

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The **Grants for Research Advancement and Transformation (GREAT)** program, sponsored by the Office of Research at The University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA), offers faculty the support necessary to pursue new areas of research in their field 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 institutional research excellence goals.

Preference will be given to proposals that:

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

Seed funding received through this program is intended to strengthen project 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 of completion of the seed grant.

ELIGIBILITY & APPLICATION LIMITS

- Both single PI and multi-PI or other collaborative team projects are allowed.
 - PIs must be full-time, tenure track or tenured faculty at UTSA in residence at the time of application and award. *Other personnel or students including individuals outside UTSA may be incorporated into a project team as co-PI; however, only those who are UTSA employees or UTSA students can be funded through this program.*
 - A faculty member may be designated as PI (primary applicant) on only one proposal (either as a new or revised proposal) each application cycle. However, an individual may serve in a co-PI (co-applicant) or other collaborative role on more than one application each cycle.
 - It is the PI's responsibility to ensure all team members are eligible and not exceeding application limitations
 - UTSA faculty are only eligible to receive either a GREAT or an INTRA Office of Research seed grant as PI (primary applicant) in any given fiscal year. Should a PI (primary applicant) be selected for both programs, the PI will be asked to select between their GREAT or INTRA award.
 - If a GREAT application was not funded in FY24 (for the FY25 application cycle) the applicant is allowed one resubmission of a revised proposal on the same subject. *Note: Revised proposals must provide a cover letter as an appendix indicating changes from the previous proposal and responses to reviewer comments.*
 - Applicants submitting a proposal closely related to a project previously funded by the Office of Research must demonstrate that the new application is substantially different
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from the prior award.

The following are ineligible for funding through the FY26 GREAT program:

- Faculty identified as PI (primary applicant) who were awarded GREAT funding for FY24 (Performance Period: 10/7/2024 – 3/31/2027)
- Faculty identified as PI (primary applicant) or co-PI (co-applicant) that have any outstanding reports under previously funded Office of Research awards
- Projects serving as gap funding to bridge support between external grants or contracts
- Proposals that have been previously submitted to an extramural agency (and are pending review or were found to be non-competitive). *Exception: 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 applicant submits, as an appendix, a copy of the original application as well as an executive summary statement or official letter from the agency specifically stating the deficiency or absence of preliminary data.*
- Projects proposed for Office of Research seed grant funding that do not have a distinct scope. If more than one application is submitted to this or other Office of Research seed grant programs, all like applications may be deemed ineligible.

AWARD INFORMATION

- **Estimated Number of Awards:** 4*, subject to the availability of funds
- **Maximum Total Funding Per Project:** \$20,000
- **Performance Period:** October 6, 2025 – March 31, 2027**

**See Peer Review section for further detail regarding award distribution.*

***Funding not spent by March 1, 2027 will automatically revert back to the Office of Research.*

This excludes salaries and wages, which can continue to be expensed through March 31, 2027. No project extensions will be allowed.

Early Career Faculty: Up to two awards may be designated for early career faculty, dependent on the intellectual merit of applications received. For the purposes of this call, *early career faculty* are defined as faculty who are within the first three years of a tenure-track position. Proposals from early career faculty will be evaluated alongside all other applications using the same review criteria; however, these applications are identified as being “early career” to allow for prioritization, as determined by reviewers and the Office of Research.

PROGRAM TIMELINE

December 4, 2024	Request for Proposals (RFP) released
January 17, 2025	Seed Grant Workshop and Teaming Lunch (Information Here)
February 19, 2025	Notice of Intent due to InfoReady (by 5:00pm CST)
March 12, 2025	UTSA 15/5 Deadline for Routing Submission (to CRA Team)
March 19, 2025	Applications due in InfoReady (by 5:00pm CST)

June 13, 2025	Awards announced
October 6, 2025	Grant performance period begins (funds available)
July 2026	Project Update Meeting requested by Office of Research
March 1, 2027	All funds must be spent (<i>see Award Information section above</i>)
March 31, 2027	Grant performance period ends (<i>unspent funds will be swept April 2</i>)
April 30, 2027	Final project report due
April 30, 2028	Year 2 project report due

OFFICE OF RESEARCH NOTICE OF INTENT (NOI) INSTRUCTIONS

The Notice of Intent (NOI) is required to be submitted to the Office of Research InfoReady portal by the deadline indicated in the program timeline. Information provided in the NOIs will not be considered final and can be revised for full application submission; however, the scope of the project indicated in the NOI will be used by the Office of Research Seed Grant team to prepare for reviews.

