



2026-2027 Research, Scholarship, and Creativity Activity (RSCA) Awards and Provost's Supplemental RSCA Support Program

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

PROPOSAL DEADLINE: 11:59 p.m., PST, November 23rd, 2025

I. Program Summary

Faculty members are invited to apply for funds to support research, scholarship, and creative activity (RSCA) projects in fiscal year 2024-2025. These funds are made available by the Chancellor's Office (CO) in an effort to support faculty scholarship and raise the visibility of the California State University (CSU) as an institution that values faculty RSCA.

The CO requires that campuses utilize InfoReady to administer the RSCA program. The CO also mandates use of a standardized application form. Projects funded by this competition are required to report on their results and on their impact on students (undergraduate and/or graduate) via InfoReady. Progress reports will be required at 6, 12, and 18 months.

As in past years, the Provost will supplement the RSCA funding allocation we receive from the CO. The expanded program will issue additional awards as a result of the ongoing support from the Provost for those applications deemed worthy of support.

The Provost is committed to providing release time to all active scholars and artists. The RSCA program is the primary vehicle for providing release time.

Submission Process

Program Chairs must *acknowledge* all applications from faculty in their program in the InfoReady system. Also, Deans must *approve* all applications from faculty in their school in the InfoReady system. The intent of these steps is to promote transparency and communication between applicants, their Chairs and their Deans and accommodate scheduling and planning. The expectation is not that Chairs and Deans will review applications for merit. The submission process will consist of the following steps:

1. Applicants submit via InfoReady by the deadline.
2. Research and Sponsored Programs (RSP) routes applications to the Chair in the InfoReady system. Within one week the Chair will acknowledge applications from faculty in their program before the Research and Grants Committee (R&G) review process.
3. RSP routes applications to R&G for review in the InfoReady system.

4. RSP routes recommended applications to the Dean for approval in the InfoReady system.
5. RSP forwards the final list of recommended applications to the Provost for final decisions based on funding availability.

II. Program Details

A. Eligibility Information

In accordance with article 25.6 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) between the Board of Trustees of the California State University and the California Faculty Association (CFA), all unit 3 employees are eligible to apply for and receive RSCA awards. Grant proposals may be submitted by individual faculty members or by a team of faculty members for support in the form of Release Time, Summer Salary, or RSCA grants to support student research assistants², supplies, and minor equipment. Faculty may only submit one proposal as lead applicant. However, faculty may appear on multiple proposals as a co-applicant. Faculty associated with multiple proposals must adhere to the budget guidelines below. Also, the respective budget narratives must address how they will complete their portion of the proposed projects within the project period.

1. Applications should demonstrate the applicant has been active in scholarship, including a wide variety of activities i.e., they have an agenda of research, scholarship or creative activities as defined by disciplinary standards.
2. Faculty who has release time funded by another source may not use the RSCA program to completely release themselves of teaching obligations in AY 24-25. All faculty must teach at least one course.
3. New tenure track faculty already receiving release time via the CBA as well as faculty participating in the FERP (Faculty Early Retirement Program) will have lower priority.

B. The Review Process and Considerations

R&G will review proposals and identify those most likely to result in products and experiences that will elevate CSUCI as an institution that values research, scholarship, and creative activity of faculty.

In addition to relative coherence, clarity, and general academic quality, all proposals will be evaluated per the review criteria below as well as for compliance with section D, Proposal Guidelines. Applicants must write the project description in such a way that it is accessible to reviewers from various disciplines, avoiding jargon when possible.

RSP will send out award notifications to awardees. Once award decisions have been announced, all applicants may request written comments from the R&G that include what the committee regarded as strengths and weaknesses of the proposal.

C. Review Criteria

Because every discipline has its own standards for scholarship and teaching, reviewers will make every effort to take disciplinary context into consideration when they evaluate a proposal. Each proposal will be reviewed starting with the following criteria:

1. Accessibility

The application is written in a way that it is accessible to fellow academics outside that discipline.

2. Project Goals and Outcomes

The proposal clearly describes the focus of the project (e.g., research problem, objective), sets clear goals and outcomes, and it explains the steps that will be taken to realize project goals.

3. Project significance

The proposal explains its broader importance to other stakeholders (e.g., the applicant's discipline, society, the University).

4. Project/Scholarship Plan and Methodology

The proposal conveys a complete and well-thought-out plan for the project that describes the activities of all individuals involved in the project. If support is requested for a student research assistant, the proposal must also include a description of their role and how the faculty member(s) will provide mentoring or management.

5. Dissemination plan

The level and type of dissemination is appropriate for the project, its goals, and its outcomes.

6. Project Timeline

The project goals and objectives are attainable within the timeline of the proposal. If requesting continued support for a project, progress to date is clearly described.

7. Project Assessment

The proposal describes how the product(s) of the project will be assessed and evaluated to determine the degree of success achieved. For instance, project products or outcomes will be identified.

8. Ongoing Professional Development Benefits for Faculty

The proposal demonstrates evidence of active scholarship per disciplinary standards. and makes clear how the project will advance each individual applicant's research, scholarship, and creative activity. If the applicant has not been active, please explain how this project will allow the applicant to remain active moving forward. The proposal discusses whether the applicant(s) intend to pursue external funding and identifies which courses of external funding are likely to be pursued. If a team of

faculty members is involved in the project, the benefits for each team member should be addressed separately.

9. *Benefits to the University, School, Program*

The proposal makes clear how the proposed project will contribute to the intellectual culture of the institution.

10. *Potential for Leading to Scholarly Product*

The proposal makes clear how the project will produce measurable scholarly outcomes demonstrating value to the applicant's research, scholarship, and creative activity.

