Faculty First Award Program
Office of Research and Engagement

Submission/Proposal Development Questions? Contact Eileen Miller (ecmille2@uncg.edu) or Kim Littlefield (kplittle@uncg.edu)

Budget Questions? Contact Barbara Hemphill (bbhemphi@uncg.edu)

Overview
The UNC Greensboro (UNCG) Office of Research and Engagement (ORE) provides intramural research support in the form of competitive Faculty First Awards. These funds are awarded to initiate or enhance research, scholarship, and creative activity. Faculty may apply for up to $5,000 for individual, or $10,000 for collaborative projects submitted by two or more UNCG faculty.

Faculty may apply to the Faculty First Award Program from December 15, 2020 through 5pm on Friday February 5, 2021.

Eligibility
Full-time UNCG tenured or untenured tenure-track faculty are eligible to apply for Faculty First Awards. Faculty applicants must:

- Have been successfully reviewed for reappointment or tenure, if applicable.
- Have completed all work toward the terminal degree.
- Have submitted a final report for all previous ORE-sponsored internal awards.
- Faculty may not hold overlapping New and Regular Faculty Research and Faculty First internal awards sponsored by ORE. Awardees of the following ORE-sponsored programs are not eligible to apply to the 2021 cycle of the Faculty First Award Program: 2019 and 2020 New and Regular Faculty Research Award Program.

Faculty First Award Program at a Glance
- Projects that initiate or enhance research, scholarship, and creative activity are encouraged.
- Awards are $5,000; $10,000 for collaborative proposals.
- Proposal submission deadline is February 5th, 2021 @ 5pm.
- Proposal documents must be submitted through the InfoReady Review portal.
- Funding decisions are expected by April 2, 2021.
- Funding period is May 1, 2021 – October 31, 2022. *New* 18-month project term.
Two or more eligible applicants may submit collaborative proposals with a budget of up to $10,000. The role of each collaborator must be clearly defined in the proposal.

Applicants may submit one internal funding proposal for consideration per cycle. If an applicant is included on a collaborative project submission, that is considered a submission and the applicant is not eligible to submit an additional individual project submission.

**Submitting the Application**

Applicants will submit their application using UNCG’s instance of InfoReady Review at: [2021 Faculty First Award Program Portal](https://uncg.infoready4.com/#competitionDetail/1829878). To begin the submission process applicants MUST decide upon which one of four subcommittees they want to review their proposal: **Arts & Humanities, Creative & Performing Arts, Social & Behavioral Sciences, or Physical & Natural Sciences**. It is recommended that an applicant select a subcommittee based on the content of the proposal rather than on traditional departmental or discipline categories. Once decided, the applicant will select the proposal submission shell (competition link) that corresponds to the appropriate subcommittee:

**Arts & Humanities:**
https://uncg.infoready4.com/#competitionDetail/1829878

**Creative & Performing Arts:**
https://uncg.infoready4.com/#competitionDetail/1829991

**Social & Behavioral Sciences:**
https://uncg.infoready4.com/#competitionDetail/1829984

**Physical & Natural Sciences:**
https://uncg.infoready4.com/#competitionDetail/1829983

Applicants should be prepared to complete the following fields in the online application form:

- Departmental Affiliation(s) of PI and Co-PIs (if applicable)
- College/School and Department affiliations of PI and Co-PIs (if applicable);
- New or Regular Faculty?
- Date of permanent appointment to UNCG.
- Resubmission of a previous ORE-sponsored internal funding program proposal? Y or N
- Amount of funding requested.
- IRB or IACUC protocol approval status information if the research involves human or animal subjects, respectively. Additional information is available here: https://integrity.uncg.edu/
- Hazardous or radioactive materials use protocol approval status information. Indicate whether the protocol has been submitted or approved. Additional information is available here: https://integrity.uncg.edu/
• Google Drive folder upload instructions (if applicable). Applicants who wish to link to digital products, especially creative and performing arts applicants who wish to support their proposal with the inclusion of artistic products (images, sound etc.) should create a shared Google Drive folder and copy/paste the shared folder address into the InfoReady Review application form where indicated. Instructions on how to create a shared Google Drive folder are attached in Competition Files. If you need technical assistance in creating a Google Drive folder, please contact oretech@uncg.edu
  o Creative and Performing Arts applicants may also submit links to 3rd party websites via the application form.

