

**2024 Research Opportunity Seed Fund**  
**UF Research x Strategic Research Development**

**Up to \$100,000 over two years**  
**Funding Innovative Collaborations Across the Disciplines**

**Deadline: 5 PM, February 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024**  
**Infoready competition link will be provided upon nomination**

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## Opportunity

The Research Opportunity Seed Fund (ROSF) awards multidisciplinary, faculty-initiated research projects with strong potential for extramural support. Guided by the philosophy that diverse partnerships across the disciplines drive groundbreaking research and winning proposals, ROSF awards strive to spark research synergies that can launch exceptional long term research collaborations.

Responsive proposals will meet the each of the five following criteria:

### 1.) New Collaborations

- Proposals must involve faculty from at least **two** colleges. PI and Co-PIs will be from different departments or colleges and not worked together on a funded proposal previously.

### 2.) Novel Research

- Proposals present new and fresh ideas—no supplements to PI or Co-PIs' existing or on-going research.

### 3.) Meaningful Contributions

- All investigators engage fully and substantially. Proposals must demonstrate involvement both in terms of proposed research as well as allocations for funding in the budget.

### 4.) Funding Potential

- Proposals show a feasible and realistic plan for PIs and Co-PIs to continue collaborating to pursue funded research after the conclusion of the ROSF award. Teams and ideas are **not** “once and done” collaborations.

### 5.) High Impact

- Proposals address significant hypotheses, problems, or research questions that cover multiple areas of expertise and can be understood by non-technical readers.

## Eligibility

Any UF faculty member who is eligible to submit a proposal to an external funding agency can apply as a PI to the ROSF. **Please review the FAQ for detailed eligibility guidelines.**

PIs **cannot** be:

- Courtesy, Adjunct, Visiting, and OPS faculty
- Assistant in, Associate in, Senior Associate in, Research Associates, or Postdoctoral Associates
- Deans at any level

Excluding Deans, Co-PIs **can** be any of the above as well as staff and curators.

Cross-department collaborations are welcome.

PIs **must** be nominated by their colleges to apply to the ROSF. **Applications for nomination are due to your college during the first full week in December.** This deadline is campus wide. Please check with your college for exact dates.

Similar to NIH and other large funding agencies, applicants resubmitting to the ROSF must provide previous ROSF reviews and a short description of how their resubmission addresses reviewer feedback. These statements **will not** be provided to reviewers. Please see the FAQ for further requirements.

Awarded faculty (either as PI or as Co-PI) are not allowed to participate in another Research Opportunity Seed Fund proposal in any role for **one year after completion of the first** award. For example, awardees in 2024 may not submit another proposal until the 2028 call (announced in 2027)—one year after the conclusion of their project in 2026.

Faculty can only submit through **one** college. PIs may not switch projects or colleges to maximize their chances of being selected to submit to the ROSF.

PIs violating any of these rules will be removed from the competition.

## How to Apply

### Phase 1: Nomination

Each college will first run an internal nomination process for applicants. **Contact your Associate Dean for Research** for information on your college's internal nomination procedures and deadline.

Faculty **cannot** apply to the ROSF unless they have been nominated by their college.

### Phase 2: Proposal Submission

Upon being nominated, PIs will submit their proposals through the infoready competition link provided by their college. **Please do not email your proposal.**

### Phase 3: Review

Submitted proposals will undergo a uniform and centrally coordinated review by ad-hoc faculty panels.

Faculty review panels will make recommendations to the Vice President for Research and a decision will be finalized. Review criteria can be found on the UF Research web site at <http://research.ufl.edu/opportunityfund.html> and in the FAQ.

### Phase 4: Award Decisions

Every effort will be made to notify Principal Investigators of their award status by **July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024.**

An updated budget may be requested from the applicant after the review if recommended by the review panel. The applicant will be informed if budget changes are required.

Changes to proposed budgets require approval from Strategic Research Development.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### What are the criteria for review?

