REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
Research, Scholarly, and Creative Activities (RSCA) Grant Program
Deadline: Monday, February 8, 2021, 11:59pm PST

Background
Cal Poly is committed to the teacher-scholar model in which faculty integrate excellence in teaching with excellence in research, scholarly and creative activities. The teacher-scholar model enables faculty to fulfill Cal Poly’s mission as an institution committed to quality undergraduate and graduate education, to the advancement of knowledge through basic and applied research, to the enrichment of society through creative activities in the arts and humanities, and to serving our community. The Research, Scholarly and Creative Activities (RSCA) Grant Program, supported by funds from the CSU Chancellor’s Office and Cal Poly, is intended to help faculty remain engaged in their disciplines beyond the classroom and to contribute new knowledge through robust programs of scholarship focused on strengthening California socially, culturally, and economically. The annual funding from the program is intended to provide more internal resources to help faculty pursue a broader array of professional activities.

Who may apply?
All faculty unit employees are eligible to compete for funding. Awards are provided only to those who hold a current appointment for the duration of the award (July 2021 - June 2022); exceptions may be granted but require review by the Vice President of Research, Economic Development and Graduate Education and the Dean of the respective college. This funding is intended to provide support to new faculty (i.e., less than six years as a Cal Poly faculty member; faculty appointment after July 2015) and to help tenured faculty open new scholarly directions. For tenured faculty, it is necessary to provide the reviewers specific information that demonstrates the proposed research is a new scholarly direction. This funding is not intended to be an ongoing source of funding for faculty research projects.

- Applicants may only submit up to two proposals, either 1) one as the PI and one as a Co-PI, or 2) two as a Co-PI; submitting two proposals as PI is not allowed.
- Applicants also cannot submit a proposal as a PI if they have received two RSCA awards in the preceding 5 years (2016-17 through 2020-21); this limit does not apply to submissions as a Co-PI.
- Applicants can only re-submit the same proposal three times – one original submission and two resubmissions.

PIs and Co-PIs are not eligible to receive a new grant if they have any past-due progress reports for previous RSCA grants.
What types of projects will be funded?
The program is intended to fund all types of research, scholarly, and creative activities. This includes but is not limited to empirical and theoretical research, applied design and development, scholarship of teaching and learning, writing of books, and the production of art and other creative activities. Proposed projects must be related to the generation of new knowledge and learning and it is incumbent upon the PI to clarify these potential contributions.

What types of projects will not be funded?
Grants will not be awarded for instructional improvement, course development, or evaluation. If the scholarship is pedagogically focused, which is a fundable research type, it is incumbent upon the applicant to make the research agenda to produce new knowledge clear.

What review criteria will apply?
Proposals will be evaluated according to standardized criteria, including intellectual merit, significance and role in advancing the field or discipline, feasibility, accrued benefits to the University, candidate's profession, and/or students, and the qualifications of the faculty PI and collaborators.

In order to ensure proposals are equitably reviewed, the committee uses a review model based on full-time equivalent (FTE) faculty across the six colleges, ensuring proposals are reviewed against other proposals in the same college. Additionally, each proposal is reviewed by three reviewers from the Academic Senate Grants Review Committee.

The following additional criteria will be considered in assigning funding priority:
- Project interdisciplinarity
- Potential of the project to attract future funding
- Support of fields and disciplines with minimal access to external funding
- Involvement of students

For more information, please find the rubric and rating definitions on the Research, Economic Development and Graduate Education (R-EDGE) website.

Please note that the RSCA funding program is highly competitive due to funding limitations, and it is possible that high quality proposals will not be funded.

When can projects begin?
Projects may begin on July 1, 2021.

**For what may funding be used?**

All justified and normally allowable expenses will be considered:

- Faculty Compensation: Assigned time must be used during the academic year and additional compensation can be used during the summer or academic year.
- Faculty assigned time: The maximum amount that can be requested is 8 WTUs per project and per person in an award cycle.
  - If an individual proposal requests 8 WTUs for one or more faculty, this is the maximum award and no other funding requests can be included in the $18,000 maximum budget.
  - An individual applicant, whether PI or Co-PI, may only receive up to 8 WTUs per award cycle and no proposal can request more than 8 WTUs. Please use the estimated assigned time rate of $2250.
  - If awarded and unable to take the assigned time as proposed, it can be converted to additional compensation. The value of the conversion cannot exceed the value of the assigned time and is capped at $9,000.
- Additional compensation: An individual, whether PI or Co-PI, may only receive up to $9,000 per award cycle and no proposal can request more than $9,000, which is half of the allowed RSCA project maximum ($18,000).
- Support for student research assistants: Explain how the work is educationally beneficial to students.
- Support for temporary personnel: This may include consultants and/or collaborators (non-Cal Poly employees).
- Supplies, services, and equipment.
- Travel to conduct research as allowed by current COVID19 restrictions. Conference travel is not allowed. Travel reimbursement rates will be based on Cal Poly travel guidelines.
- Incentives for research subjects must meet CSU and State fiscal requirements. Contact R-EDGE in advance of submitting your proposal if your project includes incentives so we can assist you in making sure your use of incentives is compliant.
- All funds awarded must be used for the specific, approved purposes and may not be converted to other uses without prior authorization.

**For what may funding not be used?**

Additional compensation requests are limited (see the statement above). Monies will not be awarded for the purpose of attending conferences, courses, workshops, or professional meetings unless the applicant is conducting research at these sites.
When must projects be completed?
Projects must be completed by June 30, 2022. Extensions may be given under special circumstances.

At what level will the projects be funded?
The award maximum is $18,000 or 8 WTUs of assigned time.

Is there a specified proposal format?
The proposal should be written for reviewers who are not experts in the applicant's specific field. It is incumbent upon the applicant to write their proposal so that their non-disciplinary colleagues can judge the merit of their proposals. If involving students, please explain how the work is educationally beneficial to students.

Proposals will be submitted through InfoReady. See “Proposal Submission” below for how to access InfoReady. Please refer to the InfoReady template for all application fields. We have highlighted key aspects of the application here:

- **Abstract** (250-word limit). Introduce the proposed work.
- **Expected Major Goals and Outcomes** (1000-word limit). Include goals and objectives, methodology, and theoretical justification. Also indicate here the scholarly significance including the impact on student learning and involvement in research. Your description should include measures that can be used to evaluate the success of your project.
- **Project Timeline** (250-word limit). The grant period will be July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022. Outline a schedule of tasks/milestones, including in which month(s) they will be commenced/completed, and how they connect to your project objectives.
- **Budget and Budget Justification**. Line items should be clearly related to the scope of work. The InfoReady application has separate boxes for budget line items and justification (i.e. "Proposal Total Budget ($)" and "PI Assigned/Release Time" through "Projected Other Costs"). If involving students, please explain how the involvement is educationally beneficial in the description boxes of undergraduate and graduate student costs. Please view the application for details.
- **Intended Products and External Grant/Contract Funding Agencies**. Provide a description of the expected outcomes and how the findings will be used. If the proposed project is preliminary to seeking external funding, provide detail on potential sources of funding.
• **Curriculum Vitae.** Provide a current curriculum vitae for faculty applicant(s). Max two pages each. If your proposal involves co-PIs, please combine all CVs into one file and upload it with your InfoReady application.

• **Additional Support.** A list of former, current, or pending support for this or related work, the sources and amount awarded, scholarly products resulting from the support. If support from Cal Poly was provided in the past, the outcome must be described. Please upload this with your InfoReady application.

**Conducting research during the COVID-19 outbreak**

Project faculty and students should be conducting research remotely where possible during the time period in which Cal Poly has limited access to campus due to the COVID-19 outbreak. In the limited cases in which this is not possible, researchers must request university approval via existing processes and follow all campus COVID-19 prevention and safety protocols, including frequent handwashing, cleaning protocols, physical distancing, and wearing a face covering. More information can be found on our [website](#). Faculty must also have all participants sign a safety acknowledgement. Note: The CSU Chancellor’s Office has recently announced that, at this time, the CSU is planning for face-to-face classes in Fall 2021. RSCA proposals may be submitted with the operating assumption that campus will reopen in Fall 2021. However, we encourage PIs to continue to explore the feasibility of their proposed project should restrictions that are currently in place continue into the 2020-21 academic year.

**When will I be notified?**

All proposals will be reviewed by the Academic Senate Grants Review Committee and additional internal or external reviewers as necessary. Applicants will be notified near the end of Spring quarter whether their proposals have been recommended for an award with funds available July 1, 2021.

**What are the reporting requirements?**

The Chancellor’s Office requires progress reports at 6, 12, and 18 months via the InfoReady system. Awardees will be notified when reports are due.

**Proposal Submission**

- Proposals are due on Monday, February 8, 2021 by 11:59p PST.
- Submit your proposal via the [Cal Poly InfoReady system](#).
- From the InfoReady homepage, select "Log In" in the upper right-hand corner, and click on the blue "Cal Poly San Luis Obispo Login" button. Use your Cal Poly credentials to log in. Then select "Research, Economic Development and Graduate Education" from the drop-down menu in the upper left corner.
Then click on the 2021-2022 Research, Scholarly & Creative Activities Grant Program link under "Applications and Competitions for Research Support Programs." You will then be able to submit an application.

Prior to review by the Academic Senate Grants Review Committee, Research, Economic Development and Graduate Education will route submitted proposals for approval by the proposer's Department Chair and Dean after these are submitted by the PI via InfoReady. Assigned time and added compensation requests will be approved via this routing. If a proposal is not approved by a Department Chair or Dean, the faculty member will be notified.

If you have questions regarding this request for proposals, contact Allie Walter at abwalter@calpoly.edu or at 805-756-5153. You may also visit our website.