**Formatting**
Applications should be prepared in 12-point Times New Roman or 11-point Arial, single spaced, with 1-inch margins on all sides.

**Components of the Application**
There are two main components to the application:
I. Research Proposal
II. Proposal Budget and Justification

Each component requires a separate upload.

I. **RESEARCH PROPOSAL:** The research proposal must include the following six components, submitted in the order listed here. Please label each section using the headings listed below. Number the pages with the Signature Page as page 1. Applicants are required to upload their research proposal as a single PDF file through the appropriate subcommittee proposal submission shell found on the InfoReady Review platform.

1. **Signature Page**
Chair/Head or Director and Dean or designee approval signatures (digital signatures are allowed) are required for all applicants, both primary and co-applicants. The signature page template is available for download under Competition Files in each subcommittee proposal submission shell.

2. **For Resubmissions Only:** Response to Reviewer’s comments (1-page limit).
A resubmission constitutes any application previously submitted under any internal award mechanism (e.g., new or regular faculty internal funding award, faculty first award) that was not funded but has been revised and resubmitted for consideration under the same or different funding program. If the project is a new idea or new topic area that has not been submitted for consideration by the UNCG faculty grants committee, then it is not considered a resubmission. For a proposal that is a resubmission, applicants should summarize the reviewers’ comments and concerns and describe how these comments and concerns have been addressed in the revised proposal. This documentation is limited to one page. If the application is a resubmission, this summary page MUST be included, and ALL reviewer comments MUST be addressed. Please keep in mind that even if all reviewer comments are addressed, it does not guarantee that the resubmission will be awarded. If the proposal is not a resubmission, indicate that section 2 is Not Applicable (NA).
3. **Progress of Research and/or Creative Activity Since Last Internal Award** (1-page limit)

If the applicant has previously been awarded an internal award, the applicant should briefly describe the progress of the research and/or creative activity project in the time since the previous project was funded. This may include peer-reviewed publications, performances, exhibitions, and/or other relevant work(s). If the applicant has not received previous internal funding, indicate that section 3 is Not Applicable (N/A). You may include audio clips, video clips, photography, and artwork as supplemental documents if these materials are directly related to the proposed scholarship. Applicants may submit links to 3rd party websites via the application form or may create a shared Google Drive folder and copy/paste the link into the application form (instructions available under **Competition Files**).

4. **Proposal Narrative** (4-page limit, not including references)

The proposal narrative is limited to four pages. Because proposals are reviewed by faculty from many different disciplines, it is important that applicants write their proposals in a way that the work to be done and the importance of that work can be understood by people who are from a different discipline or content area. The emphasis in the proposal should be on the description of what will be done during the period of the award, described in a way that any educated reader can evaluate the likelihood that the project goals will be met and that the planned work is likely to impact the field and that the results of the project will be disseminated through publication, performance, exhibition, or other discipline-appropriate forum, or future external funding for the applicant.

There are five parts (A.-E.) to the proposal narrative, as noted below, of which only A-D are included in the 4-page limit. Please clearly label each section with the headings shown here. The page guidelines for some sections below are included as suggestions with the exception of the Background and Significance section which may be as short as you would like but may not exceed 1 ½ pages. Note, the entire narrative is limited to four pages in total, including the timeline. Submissions exceeding the four-page limit will be returned without review.

**A. Non-technical Summary** (approximately 1/2 page)

The summary is an opportunity for the applicant to convince the reviewers of the value and significance of the project and to convey the importance of this particular project in the applicant’s overall program of research/scholarship. Include in the summary a description of the overall goals of the project, emphasizing the contributions that the project will make to the applicant’s program of scholarship and to his/her field of study more broadly. It is important for the summary to be written in a manner that allows reviewers who are not familiar with the applicant’s field of study to understand the goals and significance of the proposed work.

