

UTSA Grants for Research Advancement and Transformation

SPONSORED BY THE OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR RESEARCH

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The **Grants for Research Advancement and Transformation (GREAT)** program, sponsored by the Office of the Vice President for Research (VPR) at the University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA), will provide seed grants to support new areas of research for faculty at UTSA. The primary goal of these awards is to assemble preliminary data that can be used to seek extramural funding and advance UTSA's goal of reaching Tier One status. Approximately six grants for a maximum of \$20,000 each may be awarded annually, based on availability of funds.

Preference will be given to proposals that:

- Have a high potential for extramural funding
- Have significant scientific merit
- Represent a new direction for the Principal Investigator (PI)
- Build or strengthen cross-disciplinary research partnerships

Research that is already supported by other sources will not be approved for funding. Gap funding to bridge support between external grants or contracts will not be considered. The applicant must clearly and convincingly demonstrate that the proposed project represents a new research direction in an area likely to generate extramural funding. Thus, the proposal must not have overlap with any existing grants at the time of application.

Seed funding under this program is to be used to compete for extramural funds to support the project in the long term. *Successful applicants must produce a new proposal for extramural funding as a final reporting requirement within one year of completion of the seed grant.*

Three of the six awards will be designated for early career faculty at UTSA. Early career faculty for this purpose are considered faculty who are within their first three years in a tenure-track position. Early career faculty proposals will be evaluated separate for all other applicants, however will still be evaluated on the same criteria.

APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

Applicants must be full-time, tenure track or tenured faculty at the UTSA in residence at the time of application.

Only one proposal per applicant in this program will be accepted in an application cycle. An applicant may not be a PI on more than one proposal during an application period. An applicant may be a PI on one proposal and a co-investigator on another during the same application period. It is the PI's responsibility to ensure co-investigators are not in conflict.

Faculty who were awarded FY16 (September 1, 2015 – August 31, 2016) GREAT funding are not eligible to apply to the FY17 GREAT program. If an applicant has outstanding reports due under the GREAT program or any other institutional seed grant programs, they will be ineligible to receive any future seed grant awards until they have met their previous obligations.

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Proposals that have already been submitted to an extramural agency or those already reviewed and found non-competitive by an extramural agency will not be reviewed. One exception to this restriction is proposals previously submitted to an extramural agency that were declined on the basis of insufficient preliminary data. The Seed Grant Review Committee will consider such proposals only if the PI submits an executive summary statement or official letter from the agency specifically stating the deficiency or absence of preliminary data, along with the original application.

If an application has been turned down by the GREAT review panel, the PI is allowed one resubmission of a revised proposal on the same subject from the preceding year. Revised proposals must indicate changes from previous proposal and responses to reviewer comments.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

There is one GREAT submission cycle for FY17 with a deadline **at the close of business** (5:00 P.M. CST) on March 15, 2016. An applicant may submit only a single proposal (new or revised) each year, whether individually or in combination with others (see Applicant Eligibility above). Awarded funds will be available on September 1, 2016. Proposals must be submitted using CAYUSE. Contact your respective Research Service Center (RSC) for assistance with completing and submitting the GREAT application using CAYUSE.

Research Service Center Contact Information: <http://research.utsa.edu/osp/contacts.php>

If human subjects or animal research is involved, protocols to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) or Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) must be approved prior to funds being released.

- To complete IRB protocols - <http://research.utsa.edu/oric/irb/>
- To complete IACUC protocols - <http://research.utsa.edu/oric/iacuc/>

The application must include the following:

1. Application Cover Page (see Attachment A)
2. Project Description: 5 page maximum
3. Key References: 1 page maximum
4. Plan for Extramural Support: 2 page maximum
5. Budget - ([UTSA Approved Excel Format](#)) and Budget Justification: 2 page maximum
6. Biographical Sketch: 1 page maximum for each PI/co-investigator
7. Letter(s) of Support from Department Chair(s)
8. Grant Agreement (see Attachment B)

If any information items requested above are not included at the time of submission, the proposal will not be reviewed.

1. APPLICATION COVER PAGE

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION - 5 page maximum

The project description must include, in this order:

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- General background;
- Scientific merit and significance of the research: Address how this project is a new direction from the PI's existing research efforts and the potential impact of this new direction;
- Impact of this research on society and application areas where this research can or will be applied;
- Specific goals, objectives and anticipated results;
- Description of methods including anticipated barriers or technical difficulties, and
- Specify the resources needed for this project (equipment, materials, etc.) and indicate their availability.