#### **New Collaborations (20 points)**

- Does the proposed collaboration present a multi-/inter-disciplinary teaming to approach its problems?
- Is this teaming original and likely to yield unique insights not attainable from solo or siloed approaches?
- Is the team structured around long-term funding goals beyond the ROSF?
- Does the investigative team bring complementary and integrated expertise to the project?
- Is there evidence of investigators' ability to work together in an interdisciplinary fashion?

#### **Novel Research (20 points)**

- Does the project develop or employ novel concepts, approaches, methodologies, tools, or technologies?
- Are these adequately developed, well-integrated, well-reasoned, and appropriate to the aims of the project?
- Do the proposed outcomes offer a new paradigm for concepts in this area of research?
- Does the proposal present a new avenue of research and collaboration for involved investigators?
- What expanded collaborations does the team anticipate as a result of these outcomes?

#### **Meaningful Contributions (20 points)**

- Do all investigators engage fully and substantially?
- Are investigators appropriately trained and well-suited to carry out this work?
- Do proposals demonstrate involvement in terms of proposed research as well as allocations for funding in the budget?
- Does the proposal outline how investigator experience will grow from this work and allow them to achieve future opportunities?
- Can the investigators accomplish these goals with the resources available to them?

#### **Funding Potential (20 points)**

- Does the team explain how this award will allow them to prepare and build towards the next opportunity?
- Are these plans to continue collaborating on future external funding opportunities feasible?
- Do they present a timeline, and is it reasonable?
- Does the team identify the funding agencies that they anticipate will have continued interest in current and future outcomes from this collaboration?
- Does the project have commercial potential?

#### **High Impact (20 points)**

- Does this study address an important problem?

- Does the proposal explain the impact of its collaboration and work on the methods, technologies, treatments, services, or preventative interventions that drive this area of research?
- Are the impacts likely to generate future funding and research opportunities for this team?

## ROSF PI Eligibility

### A. Faculty in Tenure Accruing Tracks

- Professor, Assistant Professor, Associate Professor
- Curator, Assistant Curator, Associate Curator
- Librarian, Assistant Librarian, Associate Librarian
- Graduate Research Professor
- Distinguished Service Professor
- Distinguished Research Curator
- Eminent Scholar

### B. Faculty in Non-Tenure Accruing Tracks

- Scientist, Assistant Scientist, Associate Scientist
- Scholar, Assistant Scholar, Associate Scholar
- Engineer, Assistant Engineer, Associate Engineer
- Research Professor, Assistant Research Professor, Associate Research Professor
- Extension Scientist, Assistant Extension Scientist, Associate Extension Scientist
- Clinical Professor, Clinical Assistant Professor, Clinical Associate Professor

### C. Other University Faculty and Personnel

- Professor, Assistant Professor, Associate Professor at P.K. Yonge Developmental Research School
- Instructor at P.K. Yonge Developmental Research School
- IFAS County Extension Faculty
- Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, and Master Lecturer
- Chief of Police

### D. Emeritus Appointees

Each unit shall decide if Emeritus appointees will be allowed to submit proposals. If yes, the Emeritus Professor must have an active job in PeopleSoft HR (generally courtesy faculty). Once this job is active, the chair must still request PI eligibility per the section titled "PI Ineligible Positions to Submit Proposals" below.

### E. New Hires

New faculty hires with a PI eligible position will automatically be loaded into UFIRST as soon as they have an active job in PeopleSoft HR. It is strongly recommended that for any faculty member who has accepted a faculty position at UF the unit have a UF job entry made as soon as possible. If only a temporary courtesy faculty appointment is created, when a UFIRST proposal is created, initiate an UFIRST "Request PI Eligibility" ad hoc approval to Stephanie Gray and include a copy of the official job offer letter. With a copy of the job offer loaded, the Chair/College/Director/Dean approval can be skipped. Please note that a UFID and gatorlink are both needed before an individual will populate in UFIRST.

