University of California UC Merced

Academic Senate Faculty Research Grants Call For Proposals

Deadline For Submission: March 2, 2018

PURPOSE

The UC Merced Academic Senate Faculty Research Grants program is designed to support the research of Academic Senate faculty by enabling their scholarly activities, including those that facilitate the pursuit of extramural research funds. Grants are awarded to help sustain and to help accelerate research productivity in the absence of other appropriate sources of research funding. Total funds to be distributed by the program in AY 2018-2019 amount to $175,000. This funding program is administered by the Academic Senate Committee on Research (COR). Details of eligibility, application process, appropriate use of funding, and proposal evaluation criteria are discussed below.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

1.   Each full-time member of the UC Merced Division of the Academic Senate, including each emeriti member, is eligible to submit one grant proposal in response to this call.

2.   Each faculty member may request up to $5,000 in research funding. Funds may be requested for most research costs, with some exceptions. (See Allowable and Unallowable Expenses, below.)

3.   Faculty members may collaborate to submit a joint proposal, in which case the collaborators may *not* also submit individual proposals. Each faculty member may participate in only one proposal. An explicit effort will be made to award at least one collaborative proposal submitted from each School on the UC Merced campus. Joint proposals may request funding up to an amount which is a multiple of $5,000, with the multiple being the number of collaborators contributing to the proposal. Regardless of the number of participating faculty, awards will not exceed $20,000.

4. Faculty on sabbatical leave or leave of absence (in residence or elsewhere) may apply for research funds. Grants will not be awarded, however, without assurance that the awardee will return to UC Merced after the absence.

5. Undergraduate students, graduate students, and postdoctoral researchers are not eligible to submit proposals, but faculty members may request funds to support student research activities under the supervision of the faculty member, provided that such activities are integral to a program of research being pursued by the faculty member. Funds may not be applied to the support of postdoctoral researchers or of other research staff, however.

PROPOSAL CONTENT AND FORMAT

Each proposal must include all of the following:

1. **Completed Application Form:** The application form, which is appended to this call, solicits some basic information about the proposal and its author(s), including: a proposal title, the name(s) of the participating faculty member(s), academic title(s), School affiliation(s), graduate group affiliation(s), electronic mail address(es), the award date(s) of the most recently received Academic Senate research grant(s) for each faculty participant, and the identification of one of the participating faculty members as the Lead Principal Investigator (PI) for the proposal. The form also requires the explicit identification of one School (SNS, SOE, or SSHA) as the originating School for the proposal. The PI must have an appointment in the originating School.

2. **Description of Requested Support:** This section should explain the research to be conducted with the requested funds, providing adequate background information and context to allow for a clear understanding of the proposal by an academic but non-expert reader. This description should be as specific and detailed as possible, given space limitations and the need to remain accessible to non-experts. **Importantly, this section should explain the potential impact that funding will have on the research program(s) of the proposing faculty member(s), focusing on how award funding will support faculty career trajectories.** For example, contributors may emphasize how this award would bridge imperative yet unmet needs that the faculty's research program(s) may currently have. *The contents of this section may not exceed 1 single-spaced page per faculty contributor, with margins no smaller than 1 inch and fonts no smaller than 11 point.* For proposals involving multiple faculty collaborators, one page should be devoted to the work of each, using the page to describe how an award would critically support that contributor's research program.

3. **Reference List:** This section should provide a bibliography of work referenced in the proposal document. *This section may not exceed 1 single- spaced page, with margins no smaller than 1 inch and fonts no smaller than 11 point.*

4. **Budget:** How provided funds are to be used should be presented in a tabular format, listing the amount required for each line item.

5. **Budget Justification:** Each budget line item should be explained and justified, particularly with regard to constraints on allowable expenses (see below).

6. **Extramural Funding:** This section must list all pending and awarded extramural grants and contracts received by the proposing faculty member(s) for at least the last five years. For each award, the project title, funding amount, start date, and duration should be specified.

7. **Internal Funding:** This section must list all pending and awarded funds received by the proposing faculty member(s) from UC Merced sources, including Academic Senate funding programs and start-up funds, covering at least the last five years. For each award, the project title, funding amount, start date, and duration should be specified. For each award granted by an Academic Senate program, a single-paragraph report on the results of the award should be included. Any balance on such funds should be reported.

8. **Alternative Funding:** This section should explicitly indicate whether alternative sources of funding for the budgeted items are available or not. If such alternative sources do exist, this section should explain why they will not be used for the requested expenses. *This section may not exceed 1 single-spaced page, with margins no smaller than 1 inch and fonts no smaller than 11 point.*

9. **Future Extramural Funding:** If the proposed award is seen as supporting the pursuit of future extramural research funding, details concerning the extramural funding programs to which proposals are to be submitted should be provided in this section. If recent attempts to secure extramural funding for the proposed budget items have been made, details concerning those submissions should be itemized, with a special emphasis on any feedback received as a result of those attempts. *This section may not exceed 1 single-spaced page, with margins no smaller than 1 inch and fonts no smaller than 11 point.*

10. **Human Subjects Approval:** If the proposal involves research on human subjects, information concerning institutional ethical review and approval of the proposed work should be presented in this section.

