
The MAC-UTSA Collaborative Seed Funding Grant

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Multi-Assistance Center at Morgan's Wonderland (The MAC) has partnered with the University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA) to create the Evaluation and Research Coordinating Center ([ERCC](#)). The goals of the ERCC are to (1) provide access to evaluation results and quality improvement data for The MAC, and (2) serve as a central point for facilitating research of interest to The MAC and its stakeholders. With support from Texas Congressmen Castro, the ERCC is offering its inaugural seed funding opportunity. This request for application outlines the goals of the seed funding and the application requirements.

Entities referred to in the following request for applications:

- UTSA - University of Texas at San Antonio
- The MAC - The Multi-Assistance Center at Morgan's Wonderland
- MACers – Medical, therapy, and community service providers at The MAC.

The MACer must have a formal agreement in place with the MAC. For a full list of MACers, visit <https://morganswonderlandmac.com/the-macers/>.

Preferences will be given to proposals that:

- Align with the goals, mission, and impact of [The MAC](#)
- Build or strengthen inter-institutional research partnerships between UTSA and The MAC
- Focused on the quality-of-life outcomes for people living with disabilities
- Have a high potential for extramural funding

Pre-submission inquiries are strongly encouraged. Prospective applicants may send a brief abstract to Leslie.neely@utsa.edu or Erica.sosa@utsa.edu to assess their proposal's fit.

Seed funding received through this program is intended to strengthen competitiveness for the pursuit of long-term extramural funds. Successful applicants must produce a new proposal for extramural funding as a final reporting requirement within one year after completion of the seed grant award (deadline of August 2025).

COLLABORATION REQUIREMENT

Proposals must include two equal PI's - one PI from each institution - UTSA and The MAC. Proposal's focused on a MACer practice/organization must address The MACer's entity as it relates to The MAC, and not the MACer's organization as a whole. For example, if Blue Sprig serves as the MACer PI, it must be the entity of Blue Sprig at The MAC and not the larger Blue Sprig cooperation.

If a Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA) is required between UTSA and the MACer, one should be drafted (by either organization's contract office) and approved by both parties prior to funding distribution.

ELIGIBILITY AND APPLICATION LIMITS

The UTSA PI may be a UTSA tenure-track or tenured faculty member or doctoral student with an identified UTSA faculty mentor. UTSA PI’s may only submit one proposal as the designated PI (primary applicant) but may serve as key personnel (co-applicant) on multiple applications.

The following are ineligible for funding through the **MAC-UTSA Collaborative Seed Funding Grant**:

- Projects serving as gap funding to bridge support between external grants or contracts
- Project overlapping with other existing and/or pending research projects.

AWARD INFORMATION

- **Maximum total funding per project:** \$25,000
- **Expected number of awards:** 4
- **Performance Period:** October 2, 2023 to May 31, 2024

*Funding not spent by June 1, 2024, will automatically revert back to the originating funding source. This excludes salaries and wages, which can continue to be expensed through June 30, 2024. Project extensions require written approval and contingent on the timeline of the larger project funding.

PROGRAM TIMELINE

August 25, 2023	Request for Proposals released
September 22, 2023	Applications Due
September 29, 2023	Awards Announced
October 2, 2023	Grant Performance Period Begins
June 30, 2024	All Funds Must be Spent
July 2024	Present Findings at <i>San Antonio Improving Quality of Life for People Living with Disabilities Research Forum</i>
July 31, 2024	Final Project Report Due
August 31, 2024	Extramural Grant Submission Report Due
August 31, 2025	Extramural Grant Submission Due

PROPOSAL ROUTING AND SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

UTSA will be the lead institution for the collection and administration of this grant program. PIs must submit one combined proposal through the UTSA system. The **UTSA PI** (primary applicant) should contact their respective [Research Service Centers \(RSC\)](#) to complete a [Notice to the RSC](#) (first page of Routing Form) at least 15 business days prior to the proposal deadline.

1. Route application through a Research Service Center (RSC), utilizing the standard process. Contact your respective Research Service Centers (RSC) to complete a Notice to the RSC (first page of Routing Form).
2. Submit the application through REDKE’s [InfoReady site](#) **by 5pm CST on September 22, 2023**.