Note—This is a notification process that is separate and distinct from a notification to the College Research Administrators for application development and approval prior to submission (described below). All faculty submitting a seed grant must comply by the institutional [15/5 rule](#).

Submit your NOI through InfoReady ([linked here](#)) by 5pm CST on February 19, 2025.

- GREAT Program NOIs request the following:
 - PI (primary applicant) name, email, college and department
 - UTSA Co-PIs (co-applicants) name, college and department
 - Proposed project title
 - 3-5 sentence project overview
 - 5 Keywords related to project scope

INTERNAL PROPOSAL ROUTING & SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

1. Route the application through a [College Research Administration Team](#) using the standard process. Contact your respective [College Research Administration Team](#) to complete a [Notice to the College Research Administration Team](#) (first page of Routing Form) at least 15 business days prior to the proposal deadline.
2. Submit application through InfoReady site, as instructed in email notification of advancement, by **5pm CST on March 19, 2025**.
InfoReady applicant guide with video available [here](#).

Regulatory Compliance:

Projects are subject to Institutional Review Board (IRB), Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC), Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC), export control, conflict of interest, and campus safety regulations and approvals. The PI is expected to have thoroughly investigated all regulatory components of the intended research and to have discussed relevant components in the proposal. Prior to making an award, required protocols must be in place.

APPLICATION COMPONENTS

Application components required at the time of submission are listed below. **If components are missing and/or formatting is not compliant, the application will not be reviewed.**

Preferred Upload Method to Minimize Download Errors:

Applications should be uploaded in one standard Adobe PDF binder. Adobe Portfolios should not be used for final submission.

Formatting requirements for items with an asterisk (*) below: single-spaced, 12pt Times New Roman font, 1" margins all around. Font colors may be used to identify components. Text in figures, graphs, tables, diagrams, and charts should be no smaller than 10pt Times New Roman font.	
Component	Maximum Length
1. Abstract	250 words (<i>enter in InfoReady</i>)
2. Project Description*	5 pages
3. Key References*	1 page
4. Plan for Extramural Support	2 pages
5. Budget	Use seed grant template
6. Budget Justification*	2 pages
7. Biographical Sketch from PI/Co-PIs	3-5 pages, as limited by the format selected
8. Current, Pending, and Recent Support	No limit (<i>use SciENCv template</i>)
9. Signed Grant Agreement	<i>See end of this document</i>
<i>Appendices, if applicable, for revised FY25 Seed Grant Application</i>	
10. Cover Letter	1 page
<i>For consideration of unfunded extramural proposal:</i>	
11. Copy of original proposal	
12. Copy of executive summary statement or official letter from the agency specifically stating the deficiency or absence of preliminary data	
Items to <u>NOT</u> include in final upload:	
1. Abstract (InfoReady abstract is required, but an abstract should not be included in the single PDF document uploaded to the platform)	
2. Program Guidance's	
3. Page Numbers	
4. Letters of Support	
5. Headers and Footers	
6. Bookmarks	

1. ABSTRACT (250 WORD LIMIT)

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

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION (5 PAGE LIMIT, INCLUDING GRAPHICS)

Collaborators or other personnel who are not identified as Co-PI’s must have clearly defined roles in this general section.

The project description attachment must include, in this order:

- General background
- Intellectual merit and significance of the research: address how this project is a new direction or a different perspective from the PI’s (or team’s) existing research efforts and the potential impact on the researcher and discipline
- 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/technical difficulties and how these will be addressed
- Description of resources needed for this project (equipment, materials, etc.), with indication about their availability

Appendices are only allowed for the following:

	Appendix Attachment	Instructions
Resubmission of an unfunded FY25 GREAT application	Cover letter	Indicate changes from previous proposal and responses to reviewer comments.
Application previously submitted to an extramural agency that was declined on the basis of insufficient preliminary data	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Copy of previous submission 2. Copy of reviewer critiques/comments 	Copy of the original application as well as an executive summary statement or official letter from the agency specifically stating the deficiency or absence of preliminary data.

NOTICE REGARDING CONFIDENTIALITY: 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 page of each page where the confidential information appears.

3. KEY REFERENCES (1 PAGE LIMIT)

Attach a list of references relevant to the project.