The project description must be concise, limited to five typed, single-spaced pages with a 12-point Times New Roman font and one-inch margins. If additional information is important to submit, an appendix may be included but there is no obligation for reviewers to read it. A violation of this format will result in your proposal not being reviewed.

NOTE: It is important that you consult the [Office of Commercialization and Innovation](#) before disclosing details of any research that may be patentable. Any confidential information in this proposal must be clearly identified by marking "Confidential" at the top and bottom of each page where the confidential information appears.

3. KEY REFERENCES - 1 page maximum

4. PLAN FOR EXTRAMURAL SUPPORT - 2 page maximum

Provide a specific plan for pursuit of extramural funding for this project. Submission of at least one extramural proposal will be a required as part of the project award and must be completed within one year of the completion of the seed grant.

Provide the following details in your plan for extramural support:

- *Program:* Indicate from which extramural funding program(s) you will be seeking support. List specific program(s) and why you anticipate that the research supported by this seed grant will leverage external support. Which grant submission deadline will be targeted?
- *Objectives:* What will be the thrust of the proposal and how is it specifically supported by this seed funding? What is the societal impact of the work you will be proposing?
- *Team:* Who will be involved at UTSA, and partners from other institutions or organizations? Briefly describe their skills related to the project. More people can be involved in your final proposal team than are included on the seed grant.
- *Pre-review:* Who will read and comment on your proposal before it is submitted? Having a colleague review your grant application prior to submission significantly increases the likelihood of being funded.

If this project has previously been submitted for extramural support and rejected based on a lack of preliminary data, a copy of the executive summary from the reviewing agency should be included as an appendix in your application.

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5. BUDGET AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION

GREAT Awards will be up to \$20,000 for a grant performance period of September 1, 2016 to August 31, 2017. Roll over to the next fiscal year and project extensions are not allowed. Funding that is not spent or encumbered by August 1, 2017 will automatically revert back to VPR.

Budgets must be submitted on the UTSA approved budget template (FY16 Budget Template) found at <http://vpr.utsa.edu/osp/forms.php>. Contact your respective Research Service Center (RSC) for assistance with completing the budget template. In addition, a two page budget justification must be submitted providing details for all proposed expenditures. Funding can be used for salaries and wages of postdoctoral fellows, graduate and undergraduate students, technicians, and other non-faculty project personnel; technical supplies; equipment (under \$5,000) and miscellaneous expenses.

Grant funds **cannot** be used for faculty salaries (summer or academic year); faculty travel that is not directly related to project research (e.g., conferences cannot be supported by this grant); consultants; or office equipment, including computers and laptops. Student salaries and wages may be paid but stipends, incentives or tuition payments are not allowable. Fringe benefits are paid centrally. Student travel is not allowable unless the student is paid by the grant and directly related to project research. Grant funds **cannot** be used for international travel. F&A costs are **not** allowed.

Given that the GREAT program funding is provided by UTSA, PIs should explicitly utilize funding for research and scholarly activities conducted at UTSA. Contracts and sub-awards for activities outside of UTSA must be clearly and convincingly described as necessary for successful execution of the proposed project. Payment of salaries to non-UTSA personnel is discouraged.

The PI may transfer up to 25% of the award into different categories of spending without written permission from the VPR Director of Research Financial Administration, as long as the category is in the original budget approved by the Seed Grant Review Committee.

6. BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH-

Complete for each PI and co-investigator. Do not exceed one page for each.

7. LETTER OF SUPPORT

Each application must include a letter of support from the PI's department chair addressed to the Vice President for Research with assurance that the PI will be present at the university for the duration of the grant period; that the department will be responsible for faculty salary during the grant period; and if appropriate, any support the department is willing to give to the faculty member in pursuing this new research direction. If this research is part of a larger research vision in the department or college, the letter of support will describe how this proposal relates to that broader picture. The letter is part of the proposal packet that will be reviewed by panel members.

PEER REVIEW

Applications will be reviewed by a Seed Grant Review Committee established annually by the Office of the Vice President for Research. This committee is appointed by the Vice President for

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Research, in consultation with the Deans. Additional faculty members may be added on an ad hoc basis by the Vice President for Research if they are deemed valuable to the review process. Committee members will be from a variety of academic backgrounds. As such, proposals should be clearly written in a way that the goals, rationale and methods of the proposed work can be understood by all reviewers.

Applicants will be informed of the panel's recommendations on or about June 1, 2016. As noted above, funding will be available September 1, 2016.