**B. Background and Significance** (not to exceed 1½ pages)

In this section, the applicant explains the importance of the project, framed in context with the current literature or creative work and clarifies to the reader how the proposed
scholarship contributes to the field and to the applicant’s own program of scholarship. The literature review need not be exhaustive but instead should be selective, with the goal of helping the non-specialist understand the value of the proposed work. This section should include a clear statement of the specific aims or objectives of the project and an explanation of the contribution the work will make when completed. Citations may be included in the text; however, footnotes should not be used; citations should correspond to a list of references or works cited that are presented on a separate page at the end of the narrative (see details in Section E.).

C. Project Design and Procedures

In this section the applicant outlines a clear plan of the work that is achievable with the time frame of the award period. Reviewers will look in this section for a description of what activities will be performed, what methodology is to be used and how the project will be conducted. The methods and significance of the work must be described in a way that can be understood by scholars from other disciplines. Note, there are discipline-specific considerations in this section of the proposal:

**Humanists** must identify the source materials to be interpreted and where they will be obtained (whether from museum collections, libraries, archives, people, field sites, etc.). If examining historical documents, artifacts, literary works, or musical compositions, the applicant should describe the nature of the information the applicant is seeking. The applicant should also describe, in as much detail as possible, how the sources will be used or interpreted.

**Physical and Natural Scientists/Social and Behavioral Scientists** must identify the specific sources of data (primary or secondary) to be collected/obtained (whether from human subjects, animals, or the physical world), how the data is to be collected/obtained and how the data will be analyzed. The applicant should provide as much detail as possible to explain the process by which the data will be reduced, integrated or interpreted.

**Creative and Performing Artists/Musicians/Scholars** must explain their plans and procedures and how the proposed work relates to ideas, theories, problems, studio customs or performance practice in their field. Work Samples will be accepted in support of the project design and procedures under the guidelines below: Submit between two and four work samples of past or present work. Prioritize samples that relate to the proposed project.

This is a very important part of the application as *the work-sample illustrates the artistic merit of the applicant’s work*. Please choose media of the highest artistic/musical/scholarly quality that is relevant creative work of the artist(s) involved in the application, such as recordings, videos, still photographs, scores, scripts, design sketches, etc.
Work Sample Submission Guidelines
When submitting your work samples in digital format, please keep in mind that our panelists typically have access to standard, universally available audio/visual and computer equipment or software. The guidelines below were written to help ensure that review panelists can play your media and/or access your files without complications.

Digital Images
Image titles should clearly identify who the image was submitted by and be limited only to relevant work. The following file formats can be accepted for digital audio files: .jpeg, .gif, .png, bpm or .tiff. Other formats may not be supported.

Digital Audio
The following file formats can be accepted for digital audio files: .wav, .mp3 or .mp4. Other formats may not be supported.

Digital Video
The following file formats can be accepted for digital video files: .mov or .mp4. Other formats may not be supported.

D. Project Timeline
Include enough details about the tasks and milestones (quarterly milestone information will suffice) to demonstrate when project activities are projected to occur over the course of the award period. Be sure the tasks described in the Project Design and Procedures section are included in the timeline. Any task or milestone presented in the timeline should be described in the proposal narrative and vice versa.

E. List of References/Cited Works (Not included in 4-page proposal narrative limit; discipline specific format is acceptable)

Include only the references or works cited in the proposal narrative. Include this information on a separate numbered page following Section D of the project narrative.

5. Other Internal and External Support (begin this section on a new page)
One of the main objectives of the ORE-sponsored internal award programs is to increase applicant’s capacity to submit competitive proposals that garner external award support. It is important that the reviewers are aware of previous internal and external funding awarded to, and stewarded by, the applicant(s) - their funding track record(s) - to assess the likelihood and potential that the project under consideration will contribute to the development of a competitive proposal to seek external support. Thus, this section is very important to complete in detail; lack of information in this section could result in an applicant, with an otherwise strong application, to be denied funding.