11. **Animal Subjects Approval:** If the proposal involves research on non-human animals, information concerning institutional ethical review and approval of the proposed work should be presented in this section.

12. **Curriculum Vitae:** This section must contain a full CV for each faculty member participating in the proposal.

These sections should be assembled into a single document file in Adobe's *Portable Document Format* (PDF). While sections should appear in the order shown above, each section does *not* need to begin on a fresh page, but each section must be clearly labeled. The proposal file should have a name that begins with "COR_2018", followed by the last names of all participating faculty, separated by underscore characters. For example, a proposal submitted by faculty members Smith and Jones should be named "COR_2018_Smith_Jones.pdf".

ALLOWABLE EXPENSES

Categories of allowable expenses include the following:

- **Research Assistance:** Proposals requesting support for student assistants must include a clear statement of each assistant's exact duties, budgeted hours of labor, and rate of pay. For graduate student support, the student to be supported must be identified. This information is to be included in the Budget Justification section of the proposal document.

- **Supplies and Equipment:** Awarded funds may be used to purchase research equipment and supplies. The purchase of such items is subject to the policies outlined in *UC Business and Finance Bulletin BUS 29*. Equipment purchased with awarded funds will be the property of the University of California. Books, reports, journals, video or audio recordings, and similar research materials may be purchased with awarded funds, but these should be itemized and their purchase justified in the Budget Justification section of the proposal. Similarly, budget line items for computer equipment or computer software are allowed, but they should be explicitly justified as essential for the research activities proposed, providing capabilities not present in the computer equipment currently available to the proposing faculty member(s). Miscellaneous supply and service costs (e.g., telephone, fax, copying, postage) must be justified as essential for the proposed work.

- **Recharge Fees:** Awarded funds may be applied to recharge fees associated with the use of core research facilities or other shared or institutional research resources. The Budget Justification section should explain how each requested recharge payment is required by the proposed work.

- **Travel for Research Purposes:** Expenses incurred for investigative travel and field work may be allowed if such travel is important for the proposed research. For example, such travel may be necessary to collect data or to inspect materials that cannot be procured by other means. Travel expenses for both the participating faculty member(s) and supervised graduate students may be budgeted. The Budget Justification section should explain the need for the proposed travel, and the Budget should break down such expenses into standard travel categories (e.g., flight costs, ground travel costs, housing costs, food costs, etc.).

- **Dissemination of Research Findings:** Expenses incurred for travel to academic conferences or other meetings to present research results arising from the proposed work are allowed. Travel expenses for both the participating faculty member(s) and supervised graduate students may be budgeted. The Budget Justification section should specify and describe intended forums for presenting research findings, and the Budget should break down such expenses into standard travel categories (e.g., flight costs, ground travel costs, housing costs, food costs, etc.). Research findings may also be disseminated through publication, and reasonable required publication

fees may also be included in the Budget section. Other kinds of expenses in this category may be considered, but they will require special justification in the proposal document.

UNALLOWABLE EXPENSES

Categories of expenses that are *not* allowed to be covered by awarded funds include:

- **Research Assistance:** Awarded funds may *not* be used for faculty salary support, salary support for postdoctoral fellows, or salary support for other research staff. These funds may *not* be used to support curricular, administrative, or teaching aids.

- **Supplies and Equipment:** In general, awarded funds may *not* be used to purchase equipment that serves routine productivity purposes (e.g., printers, scanners, mobile telephones, mobile telephone service). Similarly excluded are standard office and computer supplies (e.g., paper, pens, pencils, computer storage media), office furniture, and costs associated with the maintenance, operation, or repair of standard office equipment. Individual subscriptions to periodicals and professional society dues are also considered inappropriate budget items.

- **Travel:** If a participating faculty member will be on sabbatical leave or a leave of absence during the period of an award, then, except under special circumstances, awarded funds may *not* be used for travel between the Merced campus and the locale of leave. Also, subsistence during the period of leave is not fundable.

HUMAN AND ANIMAL SUBJECTS

- **Human Subjects:** Proposed research involving the use of human subjects must be approved by the Institutional Review Board before funds will be allocated. A copy of the approval or protocol number and applicable dates must be provided prior to the awarding of funds.

- **Animal Subjects:** Proposed research involving the use of non-human animals must be approved by the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee. A copy of the approval or protocol number and applicable dates must be provided prior to the awarding of funds.

USE OF FUNDS

- **Budget Adaptation Post-Award:** Each line item in the proposal Budget must be justified in terms of the specific research activities being proposed. Expenditures of awarded funds are expected to generally conform to budgeted allocations by category and purpose. Faculty who receive awards must request approval from COR prior to any change in the use for which funds were allocated. Reasonable requests within the scope of the proposed research activities will typically be granted.