11. *Budget*

The proposed budget is reasonable in the context of the project description, and the project costs are necessary to achieve project goals and outcomes. (see budget guidelines below)

D. *Proposal Guidelines*

Proposal documents should use single-spaced text in a font size no smaller than 12-point. The font should be easy for a reviewer to read. Page margins (top, bottom, left, and right) should be no smaller than 1 inch.

Each proposal package should consist of the elements described below.

1. *Proposal Abstract*

Please provide a brief project abstract in the InfoReady system. There is a 20,000-character limit.

2. *Proposal Narrative (Maximum of 5 pages)*

The proposal narrative should include sections coinciding with the categories that will be used to review the proposal, e.g., project goals and outcomes, project significance, research plan and methodology, etc. Competitive proposals will make clear how their proposed project will result in scholarly products and will impact students (undergraduate or graduate). Follow-up reports will focus on these outcomes.

3. *Proposal Budget Information*

Proposed budgets should be appropriate for the project described. RSCA allows three categories of award: (1) Release Time, (2) Summer Salary, and (3) RSCA Mini-grants. Requests for release time are limited to 3 units per project. Faculty summer salary will be limited to \$3,000 (including fringe benefits) per faculty member. Mini-grants are limited to \$5,000, regardless of the number of faculty associated with the project. Materials funded by RSCA should be dedicated to the project. If materials are used as part of a course, applicants should request funding via the Materials, Services, Facilities, and Technology (MSFT) program. Part-time lecturers asking for summer salary should consult with pre-award staff in RSP regarding the cost of fringe benefits that should be included in a proposal budget. Please note: Award categories may be combined.

Awards will be considered across multiple categories. When appropriate, partial awards may be offered. Please note applicants can ask RSP questions for clarity on allowable expenses.

The application form includes fields for budget information. A separate budget document is no longer required. Applicants requesting 3 units of release time should budget \$6,675. Applicants requesting summer salary should budget a maximum of \$3,000 (including benefits). Mini-grant budgets could include funds for student research assistants, materials and supplies, equipment, conference fees, the hiring of specialists (e.g., for review of materials), etc., not to exceed the limit of \$5,000. All budgets should include language in the pertinent application fields justifying requested funds. Budget justification text should illustrate how the requested funds will allow the project to be completed during the period of support and how the requested funding is appropriate for the nature of the proposed work.

Applicants with more than one source of funding (other campus funds or extramural funds, for example) should indicate what the other funds will cover (or have covered) and what expenses will be supported by this application.

Consider the following topics when preparing your budget:

Equipment: Equipment (including computer hardware) that is essential to the project can be purchased via requisition. The total should include appropriate sales tax, shipping and handling, and costs for maintenance agreements, if required. Equipment purchased with these funds is the property of CSUCI and must be made available for others to use. Faculty should review the listing of campus equipment available for individuals to use before requesting equipment. When requested equipment is already available on campus, this portion of the requested budget will be cut from the budget. In some cases, the equipment may be available but has limitations for its use that should be clearly indicated in the proposal.

Supplies and services: Supplies and services include requisitioned items such as software, cartridges, chemicals, film, batteries, paint, page charges, etc. Budgets must include funds for sales tax and for shipping and handling charges. Faculty are requested to use Interlibrary Loan whenever possible for books and other materials; books that are funded by a RSCA award become the property of the CSUCI Library. Typically, costs for photocopying are not funded.

PLEASE NOTE: Travel and publication costs will no longer be funded by the RSCA program. Faculty should request support for travel via the [Academic Affairs Faculty Travel process](#). Support for publication costs will be covered by the [Provost's Direct Costs Grants Program](#).

Student assistants: Students can be paid an hourly wage for their assistance with the project, but they must be hired as regular student assistants, following campus procedures. Students can work no more than 20 hours per week when classes are in session. In planning a project, faculty should recognize that having student assistants involves significant supervisory and bookkeeping responsibility for the project

director. Human Resources can provide additional information on wages, classifications, and other matters related to planning a project that will involve student assistant employees. The student assistant classification and rate of pay should be clearly indicated in the budget for a Mini-grant proposal. If you are funded for a student assistant, please make sure that students submit timesheets in a timely manner.

Funds are subject to allocation by the CO and are expected to be available by the start of fiscal year. Funds must be spent by end of the fiscal year. Please budget accordingly. Instructions on using funds will be sent to Principal Investigators (PIs) and Program Analysts when awards are made.

Projects that request salary will require the support of an applicant's Program Analyst to initiate.

4. *Curriculum Vitae (Maximum 2 pages)*

An up-to-date copy of the curriculum vitae summary for each applicant must be supplied.

5. *Proposal Type*

The National Science Foundation (NSF) Higher Education Research and Development (HERD) annual survey categorizes Research and Development (R&D) projects as Basic, Applied, or Development. Each applicant is required to select which R&D category best represents their project. The [NSF HERD survey R&D categories](#) are defined according to the type of R&D activity. **Each applicant is required to select which R&D category best represents their project from a drop-down menu in the InfoReady application.** If R&D activity does not apply to the project, select "Non-R&D" when answering the question in InfoReady.

6. *Submission*

The proposal package must be submitted using the InfoReady Review proposal portal at <https://csuci.infoready4.com/#competitionDetail/1924740>

All proposal documents must be submitted as attachments in PDF format using the portal.

The submission portal will also ask for basic information about applicant(s) that will aid in the proposal review process.

Questions about the RSCA submission process can be directed to RSP (rsp@csuci.eud).