Please organize the information into the following three sections:
a) **Prior internal support** – provide a list of New Faculty/Regular Faculty Research Awards, Faculty First Awards, or internal grants from the applicant’s Department or School/College received *in the last five years*. Include type of award, title, and dates of funding for each project. Final reports must have been submitted for each completed University award in order to receive additional internal awards. If applicants are requesting funding for another phase of a project funded previously by an internal award, they should clearly explain their progress on the project to date.

b) **Planned on-going support** – include the names of any funding agencies or foundations or external partners (e.g., industry) to which you plan to submit a proposal that is related to the project for which internal funding is sought, the planned submission dates (be specific), a brief (2-3 sentences) description of the content of the proposal, and an approximate budget amount. If the agency or organization is not widely known (for example, a regional or specialized foundation), provide information regarding the nature of funding provided by that agency with the application. It is helpful to explain how completion of the proposed internally funded project will make you more competitive for the follow-on funding and/or is essential for the expansion of the project. While we realize that some disciplines have limited opportunities for additional funding, *plans for seeking future funding are required of all applicants*. If you need assistance in identifying possible funding sponsors, please contact your Associate Dean of Research and/or your Office of Sponsored Programs department liaison.

c) **Previous external support and awards and proposals submitted** – include projects currently funded from external sources, proposals submitted within the last two years but not funded, and proposals submitted and pending a funding decision. For each proposal, include the investigators’ names, funding agency, title of project, dates of funding received or requested, and budget amount. Fellowships are considered external funding. Awards and prizes for scholarly work that are directly related to the proposal topic should be included.

d) On a separate page, the applicant(s) should describe any other funding or support (such as in-kind or donor support) that has been committed in support of the project or line of scholarship related to the project, as well as any past, current, and future projects. If this internal proposal is a joint application from two or more faculty members, this information must be provided for all applicants.

6. **Curriculum Vitae** (3 pages maximum, begin this section on a new page)

The CV should include the applicant’s education, employment history, and a bibliography of recent and/or relevant publications or creative works or activities. The CV is limited to three pages for each applicant and co-applicant. **A CV must be provided for each faculty member named in the proposal.**

II. **PROPOSAL BUDGET AND JUSTIFICATION:** Faculty First Awards require a budget and a narrative justification for each item in the budget. The budget form and narrative justification should be compiled into a single PDF and uploaded as a separate attachment in the
proposal submission shell. Use of the Budget Summary Form (an excel file) available for download from the competition files section of each subcommittee proposal submission shell, is required. A separate page headed “Budget Justification” should contain narrative information for each budget category, including a description of the line items proposed in each budget category (one page limit). Be specific about budget item requests, especially for personnel (explaining number of hours and hourly rate, if appropriate, as well as the nature of work to be performed). The budget request should be presented in whole dollar amounts, rounding as needed. All budgetary items must be in accord with UNCG’s policies. Purchasing guidelines can be found at https://purchasing.uncg.edu/. Employment of undergraduate or graduate students or other personnel must follow UNCG guidelines.

**Allowable Expenses:**

- Personnel costs: Salary for faculty and staff; wages for undergraduate and graduate students, based on the standard wage for the department unless the applicant justifies a higher rate, and fringe benefits as required according to UNCG policies.
- Travel expenses necessary for completion of the proposed work, including international travel – per diem and mileage rates must meet current UNCG guidelines (https://sys.uncg.edu/policies-and-procedures/).
- Supplies and equipment necessary to complete the project and that are not readily available on campus or through the applicant’s department.
- Software necessary to complete the project that is not available through Information Technology Services.

**NOTE:** *All personnel costs must include fringe benefits.* Click here for current Fringe Benefits.

Employer fringe and tax costs are paid from the budgeted amount prior to distribution to the employee. For example, a request for $5,000 in salary for a 9 or 12-month faculty member will result in approximately $1,240 in fringe benefits (e.g., retirement, FICA) Thus, $3,760 would be the employee salary amount from which the appropriate individual taxes would be deducted. Requests for travel expenditures require an explanation of the reason for the travel and a breakdown of the request (e.g., airfare, per diem for meals, and lodging rate per day).

