

Call for Proposals, FY 2021

Research Expansion Funds Grant Program

Rolling Submission Deadline Beginning May 15, 2020

The Research Expansion Funds (REF) program will support new preliminary data or the development of new research methods or procedures that will be used in subsequent proposals to external funding sources. Full-time faculty at Montana State University who have earned terminal degrees are eligible to apply.

CRITERIA

A faculty committee with a history of external funding will evaluate proposals according to the following criteria:

- The project's alignment with an external federal agency or other funding sponsor(s).
- The project's intellectual significance and its potential impact and contribution to the field.
- The appropriateness of the project's methodologies and approach, as well as the feasibility of the work plan.
- The qualifications and expertise of the researcher in relation to the project goals and the stage of the applicant's career.
- The potential for success, including the likelihood that the project will be completed within the projected timeframe, and the appropriateness of the budget.

Please address each criterion in your proposal and write in a way that is accessible to your Montana State University colleagues who may not be in your discipline.

Each applicant may submit only one application to the REF program over a 12-month period, unless invited to resubmit. Preference will be given to the following: 1) tenure-track faculty that have spent their start-up as originally intended and are on good trajectory toward tenure; 2) soft-funded researchers within the first five years of their appointment that have demonstrated success with external funding and scholarship; 3) tenured faculty and senior research faculty with consistent and demonstrable success, and are aiming to scale their research or transition to a new and promising research direction.

Within three months of completion of the project, successful applicants shall provide a written report of grant activities and outcomes to the Vice President of Research, Economic Development, and Graduate Education (VPREDGE) Office, their dean, their department head or center/institute director, and the chair of the REF Grant Review Committee. To be eligible for future REF funding, this report should include brief description of the external grant submitted (or in progress to be submitted). The submission of this final project report is required as a criterion for future REF proposal consideration.

Questions about program requirement and expectations may be directed to Lee Spangler (spangler@montana.edu), while questions concerning electronic submission and budgets can be directed to Shana Wold (shana.wold@montana.edu).

BUDGET

Applicants may request funds for supplies, an approved course buyout, travel, personnel (including graduate students), and other expenses necessary to complete the proposed project. REF grants will not support summer salary. Award amounts will vary, but most will range between \$30,000 (minimum) and \$50,000 (maximum). **These funds will expire and revert back to the VPREDGE Office after 12-months from award activation.**

- If a course buyout is requested, the application must include a letter of support from the department head. The cost of a course buyout should be the salary for someone to teach the course (rather than based upon the faculty member's salary). Explain the need for a course buyout in the budget narrative.
- For travel expenses, explain projected travel expenses in the budget narrative, being as specific and realistic as possible about the cost of transportation, lodging and other expenses. When budgeting for travel, please follow State approved In-State, Out-of-State and International rates regarding per diem, mileage and lodging found on the Travel Recap Sheet available at <https://www.montana.edu/research/osp/forms.html>.
- Budgets must include the 6% admin fee that will be assessed to your award by the Vice President for Finance and Administration Office.
- The following items are unlikely to be funded unless specifically justified: computers; equipment, unless it has a direct and clearly explained relation to the proposed project; post-production costs of books, articles or other creative activities; travel to professional conferences regularly attended by the applicant.

SUBMISSION

Please submit your proposal using the Office of Sponsored Programs Electronic Proposal Clearance Form (ePCF). A Full Proposal needs to be submitted with MSU Vice President of Research (MONVIC001) selected as the Sponsor. Please enter the Program ID VPREDGE EXPANSION FUNDS 2021. Instructions and a link to the forms can be found on the OSP Website <https://www.montana.edu/research/osp/>.

Applicants should submit the following as a **single PDF document**, which will be distributed to external reviewers and REF Grant Review Committee members. Attach to the "Required Program Document" section of the ePCF.

- A cover sheet, including a brief abstract of the project (see attached below).
- A narrative of no more than five single-spaced pages addressing the significant and impact of the project, and how it will significantly advance the competitiveness for external funding; a plan of work, including brief descriptions of methodologies and approach to be used; and a timetable for completion of the project.
- A budget, including budget notes or a narrative explaining budget items.
- A maximum 5-page curriculum vitae/bio-sketch.

In a separate document, applicants should also attach the following within the ePCF:

- **"Miscellaneous Attachments"** – the narrative, budget and final report of any REF grant you received in the last three years. Submit each year's funded grant as a single PDF document.

REVIEW TIMELINE

Once a REF grant is submitted, it will be forwarded to the chair of the REF review committee (Dr. Spangler). With assistance from the Office of Sponsored Programs, the chair will identify three reviewers for the grant, with at least one reviewer being from a different department/college.

Reviewers will be asked to provide their comments and recommendation within three weeks. After receiving the independent reviews, the REF chair will share comments and recommendations with the REF executive review committee. The REF executive review committee will review comments and make a recommendation to the VPREDGE within approximately one week. When coupled with some administrative review time on the front and back end of the review process, applicants can expect to receive feedback approximately 6 weeks after submission.

To ensure that funds don't get applied based on first-come-first-serve basis at the beginning of a Fiscal Year, there will be staggered start dates with quarterly release of funds. As such, potential outcomes of the review would be 1) highly meritorious and fund immediately, 2) meritorious and consider for an upcoming FY quarter, 3) not competitive and do not fund.

Due to the rolling deadline, **project extensions beyond the 12-month period are highly unlikely**. Accordingly, applicants should submit when they are able to devote effort and proposed expenditures for the 12-month grant period.

INFORMATIONAL SESSIONS

WebEx forums to assist potential applicants will be held the following days. Please email Mai Allen (naon.allen@montana.edu) if you would like to sign up and receive a calendar invite.

- Monday, May 4th at 10:00am
- Tuesday, May 5th at 4:00pm

Cover Sheet

Research and Expansion Funds, FY 2021

Name:

Department or School:

Rank:

Applicant's Email Address:

Title of Project:

Amount Requested:

Award Period Requested:

Proposal review quarter (please highlight):

Q1 (April - June)

Q2 (July - September)

Q3 (October - December)

Q4 (January - March)

Abstract of Proposal (not to exceed 250 words)