

**UC Merced Research Instrumentation Grants**  
**Office of Research and Economic Development and Committee on Research**

The Academic Senate will provide \$300,000 to enhance instrumentation capacity as part of the \$1,000,000 that Chancellor Muñoz has allocated to the Academic Senate from the MacKenzie Scott gift to UC Merced. This is one-time funding, but continued funding will be considered depending upon fiscal constraints and demonstrated usefulness of these funds to advance our research agenda.

These awards will be administered jointly by the Committee on Research and the Office of Research and Economic Development. All proposals will be reviewed by a faculty committee. For AY 22-23, we anticipate awarding 3-6 instrumentation grants of up to \$150,000 each.

The goals of the UC Merced Research Instrumentation program are to increase access to shared/multi-user instrumentation for research and research training, and to enhance existing research facilities and research capacity on campus. Appropriately managed and maintained multi-user instrumentation reduces the financial burden of individual research groups and enhances the research productivity of a broader campus community. The program is intended to fill the gap between small equipment that is routinely purchased by individual research labs and major equipment that is supported by extramural instrumentation grants.

Instrumentation awards are intended to support:

1. the acquisition of new multi-user instruments along with sustainable plans for their service and maintenance,
2. the service, maintenance, warranty and extended warranty, and upgrade of existing multi-user instruments, and
3. the transition of existing multi-user instruments in high demand, and their ongoing service, maintenance, warranty and upgrade costs, from individual faculty laboratories into campus core facilities.

To maximize the impact of limited funds, cost-sharing of the equipment purchase, service contracts, operation and maintenance costs by schools, centers, institutes, departments and individual labs is strongly encouraged, as are explicit commitments to share space and access broadly, and to provide resources for the training of new users.

Details of eligibility, application process, appropriate use of funding, and proposal evaluation criteria are described below.

**ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

- The PI of an instrumentation grant should be a full-time faculty member of UC Merced or a manager/director of a campus core facility.
- Each faculty member or core facility manager/director can serve as the PI of only one proposal. There is no limit on the number of proposals for which a faculty or facility staff member can serve as members of, and facility staff can also serve as a collaborator or co-PI.

- The proposed instrumentation purchase or upgrade must benefit multiple researchers or research groups. Proposals providing equitable, inclusive and transparent access and training for new users will be prioritized. Instrumentation that is mainly used by a single research group is not supported by this program.
- Funds can be used for equipment purchase or core facility enhancement, including installation and training costs and warranty/service plans.

## **EVALUATION CRITERIA**

- Demonstrates a compelling campus instrumentation need, in particular, the benefits to a broad user base.
- Demonstrates potential impact on research, research training, and research capacity.
- Demonstrates broad user access and fiscal sustainability in the management plan for sustainable operation, maintenance and access.
- Demonstrates cost-share commitments by faculty, departments, ORUs, or other units, if applicable.

## **APPLICATION PROCESS**

- Deadline for submission: 15 February 2023
- Submit via InfoReady.
- Decisions will be announced by 15 March 2023

*Proposals should include the following elements:*

- Cover page with the project title and a list of key faculty/staff and their departments/facilities.
- Narrative (up to 2 pages). A description of the requested instrument or instrument upgrade. Describe why this instrument or upgrade is needed and how it will impact the productivity of research labs and their ability to secure extramural funding. Describe the potential impact on the research capacity of the campus.
- A management plan for sustainable operation, maintenance and access (up to 1 page): describe where the instrument will be housed, how its operation and maintenance will be governed in a way accountable to its users (if not already in a core facility with a faculty advisory board), sustained after immediate warranties expire, and for how broader user access will be provided beyond those in one or a few research groups, and identify space, resources, policies and partnerships for the training and provision of access to new users. Provide details on the estimated useful life of the instrumentation. Include budget details for service and maintenance plans as applicable. Specify source(s) of funding for continued operation and maintenance.
- Budget and justification (1 page). Each proposal can request up to \$150,000 for equipment purchase. Describe the total cost of the equipment purchase, the amount that is requested from this instrumentation program and the amount of cost share if applicable. Attach a quote separately.
- Outcomes from prior support by UC Merced COR Instrumentation Grants, if applicable.
- Biosketch(es) of the PI and co-PI(s); maximum of 2 pages per biosketch.

- One or more commitment letters that specifies the resources committed, including space, to operation and maintenance of the instrument by all parties involved, such as faculty, departments, ORUs, and schools. Include cost-sharing commitments if the equipment purchase, operation, maintenance, or upgrade costs are to be cost-shared.

Each proposal must consist of a single PDF file, formatted and named according to the instructions provided above. Funds will become available immediately upon award notification. All award funding must be spent within six months of award unless there are exceptional circumstances. We ask that you work with your respective financial staff to ensure all expenses are incurred in a timely manner.

**The PI of an instrument award is required to submit a one-page report by October 1, 2023 to VCR Gillian Wilson ([gwilson@ucmerced.edu](mailto:gwilson@ucmerced.edu)) with a copy to Simrin Takhar for the Academic Senate Committee on Research ([stakhar@ucmerced.edu](mailto:stakhar@ucmerced.edu)).**