**Expenses Not Allowed:**

- Travel to a professional meeting or conference.
- Travel that is not essential to completion of the research (i.e., travel to consult with a colleague or mentor is generally not considered essential and would need to be well justified to be supported).
- Graduate or undergraduate wages or assistantships that are not directly related to the project.
- Salary for non-UNCG employees or students.
- Subcontracts to other universities or organizations.
• Materials or equipment already available on campus or generally provided by departments.
• Software normally provided by Information Technology Services.

NOTE: The Faculty First Award budget must be expended within the allotted award period. Funds that are not spent within the award term will be forfeited by the researcher and reclaimed by the Office of Research and Engagement to be used for the next competition. Outstanding invoices must be paid and reimbursement requests must be submitted for payment within 30 days of the close of the award.

Proposal Review Process

Proposals are evaluated on merit (see following for the review criteria). However, once reviewers have determined which proposals are fundable, priority is assigned to faculty who have not received an internal grant within the last five years.

All proposals to the Faculty First Awards competition meeting application guidelines are reviewed by members of the Research Grants Committee, a Faculty Senate Committee, that makes funding recommendations to the Vice Chancellor for Research and Engagement. The Research Grants Committee includes faculty who are elected, an appointed Senate representative, and ad hoc members as needed. Information about the elected committee members may be found here: https://facultysenate.uncg.edu/index.php/research-grants-committee/

Each member of the committee serves on one of four subcommittees: Arts & Humanities, Creative & Performing Arts, Social & Behavioral Sciences, or Physical & Natural Sciences.

Proposal Review Criteria
Proposals submitted to the Arts & Humanities, Social & Behavioral Sciences, and Physical & Natural Sciences subcommittees are reviewed according to the following qualitative and quantitative criteria:

Qualitative:
Response to Reviewers (for Resubmission Proposals only)
Overall Strengths of the Proposal
Overall Weaknesses of the Proposal
Budget and Justification (Complete/Acceptable or Incomplete/Unacceptable)

Quantitative (Scored with ratings between 1 (poor) – 9 (exceptional))
Quality of the Non-Technical Summary Section
Quality of the Background Significance presentation
Quality of the Project Design Procedures presentation
Quality of the Project Timeline presentation
Quality of the plan to seek external support to extend or expand the project
Proposals submitted to the Creative & Performing Arts subcommittee are reviewed according to the following qualitative and quantitative criteria:

**Qualitative:**
- Response to Reviewers (for Resubmission Proposals only)
- Artistry as shown by past and/or present work
- Significance as outlined in the project narrative
- Ability to execute the project as proposed
- Budget and Justification (Complete/Acceptable or Incomplete/Unacceptable)

**Quantitative:**
- Overall rating for the proposal (scored with ratings between 1 (Poor) – 9 (exceptional))

**Rubric:**
Reviewers will be guided by this rubric:

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<tr>
<th>Criterion Strength</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Descriptor</th>
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<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Exceptional</td>
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<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Outstanding</td>
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<td>Excellent</td>
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<td>Medium</td>
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<td>Poor</td>
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Subcommittees report their reviews (criterion rating scores and comments) which drive the proposal rankings within the subcommittee. The funding threshold average score is determined collaboratively by the subcommittee chairs and Vice Chancellor for Research and Engagement. The ORE notifies applicants about funding decisions. Unsuccessful applicants receive feedback from the program about their proposals. All communication about proposals and the resulting review is considered confidential. Information about funding of specific proposals will be communicated by ORE exclusively.
Post Award Requirements/Expectations

An *initial* progress report is due to the Office of Research and Engagement no later than 6 months following the award completion. In addition, awardees will submit a *final* progress report one year after the initial progress report. The reports will be requested by, and submitted through, the InfoReady Review Platform. Awardees will be expected to attend a luncheon (date to be determined) and participate in a proposed ORE Research Forum in the Fall of 2023.

The Office of Research and Engagement may contact awardees for additional, ad hoc progress updates for up to three years following submission of the final progress report. The information may be used to showcase research/scholarship at UNCG and/or to comprehensively assess the effectiveness of the program.