

**Committee on Research (CoR)
Minutes of Meeting
January 18, 2023**

Pursuant to call, the Committee on Research met at 1:30 pm on January 18 via Zoom. Chair Jason Sexton presiding.

- I. Consultation with VCR Wilson
 - A. State Climate Funds
 - i. UC Merced Climate Action Research Seed Fund Competition
 - ii. UC Merced Climate Action Innovation & Entrepreneurship Hub

VCR Wilson summarized the various funding opportunities as follows:

The State of California has designated \$100M to the University of California (UC) Office of the President and \$18 million to the University of California (UC) Merced, per AB 179, for climate action research and innovation to address critical needs of the state.

The UC Office of Research & Innovation will administer their funds as follows:

- 1) \$80 million in two categories: the California (CA) Climate Action Seed Grants and the California (CA) Climate Action Matching Grants through one-time peer-reviewed competitions open to applicants from the UC system, California State University system, and California private colleges and universities.
- 2) \$20 million UC Climate Action Innovation and Entrepreneurship Awards: Limited Submission invitation to VCRs of ten UC campuses, UC Agriculture and Natural Resources (UC ANR); systemwide UC Health; UC Natural Reserve System (NRS); and each UC-affiliated national laboratory (LLNL, LBNL, LANL). \$1 million each.
- 3) ORED plans to administer \$9 million of UC Merced funds through a Climate Action Research Seed Fund Competition

Open to UC Merced researchers

Grant Program	Purpose of Grant	Award Size/ Duration	Multi-Institution, Community Partners, &/or End-User	Matching Contributions (See Sec. 2 & Appendix C)
CA Climate Action Seed Grants	Advance high-impact applied research into actionable outcomes for climate resilience, adaptation, and/or mitigation. Awarded funds will be leveraged to sustain and/or expand the project outcomes.	\$500,000-\$2 Million for 2 years	Encouraged	Encouraged
CA Climate Action Matching Grants	Utilize awarded funds and concurrent matching non-state contributions to advance high-impact, large scale applied research into actionable outcomes for climate resilience, adaptation, and/or mitigation.	\$2 -\$10 Million for 2 years	Required	Required

Informational Webinar (archived)	October 17, 2022
RFP Release	December 2022
Required Letter of Intent (LOI) Due Date	January 17, 2023 (by 12:00 noon Pacific Time)
Invitation to Full Application Announced	February 7, 2023
Seed Grants: Full Application Due Date Matching	Thursday, April 6, 2023 (by 12:00 noon Pacific Time)
Grants: Full Application Due Date	Thursday, May 4, 2023 (by 12:00 noon Pacific Time)
Seed Grants: Award Start Date	August 1, 2023
Matching Grants: Award Start Date	September 1, 2023

More information, including Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), is available on the California Climate Action Initiative website <https://uckeepresearching.org/california-climate-action/>

- Climate Action Launchpad Proof of Concept (PoC) Awards
\$500K Up to \$50K per recipient
- An Entrepreneur in Residence (EIR) - \$293K
To assist the PoC award recipients in delivering climate action solutions for California communities
- UC Merced New Ventures Lab (first wet lab incubator on campus) \$117K Minor room renovation and equipment purchase

Proposals to be presented/reviewed by Council of Vice Chancellor for Research (COVCR) on Wednesday January 11th.

UC Merced Climate Action Research Seed Fund competition: three rounds, separated by approximately six months.

Total Funding: \$9 million, distributed as \$3-4 million in each in the first two rounds of competition, and \$1-3 million in the third round of competition.

Types of Awards: Small (under \$50K) and Large (\$50K-\$1M) awards. Large awards are expected to facilitate transdisciplinary activity and/or collaboration with community/end-user partners.

First Competition Timeline

Feb 23, 2023 - Deadline for first competition

April 30, 2023 - Awards announced

June 1, 2023 - Funds available

Two Levels of Review:

Level I review: Panel consisting of Deans (including Graduate Education and Undergraduate

Education) or their representatives, Directors of the three Organized Research Units (ORUs) or their representatives, members of the Committee on Research (CoR), internal and/or external subject matter experts.

Level II review: Three-person panel, chaired by the VCR. Level II Review will explicitly address final distribution of awards to achieve a balance (a) across schools and disciplines including the humanities and arts; (b) amongst early and later career researchers; and (c) to ensure diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility.

VCR Wilson then briefly shared with CoR the list of allowable and non-allowable costs as well as subaward eligibility.

VCR Wilson asked for CoR's assistance in advertising these funding opportunities widely with faculty. Prior to this meeting, VCR Wilson shared her draft RFP for the UC Merced Climate Action Research Seed Fund Competition with the Senate Chair and Vice Chair and the chairs of CoR and CAPRA and it was subsequently sent to CoR for input. VCR Wilson hopes to finalize the RFP and distribute it widely soon.

- B. VCR Wilson asked CoR members for input on potential topics for discussion for her upcoming department meetings with faculty.

CoR members suggested the following:

- Discussions on how departments, faculty, and ORED can cooperate on shared facilities and instrumentation. Departments should involve ORED early in the faculty recruitment process with regard to facilities and instrumentation.
- Discussions on how the campus is trying to expand the core facility model and want to make instrumentation grants more competitive for faculty. Faculty will have to cooperate with ORED on space in order to support larger research capacity.
- Shared governance and its responsibilities.
- Ideas on creating a communication channel between the VCR and department chairs. (Untenured faculty may find it difficult to be candid with a senior administrator in a department meeting, so having the VCR keep in contact with the department chair on any faculty issues would be useful.)

II. Chair's Report

A. UCORP meeting January 9

- Prior to this meeting, CoR members were forwarded an email from UCOP requesting input on a list of questions regarding patents as well as ideas for narrowing down the thematic areas for the 2024 Lab Fees Research

Program award competition. CoR Chair Sexton asked CoR members to review the email.

- Discussion about faculty having to fill the gaps in their grants to pay their graduate students and post docs.

B. Updates on pending fall semester business

- ORED submitted the call for the instrumentation grants competition on December 20, 2022. Deadline for submissions is February 15. CoR, in conjunction with VCR Wilson, will review the proposals and announce funding decisions by March 15.
- The call for the annual Senate faculty grants competition was submitted on November 14, 2022. Deadline for submissions is January 31.
- FWF is drafting a brief call for proposals for COVID mitigation funding. CoR will review the draft call when it is available.

III. Consent Calendar

A. Today's agenda

B. December 14 draft meeting minutes

Action: the Consent Calendar was approved as presented.

IV. Campus Review Item

A. Proposal to Create a Department of Electrical Engineering in the School of Engineering

The proposal documents and the relevant policy were linked on today's agenda.

CoR identified a lead reviewer.

Action: The lead reviewer's comments will be discussed at the February 1 meeting. CoR's comments are due to the Senate Chair by Friday, February 3.

V. Systemwide Review Item

A. Presidential Policy – Developing and Maintaining Presidential Policies ("Policy on Policies")

The proposed policy and explanatory cover letter were linked on today's agenda.

CoR identified a lead reviewer.

Action: The lead reviewer's comments will be discussed via email. CoR's comments are due to the Senate Chair by Friday, January 27.

VI. Other Business

CoR discussed which administrative guests to invite to meetings. A CoR member recommended that the committee consult with the VCR about creating a campus wide strategy that incorporates best practices with shared instrumentation. Another CoR member requested that CoR discuss with the VCR what ANR status means for UC Merced and how the campus can prepare.

Action: The committee analyst will add both discussion items to a future agenda and will notify the VCR.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:30 pm

Attest: Jason Sexton, CoR Chair