### A. Ineligible Positions

- Visiting Faculty
- Assistant In, Associate In, Senior Associate In
- Adjunct Faculty
- Research Associates
- Courtesy Faculty
- Postdoctoral Employees
- OPS Faculty
- Graduate Students
- Non-Faculty

### [Review Resubmission Requirements](#)

Applicants resubmitting to the ROSF must include the previous year's reviews as well as a **one-page** response that:

- Summarizes substantial additions, deletions, and changes to the application
- Responds to the issues and criticism raised in the reviewer comments

**Note: If the scope of the project has significantly changed, this document is not required.**

### [How many applications may I submit as PI or Co-PI?](#)

For 2024, there is no limit to the number of Co-PIs on an application; however, we do limit the number of applications a faculty member may be involved in as PI and Co-PI.

A faculty member can serve as a PI on only **one** ROSF proposal and Co-PI on only **one** other proposal. If not serving as lead PI on a ROSF proposal, a faculty member can serve as co-PI on a maximum of **two** proposals.

### [How many applications may my college submit?](#)

The number of proposals submitted by each college is based upon each college's expenditures in the previous fiscal year.

**For FY 2024, awards will be made with at least 50% going to Arts/Humanities, Business, Education, Engineering, Life Sciences, Physical and Mathematical Sciences, and Social and Behavioral Sciences and limiting 50% of the awards to Health Sciences/Professions.**

**The maximum number of proposals allocated to each college for the 2024 competition is provided below:**



Expenditures	Tiers	Allocation Per Tier FY24	College
< \$5M	1	1	Nursing
		1	Business
		1	Arts
		1	Journalism
		1	Center for Latin American Studies
		1	Libraries
		1	Law
\$5-\$10M	2	2	Museum
		2	Design & Construction
\$10-\$25M	3	3	HHP
		3	Dentistry
\$25-\$50M	4	4	PHHP
		4	Vet Med
		4	Pharmacy
		4	Medicine- Jax
		4	CLAS
\$100M-\$150M	6	6	Engineering
		6	Education
		6	IFAS
>\$250M	8	11	Medicine - Gainesville
	8	1	Medicine - Scripps

\*Only faculty tenured in the Center for Latin American Studies and Libraries, respectively, may be PIs on proposal(s) submitted by these units.

*Please note:*

1. The system of allocation determines how many proposals may be submitted by each college to UF Research. There is no college-based allocation system for awards - these will be merit based, as recommended by faculty review panels.
2. The allocated number of proposals reflects the maximum number of proposals that may be submitted by a college with its faculty as the PI.
3. The proposal allocations per college are reviewed annually and adjusted based upon each college's extramural award performance in the preceding fiscal year.
4. The method by which each college selects its allotted number of proposals for submission to UF Research is at the discretion of the college.
5. The deadline for submission of each college's Research Opportunity Seed Fund proposals to UF Research through Infoready is **February 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024.**
6. **All Research Opportunity Seed Fund awards will be administered over a two-year period.**

7. No cost extensions may be provided on a limited case-by-case basis if strong justification is provided. However, a no cost extension means that the award is still active, and participating faculty cannot apply until 1 year past the last termination date.

### Proposal Contents

Proposals must be uploaded in PDF format only as ONE file (name file: 2024\_OppFund\_PI last name). PLEASE DO NOT UPLOAD DRAFTS, SCANNED FILES, OR MULTIPLE VERSIONS OF THE PROPOSAL.

**The title of the proposal submitted MUST start with DRPD-ROSF2024 prefix (Proposal Title: DRPD-ROSF2024: XXXXX).**

Proposals should consist of the following materials in this sequence (submitted as ONE pdf file, NO SCANNED COPIES):

1. Cover Page: please ensure that the cover page provides requested information below. Please do not submit a cover letter.

