniques will be welcomed, but the Review Committee cannot support requests for routine revision of lecture notes, production of standard teaching materials, or normal preparation for new courses.

6. Readability of Application.

Proposals that the Review Committee finds difficult to read or that have excessive technical language may be rated low. The Review Committee will be diverse and not necessarily expert in your specific area of study.

C. Additional Guidelines

1. Deans or Associate Deans who administer GRF entities are responsible for reallocating Funds, within their respective entities, after awards have been made, such as when a GRF recipient receives an external grant for the same project or part of the same project.
2. Surplus funds can also result when an entity has an insufficient number of worthy applications. When this occurs, the FSRC is reluctant to set the precedent of allowing one GRF entity to shift excess funds to another. The FSRC wishes to review, on a case-by-case basis, requests that excess funds be used to fund worthy proposals submitted by faculty in a different entity.

3. The FSRC urges entities to take all steps necessary to promote the GRF and thus help ensure that there are enough worthy proposals to utilize GRF allocations fully.

VI. GRF MATERIALS, PRODUCTS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

1. Property

Title to all materials, equipment, supplies, microfilm, computer files, books, tapes, documents, etc. obtained with GRF funds will rest in the University. When such materials are no longer needed for the project, they should be released to either the department or to the University Library for use by other faculty members and students.

2. Acknowledgements and Intellectual Property

All publications, presentations or performances supported in whole or in part by this allocation should bear the following acknowledgment: **"This investigation was supported by the University of Kansas General Research Fund allocation #_ (cost center number) _."** If works of art or other products of activity supported by this allocation are to be sold or leased or otherwise yield income, you are expected to consult with the Executive Director of the KU Center for Technology and Commercialization (4-6265). Intellectual property developed as a result of the General Research Fund is subject to the intellectual property policy of both the University of Kansas and the Kansas Board of Regents (KBOR). These policies can be found at:

[Intellectual Property Policy](#)

[KBOR Policy](#)

VII. BUDGET PREPARATION

Allocations cannot be made for a period longer than the upcoming fiscal year (July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025). These funds are contingent upon the approval of the University's annual budget by the Kansas Legislature. A budget justification must be included with the proposal.

Payroll Dates

Employees may be appointed beginning 6/16/2024 and end before 6/14/2025.

Salaries and tuition for graduate research assistants. Salaries for graduate research assistants must be included at a rate comparable to other GRAs in the faculty member's department or entity. The level of effort and time committed by GRAs should be justified in the body of the proposal or as an addendum to the budget.

GRA tuition may not be budgeted.

Salaries for faculty investigators. These salaries can be included if necessary to support research and to maintain continuity of research during the summer. No more than 4 weeks of summer salary can be provided from the General Research Fund for faculty members with nine-month appointments. Generally, salaries are limited to 4 weeks of salary.

Fringe benefit costs. The cost of fringe benefits associated with the payment of salary must be included in the budget. Add 37% for faculty and 7% for students, this represents the employer's portion. Faculty still have to cover their portion of fringe from the gross salary budget amount.

Consumable materials. Reasonable amounts of materials may be requested in the proposal.

Budget items considered inappropriate:

- a. Salary of faculty members during the academic year
- b. Capital equipment (over \$5,000)

- b. Tuition**
- d. Payments to consultants**
- e. Reprinting costs**
- f. Computing costs**
- g. Salaries for technicians and clerical help**
- h. Travel and associated costs to attend professional meetings or conferences.**
- i. Computers (laptops, tablets, cellphones, monitors, etc.)**
- j. Furniture**