Chancellor's Fund for Innovation and Collaboration

Purpose

The Chancellor's Fund now has three subsets: the Innovation and Collaboration Fund, the Commercialization Fund, and the Gap Fund. The Commercialization Fund information was made available on Feb. 1, 2019. The Innovation and Collaboration Fund will be offered for the third consecutive year, and information on the 2019 funding cycle will be available on Feb. 6, 2019. A newly created Gap Fund will be released Feb. 8, 2019.

With the announcement of the university's signature research areas in January 2019, the third round of the Innovation and Collaboration Fund is aimed at further developing the intellectual and creative environment of the University of Arkansas by investing in the signature research areas. As the state's flagship research university, the university must continue to build and strengthen its research and discovery enterprise. The Innovation and Collaboration Fund provides seed funding to support bold thinking and risk taking that can launch discovery- and creativity-based initiatives that advance the university's signature research areas, build a collaborative and innovative campus, strengthen campus graduate programs, and promote innovations in teaching and learning.

The university will invest approximately $1 million in this fund for 2019 to support cutting-edge ideas and collaborations. The fund will provide support for a number of new research, discovery, and creative activity opportunities that have not been possible given the dearth of external competitive programs that support "early stage" funding of new projects and collaborations, as well as financial constraints previously faced at the university. Fund investments into faculty-initiated projects will not only lead to new academic directions, but they will also increase the competitiveness of the university and faculty for external funding and raise the recognition and distinction of the University of Arkansas' discovery, innovation, creative activities, and scholarly programs.

Eligibility

Funding will be awarded to research teams who propose projects that bring the academic community together in exciting and innovative ways. All full-time faculty at University of Arkansas – Fayetteville are eligible to serve as a group principal investigator.

Example Projects

Examples of projects that potentially could receive funds include, but are not limited to

- Proposals for research, creative activities, teaching, and outreach that promote faculty and student innovation and collaboration. These would be grants that essentially allow investigative or creative teams to collect valuable preliminary data or perhaps demonstrate proof-of-concept for pursuing external sources of support.
- Proposals that focus on interdisciplinary discovery areas that are emerging and require a variety of expertise from disciplines across campus. These investments will be guided strongly by the recently announced research signature areas of the university. Examples of themes that align with the signature areas include, but are definitely not limited to, topics such as
    - data science, data analytics, big data, and data visualization
    - interdisciplinary approaches to design to enrich community vibrancy
    - sustainability and resiliency
    - food systems
    - nano and materials science
    - energy and the environment
    - integrative approaches to improving human health and minimizing health disparities
    - social justice
    - digital humanities
    - supply chain, retail and transportation
- Collaborative research partnerships with UAMS for health-related projects that will lead to future NIH funding or funding from other external sources
- Projects that promote collaborative and research-based experiential teaching and learning for undergraduate, graduate, and professional students, particularly those that can develop into initiatives that can attract external support

    Promoting discovery through interdisciplinary efforts that integrate diverse disciplines (sciences, engineering, arts, business, and the humanities) is encouraged.

Budget and Timeline

- Projects can be funded once for a period of one to three years. Given that projects are aimed at seeding new initiatives, most funded projects should have a timeline of less than two years. Projects up to three years will be considered if the project period is well justified in the proposal.
- The maximum total project budget is $150,000 direct costs, with no F&A. The fund will be used to support new projects only; any previous or concurrent

funding for the proposed ideas make them ineligible for the Innovation and Collaboration fund.
- Funds cannot be requested for summer salaries or for course buy-outs for project PIs and co-PIs.
- Co-investment from the participating units is a requirement. Co-investment varies from discipline to discipline and is not a component of the review criteria.

Proposals Should Include

- A one paragraph project abstract written for a "lay person" (i.e., minimal use of scientific/technical jargon) that clearly describes the overall idea, the nature of and impetus for collaboration, and the potential outcomes of the proposed activity.
- A project description of no more than three pages that includes
  1. The specific aims of the proposal and why seed funding from this fund is needed to launch the idea
  2. A description of the anticipated project activities
  3. A clear statement of expected outcomes and the metrics that will be used to measure success of the proposed project
  4. The relationship of the proposal activities to one or more signature areas.
- A project budget and one-page budget justification, which includes a co-investment from the department(s)/college(s) involved.
- A list of the project team, including a short statement of each individual's role in the project and a two-page curriculum vita of each investigator.
- We expect all proposed projects are in full compliance with university, state, and federal research policies and laws. A statement will be required in the narrative that investigators will seek IRB/IBC/IACUC approval, if applicable, and provide necessary documentation of approval before beginning work. Funds will not be transferred until IRB/IBC/IACUC approval is received.

Proposal Review and Criteria

- Proposals will be read and reviewed by a faculty panel led by the Vice Chancellor for Research and Innovation that is comprised of 6-8 faculty selected from across the university. The panel will make funding recommendations to the Chancellor, who will make a final decision.
- Proposals will be evaluated on
  - Quality and potential transformative nature of the project in advancing a university research signature area
  - Quality and intensity of the proposed collaboration, and the likelihood that the project, and collaborations, would not have occurred as quickly, fully or at all without this seed funding

- o The probability that a successful project can leverage future sources of support
- o The potential of a successful project might have to raise the recognition and distinction of the university.

The university expects to make 10-15 awards annually.

How to Apply

Proposals may be submitted online through chancellorsfund.uark.edu, which will become available for submission February 6 to March 12. Instructions and a budget template can be found here. Submission deadline: No proposals will be accepted after 11:59pm, March 12, 2019. Award notifications will be by June 30, 2019.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Who can be PI or Co-PI? Who can receive funding?

A: All University of Arkansas (Fayetteville) full time faculty (both tenure and non-tenure track) are eligible to be PI on the grant. Faculty from collaborating institutions, students, and research staff can be Co-PI or participants in a collaborative team. Salary support can only be requested for U of A employees in positions of postdocs, graduate students, undergraduates, and staff. Sub-awards will not be made to other institutions. Postdocs, students, or staff supported by the funds need to be supervised by a U of A employee on this project, but they can also work with team members from collaborating institutions.

Q: Can someone be involved in more than one proposal?
A: The purpose of this fund is to seed the most exciting and innovative ideas on campus. As such, an investigator may only be PI on one project. However, the PI may serve as co-PI on other proposed projects

Q: Can tuition be included in the budget request?
A: Yes, both tuition and a stipend for a graduate student can be included, but this may be an area to ask for matching support from units.

Q: Can an advisor or consultant be paid from the grant?
A: Yes, if the function is needed for the proposed project; no sub-awards are allowed.

Q: What are the procedures for equipment purchased from this grant?
A: Equipment would be purchased by the university following all applicable university policies and procedures. Equipment purchased as part of this funding is owned by the university. Equipment may be placed off campus for data collection, if necessary.

Q: Does the grant need to include indirect funding?
A: No. Since this is internal funding only, no indirect cost(s) need to be budgeted.

Q: What is meant by co-investments?
A: It is understood that not all units will have access to large discretionary funds.

However, the department can generate support for the proposal by cost sharing. Resources can include release time for the investigator, graduate student support, and equipment usage in addition to financial support.

Q: Can proposals that are not funded be re-submitted?
A: Yes. If funds are available again next year, any proposals that are not funded may be re-submitted next academic year, assuming that the proposed project has still not received any funding, including external or internal (e.g., the Commercialization Fund or Gap Fund).