4. PLAN FOR EXTRAMURAL SUPPORT (2 PAGE LIMIT)

Attach a specific plan for pursuit of extramural funding after completion of this project. Submission of at least one extramural proposal is required as part of the grant award terms and must be completed within one year of the completion of the award term. You plan for extramural support must include the following:

- *Sponsor/Program:* What extramural funding program(s) do you plan to pursue? List specific program(s), deadlines you will target, and how you will leverage results of this seed grant for external support.
- *Objectives:* What will the extramural proposal seek to accomplish and how is it specifically supported by this seed funding? Describe how this work represents a new area for you and what the potential societal impact is.
- *Team:* Who are your team members from UTSA and other partnering organizations? Briefly describe their skills related to the project. More people can be involved in your extramural funding proposal team than are budgeted in this seed grant.
- *Pre-review:* Who will read and comment on your extramural proposal before it is submitted? Having a colleague review your application prior to submission significantly increases the likelihood of being funded.

5. BUDGET (USING [UTSA SEED GRANT TEMPLATE](#))

Budgets must be submitted solely on the UTSA approved budget template ([Internal Seed Grant Budget Template](#)) and must not exceed the allotted fund request of the program. Contact your respective [College Research Administration Team](#) for assistance with completing the budget template.

For 18-month performance period projects, budget's must be allocated with a 50/50 split each year (\$10,000 period 1; \$10,000 period 2) and be appropriately noted in their respective tabs on the [Internal Seed Grant Budget Template](#). The periods are as follows:

- Period 1: October 2025 – July 2026
- Period 2: October 2026 – March 2027

6. BUDGET JUSTIFICATION (2 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, provide detailed calculations of how you arrived at totals/estimates, and note whether funds will be expensed during the academic year (October—May), summer (June—July), or both. Also note when funds will be expensed during the performance period (Period 1, Period 2, or both)

Budget justifications must follow the formatting requirements mentioned under Application Components.

Budget Considerations

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

- Salaries and/or wages for faculty, postdoctoral fellows, graduate, and undergraduate students. *Faculty are not required to request funding for their effort; however, if a faculty member does request funded effort, each faculty member is limited to no more than 1 summer month of effort.* For most T/TT faculty, 1 summer month is the equivalent of 1/9th of your base annual salary contract amount. [Fringe benefits](#) are paid centrally and should be excluded from the budget worksheet.
- Materials and supplies (*any item with a cost of less than \$5,000/unit must be justified as needed for project success*)
- Expenses for field work, data collection, archival research, training, educational purposes and/or presentations on research, creative or scholarly activities directly related to the proposed project
- Consultant fees
- Contracts for activities outside of UTSA (*must be clearly and convincingly describes as necessary for successful execution of the proposed project*)
- Domestic travel (Data collection, conference presentation, meeting with a collaborator). *Travel must adhere to [UTSA Financial Management Operational Guidelines](#) and [GSA per diem](#) rates.*

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

- *Fringe benefits*
- *Equipment (unit cost of \$5,000 and useable life of greater than one year)*
- *Office equipment, including computers or laptops.*
- *International travel*
- *Non-UTSA employee travel*
- *Stipends, scholarships, and/or tuition*
- *Indirect costs (F&A) costs*
- *Payment of salaries to non-UTSA personnel*
- *Refreshments. (Includes food/refreshments for participants, business meals. Excludes meals while on travel).*
- *Hosting conferences, workshops, or seminars*
- *Travel to visit program officers*

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.

NOTE- *If awarded, applicants are unable to reallocate funds without prior approval from the Office of Research.*

Please contact seedgrants@utsa.edu prior to working with your departmental financial lead to allocate funds differently from that described in your approved application. The Office of Research will review costs to ensure it is an allowable expense. When budgeting for participant support, estimate with most accuracy as possible. Reallocation to and from this spending category is not permissible.

7. BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES (3-5 PAGES, AS LIMITED BY THE FORMAT SELECTED)

Biographic sketch attachments must be included for PI (primary applicant) and any Co-PIs (co-applicants). [SciENCv \(NIH or NSF format\)](#) must be used.

Collaborators or other personnel who are not identified as Co-PI's are not required to submit supporting documents; however, their roles must be clearly defined in the project description.