- **Award Period:** Grants awarded by this program have a period of a single year. All award monies must be spent before June 1, 2019. Funds will not be provided for expenses incurred prior to the date upon which a grant is awarded. Faculty awardees are responsible for the administration of their grants, including the covering of overdrafts. Faculty awardees are expected to promptly return any funds that will not be spent before their grants expire. Any unexpended funds remaining on the grant expiration date will automatically revert to the Provost/Executive Vice Chancellor for redistribution.

- **Equipment:** Any equipment purchased with awarded funds will be the property of the University of California, and possession is retained by the University of California beyond the completion of the period of the grant.

- **Compliance:** All expenditures are subject to all applicable University of California regulations.

EVALUATION PROCESS

Proposals that are incomplete or do not meet minimum conformance standards with regard to the requirements outlined in this document will not undergo further review. Complete and properly formatted proposals will be evaluated for their fit to the goals of the funding program, partially based on the clarity and quality of the case made by the proposal.

Proposals will be read by the COR membership, and they will be assessed according to the following criteria:

1. *Distribution across UC Merced Schools:* In an effort to distribute grant funds equitably across the campus, the proportion of all grant awards that are made to each School will roughly match the proportion of all proposals received from each School. To facilitate this, each proposal must specify a School of origin, and the PI of the proposal must be in the originating School. Also, an effort will be made to award at least one multiple-contributor proposal submitted from each School.

2. *Time since the receipt of a research award from the Academic Senate:* In a further effort to distribute grant funds broadly across the faculty, proposals from faculty who have never received an Academic Senate research award and proposals from faculty who have not received an Academic Senate research award for some time will be preferred over proposals from faculty who have recently received an Academic Senate research award. Thus, the likelihood of funding will generally increase with the time since last award. For proposals from multiple faculty members, the average time since last award, across collaborators, will be used. This criterion will be weighted heavily, and it will be used to generate an initial ranking of proposals originating from each School.

3. *Demonstration of funding need:* Proposals that convincingly demonstrate a lack of alternative available funding for the proposed research activities and clearly communicate the importance of those activities for the productivity of faculty research programs will be preferred over others. Proposals for which other funds appear to be available and proposals involving activities that do not directly contribute to the maintenance and/or acceleration of faculty research programs will have a lower probability of being funded. To support this assessment, proposals should identify all currently available research funds, if any, and they should clearly explain why all such funds are not appropriate or sufficient to support the demands of faculty research programs. The need for the requested funding, its current lack of availability, and its impact on overall research productivity are important evaluation criteria for this program.

4. *Targeted extramural funding programs and efforts to secure extramural funding:* In research domains for which appropriate extramural funding opportunities exist, proposals that make a convincing case for a relatively high likelihood of funding from specific extramural funding programs, and/or show past efforts to secure extramural funding that have resulted in positive feedback or review without a positive funding decision, will be ranked highly.

Based on these criteria, the membership of COR will evaluate proposals, deliberate, and make final funding decisions. In general, COR will rank the recommended proposals, and funds will be allocated to these proposals in the order in which they have been ranked until available funds are exhausted. In some situations, however, COR may, based on a majority vote, reduce the size of some awards below requested amounts so as to increase the number of awards granted. Also, in an effort to produce an award portfolio that reflects the range of research being conducted at UC Merced, COR reserves the right to adjust rankings, using approaches that are regularly employed by federal funding agencies.

The award recommendations produced by COR will be communicated to the Academic Senate Divisional Council, and they will be provided to the Vice Chancellor for Research and Economic Development, as well as to the Provost/Executive Vice Chancellor, to guide the campus administration in the delivery of award funds. Once an award is made, funds will become immediately available to the participating faculty member(s).

APPLICATION PROCESS

Each proposal must consist of a single PDF file, formatted and named according to the instructions provided above. Completed proposal documents should be delivered to the Academic Senate Office: senateoffice@ucmerced.edu. Proposals must be received by the end of the day (i.e., before midnight) on March 2, 2018.

If an award is made, funds will become available immediately. All award monies must be spent before June 1, 2019.

Academic Senate Faculty Research Grants Application Form

Proposal Title:_____

Originating School: _____

Proposal type: ☐ Individual   ☐ Collaborative Group

Principal Investigator: _____

   Name:_____

   Academic Title:_____Email Address: _____

   School and Graduate Group Affiliation(s): _____

   _____

   Award Date of Most Recent Academic Senate Funding: _____

Co-Principal Investigator:_____

   Name:_____

   Academic Title:_____Email Address: _____

   School and Graduate Group Affiliation(s): _____

   _____

   Award Date of Most Recent Academic Senate Funding: _____

Co-Principal Investigator: _____

   Name:_____

   Academic Title:_____Email Address: _____

   School and Graduate Group Affiliation(s): _____

   _____

   Award Date of Most Recent Academic Senate Funding: _____

Co-Principal Investigator: _____

   Name:_____

   Academic Title:_____Email Address: _____

   School and Graduate Group Affiliation(s): _____

   _____

   Award Date of Most Recent Academic Senate Funding: _____