APPLICATION COMPONENTS**1. Abstract (250 word limit)**

InfoReady will prompt you to include a clear executive summary (or abstract) that summarizes the essential content of the proposed research effort, including the objectives, benefits, and significance.

2. Project Description (2 page limit)

The project description attachment must include, in this order:

- General background
- Description of how the project evaluates or impacts the quality-of-life outcomes for people living with disabilities
- Specific goals, objectives, methods, and anticipated results
- Plan for extramural support including the sponsor/program, team, and application timeline.

3. Key References (1 page limit)

Attach a list of references relevant to the project.

4. Joint Work Plan (1 page limit including graphics)

- Attach a summary of task-level activities to be performed by UTSA and The MAC as they relate to the overall project's objectives.
- Describe areas of interdependence, the coordination and handoff of interim project materials and data, and the timeline of each organization's participation in the overall project effort.
- While no specific graphical format or presentation is required, this section is expected to contain a mixture of narrative and graphical information to aid the evaluators' assessment of the proposed scope, roles, and responsibilities within the team, and collaboration environment.

5. Budget (Utilizing [UTSA Template](#))

Budget must be submitted solely using the [UTSA approved budget template](#).

6. Budget Justification (1 page limit)

Details for all proposed expenditures must be described in a budget justification attachment. This document must convey an integrated understanding of the types of resources (labor, materials, other) necessary to complete the proposed research project. For each line item and provide detailed calculations of how you arrived at totals/estimates.

Budget Considerations:

- It is highly encouraged that the budget should balance funding between both partners (UTSA and The MAC)

Funds **can** be used for the following:

- Salaries and/or wages for UTSA faculty, staff, students, or MACer collaborators.
- Materials and supplies (any item with a cost of less than \$5,000/unit; must be justified as needed for project success)
- Expenses for fieldwork, data collection, archival research, training, educational purposes and/or presentations on research, creative or scholarly activities directly related to the proposed project
- Consultant fees
- Local travel for data collection
- Participant stipends
- Expenses for food or drink must receive prior approval from Dr. Neely or Dr. Sosa

Funds **cannot** be used for the following:

- International travel
- Rent or space reservation costs (excluding lodging during travel)

If additional resources are available to support this project through other sources, the budget justification should include a list of these resources, noting when the resource will be available and who it will be provided by. Examples include lab or studio time, equipment, computer resources, and research assistantships made available through a department, as well as support obtained from external sources. Note: While additional resources can be listed, no formal cost-sharing is allowed.

7. Biographical Sketch (3 pages per person)

Biographical sketch attachments must be included for the PIs (primary applicants), and any key personnel using the NIH or NSF formatting. Collaborators from the MAC may submit a resume in lieu of a biographical sketch.

8. Grant Agreement (See end of this document)

Each UTSA PI and MACer PI must have this document signed by their direct supervisor (i.e. Department Chair or Director), acknowledging that they have also read all responsibilities and obligations of the applicant and their department or division.

PEER REVIEW

Applications will be reviewed by an internal review committee established by the Evaluation and Research Coordinating Center at The MAC. This committee is appointed by ERCC members in collaboration with The MAC and affiliated entity leadership staff.

- Committee members will be from a variety of academic, practice, and scientific 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. Avoid discipline-specific terminology/jargon as much as possible.
- The committee will be composed of half UTSA reviewers (1-2 reviewers) and half MAC and affiliated entity leadership staff reviewers (1-2 reviewers).

- The review committee will review proposals and make recommendations to the ERCC. Funding decisions will be based primarily on the Committee’s recommendations; however, final decisions will rest with the ERCC.
- Proposals will be evaluated based on the weighted criteria below. The PI (primary applicant) should include all required proposal components and fully and clearly address each criteria.