8. CURRENT, PENDING AND OTHER RECENT SUPPORT (NO LIMIT, USE [SCIENCv TEMPLATE](#))

Current, Pending, and other Recent Support attachments must be included for PI (primary applicant) and any Co-PIs (co-applicants). Details for all current, pending, and other recently funded (within last 3 years, if already complete) projects must be described in an attachment, including this project. The following must be included for each project:

- Label of Pending, Current, or Other Recently Funded
- Project Proposal Title
- Source of Support (i.e., sponsor name)
- Total Award Amount
- Total Award Period Covered (e.g., 9/1/20 – 8/31/21)
- Person Months Per Year Committed to Project (i.e., academic and/or summer months)

Faculty unfamiliar with SciENCv are encouraged to review this [FAQ sheet](#) provided by the National Science Foundation and direct questions directly to their [College Research Administration Team](#).

9. GRANT AGREEMENT (SEE END OF THIS DOCUMENT)

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

Please ensure signatures are correctly captured when combining files into a single document.

PEER REVIEW

Applications will be reviewed by an internal Seed Grant Review Committee established annually by the Office of Research. This committee is appointed by Office of Research staff, in consultation with UTSA Associate Deans for Research (ADRs). The committee will be divided into two (2) review panels, as follows:

- **Panel 1:** ACOB, COEHD, COLFA, HCaP, KCEID- School of Architecture and Planning (unless otherwise advised by the KCEID ADR)
- **Panel 2:** KCEID and COS

Committee members on both panels 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 should avoid discipline-specific terminology/jargon as much as possible. The Seed Grant Review committee will review proposals and make recommendations to the Office of Research. Funding decisions will be based primarily on the committee’s recommendations; however, final decisions will rest with the Office of Research. The percentage of proposals selected for award will be relative to the number of total applications received (i.e. the panel with the greatest number of submissions will receive the greatest number of awards, proportionally).

Proposals will be evaluated based on the weighted criteria below. The PI (primary applicant) is expected to include all required proposal components and to fully and clearly address each criteria.

Review Criteria	Max Point Allocation
Is the project described in sufficient detail and 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
Did the proposal address whether the project is a new direction from the applicant's (or team's) existing research efforts and the potential impact of this new direction? Does research overlap with currently funded projects?	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 enhancement of cross-disciplinary research partnerships?	10
Did proposal describe the broader impact to the field and to society?	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
Total Points Possible	100

GRANT ADMINISTRATION

The 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.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Update Meeting/Report will be requested by Office of Research staff in July 2026. Applicants awarded funding under this opportunity will be required to submit their final report to the Office of Research using the UTSA Seed Grant Reporting Form on InfoReady, capturing both quantitative and qualitative output. Awardees will be provided final reporting instructions prior to the end of their project. The PI (primary applicant) is responsible for submitting a Final Grant Report no later than **April 30, 2027**.

A final report must be filed with the Office of Research in order for members of the project team to be considered for future Office of Research Seed Grant funding. A second-year performance report will be required one year after the due date of the initial report to fulfill the grant requirements.

Extramural Grant Submission Required

Awardees must produce a new proposal for extramural funding as part of the final report within one year of completion of this 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 Office of Research. If neither an extramural proposal nor waiver is submitted, no new Office of Research funds will be made available to the PI (primary applicant) or Co-PIs (co-applicants) until an extramural proposal or waiver is submitted. **The applicants must submit a report to the Office of Research describing the extramural grant submission details by April 30, 2028.**

CONTACT INFORMATION

Lyndsey Lepovitz
Research Program Coordinator
Office of Research
Email: seedgrants@utsa.edu

**All emails regarding this program should be sent directly to the Seed Grant inbox.*

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 the Office of Research staff at SeedGrants@utsa.edu.

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

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

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 the Office of 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:

Office of Faculty Research Development

Email: SeedGrants@utsa.edu

5. Submit at least one extramural proposal for funding to support the future progress of the project within one year of completion of the GREAT award period.

6. Adhere to the assigned GREAT program timeline:

October 6, 2025— Grant performance period begins (i.e., funds available)

July 1-15, 2026—Project update meeting requested

March 1, 2027—All funds must be spent

March 31, 2027—Grant performance period ends (unspent funds will be swept April 2)

April 30, 2027—Final project report due

April 30, 2028—Year Two Project Report due

7. Respond to all inquiries and communications from the Office of Research related to this funded project.

8. Participate as a reviewer on at least one a Seed Grant Review Committee(s) during or after award period.

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR (PI) / CO- INVESTIGATOR (Co-PI)

Signature:

Proposal Title:

Date:

PI/CO-PI SUPERVISOR- *I agree with PI/Co-PI's obligation and responsibilities for this funding opportunity*

Signature:

Date: