



OFFICE of the
VICE PROVOST
for RESEARCH

EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

Research Funding Program

ETSU's vision is to be recognized, through funding and program rankings, as one of the premier R2 research universities in the nation. In support of this vision, the University, through the Office of the Vice Provost for Research (OVPR), is committed to financially supporting high-quality, rigorous, impactful scholarship. The OVPR **Research Funding Program (RFP) Awards**, awarded annually, fund proposals that likely lead to external funding, increased institutional reputation, and significant missional impact.

Eligibility

Full-time, tenure-track or tenured faculty, clinical faculty, and research faculty are eligible to apply. While faculty at any rank are eligible to apply, preference will be given to junior, tenure-track faculty. Eligible faculty must have a minimum of 25% effort devoted to research. Faculty may submit only one proposal per funding cycle.

Funding Amount & Period

Maximum of \$15,000 per individual award. Two or more eligible applicants may submit collaborative proposals with a budget of up to \$20,000. The role of each collaborator must be clearly defined in the proposal. The award period is 15 months (July 1, 2023-September 30, 2024). No cost extensions are at the discretion of the Associate Dean(s) for Research and Vice Provost for Research. Award amounts may be less than the amount requested.

Allowable Expenses

In addition to project-specific expenses (e.g., supplies, equipment), RFP Awards can support summer salary for 9-month appointments (if not covered by startup funds or another institutional resource), course buyout, graduate/undergraduate student support, and research-related travel. Article processing charges can be included for publications resulting from RFP-supported research. However, RFP Awards will not cover article processing charges for non-RFP publications. Travel to present RFP-related findings can be included. If the award covers summer salary, the faculty member being covered is prohibited from teaching during the summer session.

Application Details

The application deadline for FY24 funding is February 24, 2023. Please submit applications to the Vice Provost for Research (hagemeier@etsu.edu). Applications must be submitted as a single pdf document. Applications should be formatted to mirror the formatting requirements of an anticipated proposal submitted to an external funding source (e.g., [NSF](#), [NIH](#)), including adherence to line spacing, font size, and margins.

Application Checklist:

- PI Information Form (1 page)**
- Specific Aims (1 page maximum)** – Concisely state the overarching goal(s), central hypothesis, specific aims/objectives, and expected outcomes of the proposed project. Concisely describe how this project, if funded, is likely to lead to external funding, increased institutional reputation, and significant missional impact.
- Research Strategy (3 page maximum)** – Describe your project in language that can be understood by an educated nonexpert; avoid jargon and technical details that would only be accessible to an expert in the field. Elements of the research strategy can include background information, preliminary research, significance, innovation, objectives/aims, approach/methodology, the roles of collaborators, data collection, and data analysis. Tailor the research strategy to reflect the anticipated external funding source to which a subsequent proposal will be submitted. Describe expected outputs (e.g., publications) in terms of quality and quantity. Describe the project activities, activity durations, and milestones that will occur. A Gantt chart and/or logic model may be included.
- RFP Budget Form (1 page)** - Using the RFP Budget Form, list all anticipated expenses by category. See **Allowable Expenses** section in RFP Award information.
- Budget Justification (1 page maximum)** – Provide a justification for all expenses. Poorly justified expenses are unlikely to be funded. Faculty with access to startup funds should clearly explain why the startup funds cannot be used for budgeted items in this proposal. Applicants are encouraged to work with Ms. Cynthia Hardin (hardinc@etsu.edu), Associate Director of Sponsored Programs, for budget construction.
- References Cited (1 page maximum)** – Standard citation format for the applicant’s academic field can be used.
- Abbreviated CV or Biosketch (2 page maximum)** – Include education, training, relevant publications, and past 3 years of funding history, both sought and awarded.
- Signed PI/Chair Commitment Form (1 page)**

Evaluation Process and Criteria

Complete proposals will be evaluated by the University Research Council (URC). The URC will make recommendations for funding to the Vice Provost for Research. Criteria against which proposals will be evaluated include:

- Investigator qualifications (10%)
 - Does the PI meet eligibility criteria?
 - Is the PI qualified to conduct the research?
 - Are there gaps in expertise on the research team?
- Impact (30%)
 - Does the proposal significantly improve the likelihood of the PI obtaining external funding?
 - Will the proposal likely lead to increased institutional recognition?
 - To what extent will the project significantly contribute to institutional impact?
- Proposal strength and quality (40%)
 - To what extent does the proposal provide a compelling argument for funding?
 - To what extent does the proposal represent a significant contribution to the PI’s field of study?
 - Are the overall strategy, methodology, and analyses well-reasoned and appropriate to accomplish the specific aims of the project?
- Budget Justification (20%)
 - Is the budget fully justified and reasonable in relation to the proposed research?

Awardee Responsibilities

Awardees agree to the following RFP Award requirements:

- Submit progress report to ADR and VPR by January 15, 2024.
- Submit project-related press release to be featured in ETSU marketing and communications within 30 days of project completion.
- Submit final report to ADR and VPR within 30 days of project completion.
- Notify the ADR and VPR of all RFP-related outputs (e.g., publications, external grant awards) as they become available.
- Follow all ETSU purchasing, travel, and personnel guidelines.
- Complete all work during the funding period or send a written request for an extension to the VPR a minimum of 60 days prior to the end of the grant period.
- Include an acknowledgement of support from ETSU on any publication or presentation of work funded fully or in part by the ETSU Research Funding Program
- In collaboration with the Department Chair, fund any expenditures in excess of the total budget, unallowed charges, and expenditures made beyond the grant expiration date.
- Return all grant funds remaining to the Office of the Vice Provost for Research if the grantee leaves the University during the funding period.
- Return all grant funds remaining at the end of the grant period back to the Office of the Vice Provost for Research.