Review Criteria	Max Point Allocation
Does the proposal provide strong justification for the intellectual merit and significance of this research?	15
Are the overall strategy, methodology, and analyses well-reasoned and appropriate to accomplish the project objectives?	15
Are the goals, objectives and anticipated results stated clearly and are they reasonable, given the funds, and time provided?	10
Did the proposal address a feasible plan to obtain extramural funding to support the project in future years?	10
Did the proposal demonstrate potential to foster cross-institutional research partnerships?	10
Does the proposal budget balance resources across partner institutions (UTSA and The MAC)?	10
Did proposal describe the broader impact to the disability community?	5
Does research avoid overlap with currently funded projects?	5
Are potential difficulties, alternative strategies, and benchmarks for success presented?	5
Did the proposal specify the resources needed for this project (labor, equipment, materials, etc.) and indicate their availability?	5
Did the proposal outline a spending plan and thoroughly address each expenditure with a clear justification and calculations? Do proposed costs align with proposed scope of work?	5
Did the applicant (or team) convey through their biographical sketches that they have appropriate experience and training? And have they demonstrated an ongoing record of accomplishments that have advanced their field(s)?	5
Did the proposal include a PI from both UTSA and either The MAC or a MACer?	Pass/Fail*
Did the proposal align with the goals, mission, and impact of The MAC?	Pass/Fail*
Does the Budget and Budget Justification meet criteria (e.g., \$25,000 limit, budget restrictions, etc.)?	Pass/Fail*
Total Points Possible	100

***Any proposal that receives a “fail” rating on any of the criteria, will not be eligible for review.**

GRANT ADMINISTRATION

Each PI (primary applicant) is responsible for the administration of grant funds. All grant expenditures must conform to state and university regulations and approvals. In particular, the PI must be certain that over-expenditures do not occur, and that all funds are fully expended according to programmatic deadlines. All work must be completed within the performance period.

FINAL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Applicants awarded funding under this opportunity will be required to submit their final report to the ERCC by July 31, 2024. Awardees will be provided final reporting instructions prior to the end of their project. This report will capture both quantitative and qualitative outputs of the grant activities. The ERCC will also request information regarding grant submissions/awards in August 2025 to capture the long-term impacts of this seed funding (see below).

EXTRAMURAL GRANT SUBMISSION REQUIREMENT

Awardees must produce a new proposal for extramural funding as part of the final report by the end of the project. In exceptional cases, where seed funding may prove the project non-competitive, a waiver of the extramural application requirement can be requested from the ERCC. The applicants must submit a report to the ERCC describing the extramural grant submission details by August 31, 2025.

Contact Information

Ana Laredo

Manager of Special Projects

University of Texas at San Antonio

Email: ana.laredo@utsa.edu

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

1. Maintain program eligibility throughout the award/performance period, including residence and employment with UTSA. If there is any change in employment or residency status, the PI (primary applicant) and/or their direct supervisor (department chair, school director, or dean) must notify Leslie Neely at leslie.neely@utsa.edu.
2. Include the following acknowledgement on all publications resulting from this grant award. PIs should also email Leslie Neely at leslie.neely@utsa.edu for any other acknowledge requirements.

“This project was funded (full or in-part) by a collaborative seed grant administered by the Multi-Assistance Center at Morgan’s Wonderland and The University of Texas at San Antonio.

3. If human subjects, animals, or biohazardous materials will be utilized in the research, protocols to the Institutional Review Board ([IRB](#)), Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee ([IACUC](#)), or Institutional Biosafety Committee ([IBC](#)) must be approved prior to funds being released.
4. Secure prior written approval from UTSA if the research to be conducted differs from that described in the proposal that was funded. Requests for such approval should be submitted to:
Email: Leslie.neely@utsa.edu
5. Submit at least one extramural proposal for funding to support the future progress of the project, within one year of the completion of the award period.
6. Adhere to the assigned PROGRAM TIMELINE:
October 2, 2023 – Grant performance period begins (i.e., funds available)
June 1, 2024 – All funds must be spent
June 30, 2024 – Grant Performance Period Ends (Unspent funds swept)
July 31, 2024 – Final project report due
August 31, 2024 – Extramural grant submission report due
August 31, 2025 – Extramural grant submission due
7. Respond to all inquiries and communications from the Evaluation and Research Coordinating Center related to this funded project.
8. Have time to allocate to the project.

Principal Investigator (PI)	
Signature:	
Project Name:	
Date:	

PI Supervisor - “I agree with the PI’s obligation and responsibilities for this funding opportunity.”	
Approved By:	
Signature:	
Date:	