#### Cover Page ROSF 2024

**Title:** DRPD-ROSF2024: XXXXXXXXX

**PI:** (Name, Department, College, and eMail)

**Co-PIs/Co-Investigators:** (Name, Department, College)

**Other Faculty Contributing Effort:** (Name, Department, College)

**Project Start Date:** (default July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024)

**Total Budget Requested:** (Max \$100,000)

#### Please check all that are applicable:

- This proposal/parts of this proposal have been submitted for funding through other seed programs at UF (CTSI, UF Informatics Institute, UF Biodiversity Institute, MBI, Water Institute, Cancer Center etc.)  
The proposal/parts of this proposal:
- Are currently under consideration for funding
- Is the proposal multidisciplinary?
- Has the proposal been previously submitted for ROSF funding? If yes, please include previous ROSF reviews and the **Review Resubmission** materials in the application **Appendix** (see RFP FAQ for requirements)
- Is this a new collaboration? If yes, describe your plans for collaboration; if no, discuss what is new and unique about your continued collaboration. **(describe in section 7)**
- Does the proposal have potential for return on investment? **(describe in section 5)**

2. Abstract: explain the rationale for the work to be accomplished in terms that can be understood by an “intelligent non-expert.”
3. Abbreviations: if any are used in the proposal (half a page)
4. Project Description: **up to five (5) pages** of text MAXIMUM describing the project. If proposals are longer than 5 pages, only the first 5 pages will be reviewed. The project description should be written such that it can be understood by an interdisciplinary faculty committee. PIs must keep in mind that their proposals are not being evaluated by a discipline-specific committee, but rather by an interdisciplinary one. Project descriptions should include the following:
  - a. Specific Aims/Objectives
  - b. Background and Significance
  - c. Preliminary Data (if applicable)
  - d. Innovation/Potential Impact of Research
  - e. Approach/Research Design/Expected outcomes, Challenges, Alternative Strategies
  - f. Timeline for Completion
5. Plans for continued support and/or return on investment (2 pages):
  - a. Plans to obtain continuing external support for the project. Proposals must specifically list the sources of external support that will be pursued following the seed money provided by the Research Opportunity Seed Fund. **PIs should give examples from their field of what “return on investment” looks like and how their anticipated ROIs reflect these expectations.**
  - b. If applicable: a description of the commercial potential, including a statement of potential market size and how the funding could increase the marketability of the technology. **Commercial potential is not a requirement for funding, nor is it a review criterion.**
6. References Cited: (no page limit)
7. Key Personnel: a list of the individuals to be involved and details of their participation (no page limit).
8. A detailed budget table and justification of expenses (no page limit):
  - a. Budget Table

Budget table template is given below.

Budget Item	Description	Cost
A. Personnel (faculty salary not allowed)		
B. Fringe		
Total Personnel	Salary plus fringe	
C. Materials and supplies		

D. Other items (List each item on a new row)		
	<b>Total Project Cost</b>	

b. Budget Justification

- Budgets should not exceed \$100,000 for the entire project period; most awards will be for less.
- Include costs for PI and **all** co-PIs
- A brief justification of the need for support from the Research Opportunity Seed Fund is required.
- The budget may include all normally allowable costs of research with the **exception of faculty salaries and F&A costs**; however, research faculty or soft-funded faculty (Non-tenure track faculty) may request salary in the budget. Student and Postdoc expenses are allowed. The time commitments in months (faculty effort) of each participating faculty member must be included in the budget justification. Research Opportunity Seed Fund awards are to be expended on campus and are not to be used for the purchase of standard pieces of equipment. Exceptions will be allowed in instances where specific techniques/equipment used in the research are not available on campus. There are no F&A Costs associated with Research Opportunity Seed Fund awards.
- Budgets may be for a period of up to two years. Awards will be administered for up to two years.
- A specific start date should be given (the earliest start date is July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024). **If no start date is specified, UF Research will assume a start date of July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024.**

9. Biosketch and Current and Pending Support:

- A current biosketch of the Principal Investigator and each of the Co-PIs/Co-Investigators (NIH- or NSF-style biosketch suggested).  
A fillable NSF form can be found at <https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/nsfapprovedformats/biosketch.pdf>  
The NIH biosketch form [Non-fellowship Biosketch \(blank format page, Word\)](#)
- Current and Pending Support: required for the Principal Investigator and each of the Co-PIs/Co-Investigators. Please include time commitments in months for each funded/pending project.