Proposals will be evaluated using the following criteria:

1. If the proposed research is completed, does the proposal have a high chance of leveraging extramural support?
2. Are the significance and scientific merit of the research clearly documented?
3. Does the PI provide information necessary to determine if this is a new direction within their research focus area, and that the research does not overlap with existing funded projects?
4. Have potential barriers or technical difficulties been identified?
5. Does the PI (and co-investigators) have the experience necessary to carry out the project?
6. Are the goals, objectives and anticipated results stated clearly and are they reasonable, given the funds and time provided?
7. Are the methods outlined and do they reflect the goals and objectives stated in the proposal?
8. Have extramural opportunities been identified and are they reasonable?

GRANT ADMINISTRATION

The PI is responsible for the administration of grant funds. In particular, he/she must be certain that over-expenditures do not occur, and that all funds are fully expended according to institutional fiscal year end deadlines. All work must be completed in the 12 month performance period.

The PI and co-investigators are required to include the following acknowledgement on all publications resulting from a GREAT Award.

This project was funded (fully or in-part) by the University of Texas at San Antonio, Office of the Vice President for Research.

FINAL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Successful applicants must produce a new proposal for extramural funding as part of the final report within one year of completion of the project. In exceptional cases, where seed funding may prove the project to be ultimately non-competitive, a waiver of the extramural application requirement can be requested from the Office of the Vice President for Research. If neither an external application nor letter of explanation is submitted, no new research funds will be made available to the PI or co-investigators until the letter or application is submitted. The PI must submit a report to the VPR describing the extramural grant submission details by September 30, 2018.

In addition to the above requirement to pursue extramural funding, the PI is responsible to submit a final grant report no later than September 30, 2017. Awardees will be provided final

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reporting instructions prior to the start of their project. A Project Update Meeting will be requested by the VPR for early March 2017.

VPR has launched a performance measurement system to capture quantitative and qualitative output for institutionally supported grant programs. PIs awarded funding under this opportunity will be requested to submit their final report in the new UTSA Seed Grant Reporting Form.

GREAT TIMELINE

December 1, 2015 – Grant Request for Proposals (RFP) announced
March 15, 2016 – Grant applications due in CAYUSE (by 5:00 P.M. CST)
June 1, 2016 – Award winners announced
September 1, 2016 – Grant performance period begins (i.e., funds available)
March 1-15, 2017 – Project Update Meeting Requested by VPR
August 1, 2017 – All funds must be spent or encumbered
August 31, 2017 – Grant ends
September 30, 2017 – Final project report due
September 30, 2018 – Extramural grant submission report due

CONTACT INFORMATION

Jaclyn Shaw
Assistant Director for Faculty Development
Office of Research Support
One UTSA Circle, San Antonio, TX 78249
Phone: (210) 458-6767
Email: Jaclyn.Shaw@utsa.edu

Beth Manning
Director, Research Financial Administration
Office of the Vice President for Research
One UTSA Circle, San Antonio, TX 78249
Phone: (210) 458-4342
Email: Beth.Manning@utsa.edu

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ATTACHMENT A: APPLICATION COVER PAGE

Project Name: _____

Name of Principal Investigator (PI): _____

Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

PI College and Department: _____

Name of Co-Investigator: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Co-Investigator College and Department: _____

Abstract (400 words or less)

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ATTACHMENT B: GRANT AGREEMENT

If this research proposal is funded, I agree that my acceptance obligates me to:

1. Include the following acknowledgement on all publications resulting from this grant award.

This project was funded (fully or in-part) by the University of Texas at San Antonio, Office of the Vice President for Research.

2. Release all permanent equipment (cameras, laboratory equipment, etc.) to the university.
3. Secure prior written approval from the Office of the Vice President for Research if the research to be conducted differs from that described in the proposal that was funded. Requests for such approval should be submitted to:

Jaclyn Shaw
Assistant Director for Faculty Development
Office of Research Support
One UTSA Circle, San Antonio, TX 78249
Phone: (210) 458-6767
Email: Jaclyn.Shaw@utsa.edu

4. Submit at least one extramural proposal for funding to support the future progress of the project, within one year of the completion of the GREAT.
5. Adhere to the assigned GREAT program timeline:

September 1, 2016 – Grant performance period begins (i.e., funds available)
March 1-15, 2017 – Project Update Meeting Requested by VPR
August 1, 2017 – All funds must be spent or encumbered
August 31, 2017 – Grant ends
September 30, 2017 – Final project report due
September 30, 2018 – Extramural grant submission report due

6. Respond to all inquiries and communications from the Office of the Vice President for Research related to the GREAT funded project.

Signature of Principal Investigator: _____

Project Name: _____

Date: _____