10. Appendices: if necessary to support the proposal, should be brief; please do not attach manuscripts or other lengthy documents.

Please keep in mind that proposals should be written in a manner appropriate for an interdisciplinary review panel.

## FORMATTING REQUIREMENTS

Single spacing; font size no smaller than 11 point; minimum 0.5 inch margins; tables and figure legends can be in 10 point.

### Reporting Requirements

Funding success related to the Research Opportunity Seed Fund award will be tracked. Two reports will be requested from the proposal PI:

1. **First Report** will be due at the end of the two-year award period.
2. **Second Report** will be due three years after that.

For example, a PI awarded in June 2016 will be asked to submit their first report in July 2018 and the second report in July 2021. Non-compliant PIs/colleges may not be allowed to submit future requests to Research Opportunity Seed Funds.

### How do you define “Multi-/Interdisciplinary?”

“Multidisciplinarity is a non-integrative mixture of disciplines in that each discipline retains its methodologies and assumptions without change or development from other disciplines within the multidisciplinary relationship. Multidisciplinarity is distinctly different from Interdisciplinarity because of the relationship that the disciplines share. Within a multidisciplinary relationship this cooperation ‘may be mutual and cumulative but not interactive’ (Augsburg 2005: 56) while interdisciplinarity blends the practices and assumptions of each discipline involved.” <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Multidisciplinarity>

“An interdisciplinary field is a field of study that crosses traditional boundaries between academic disciplines or schools of thought, as new needs and professions have emerged. Interdisciplinarity involves researchers, students, and teachers in the goals of connecting and integrating several academic schools of thought, professions, or technologies -- along with their specific perspectives -- in the pursuit of a common task.” <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Interdisciplinarity>

In the university setting, an ‘interdisciplinary’ project may create a new area of research/discipline (such as bioinformatics – the blend of biology and computational sciences – where both the biologists and computational folks are stepping out of their traditional roles and developing new research), while a multidisciplinary project will have people from different disciplines working together to address different aspects of a project (e.g. an NSF IGERT proposal - curriculum is developed by the researchers as pertinent to the research fields, while assessment and evaluation are done by a separate group.)

Each college review committee must decide if multi-/interdisciplinary proposals require collaboration outside the college. Some colleges (IFAS and CLAS for example) are large and varied enough so that all faculty may come from the same college (but different departments).

### Who should I contact with questions?

**College contact:** Your Associate Dean for Research

### Strategic Research Development contacts:

Kira Bohunicky at [opportunityfund@research.ufl.edu](mailto:opportunityfund@research.ufl.edu)

Marah Berry at [m.berry@ufl.edu](mailto:m.berry@ufl.edu)

### Additional Questions

Q: Are student and Postdoc expenses allowed?

A: Yes, student, Postdoc expenses are allowed.

Q: Can residents and other trainees (post-docs, interns, practicum students) be Co-PI/Co-Investigators?

A: Trainees can be a Co-PI/Co-Investigator if they are making intellectual contributions to the research being proposed. They can be included on the proposal and budget in a way similar to grad students.

Q: Is Co-PI from an external university allowed as a collaborator?

A: The person from the external university has to be a collaborator. They cannot be a Co-PI. The seed fund is for internal collaborations/teams. The outside person cannot be used to establish a multidisciplinary team.

Q: If a faculty member participates as a Co-I and received funding in FY 2023, is this faculty member eligible to be either a PI, Co-PI, or Co-I in this year's competition?

A: Yes, this is allowed only for the FY 2024 cycle.

Q: Is faculty salary allowed for soft-funded faculty?

A: Research faculty or soft-funded faculty (Non-tenure track faculty) may request salary in the budget.