

Research Pilot Studies (RPS) Guidelines



Research Enhancement Program

Program

The Research Pilot Studies (RPS) program is a grant competition authorized by the university's Research Enhancement Program. RPS applications are accepted on a semester basis, and grants are reviewed and awarded by the University Research Council.

RPS grants provide support of up to \$3,000 to assist faculty in initiating pilot projects to generate data for a specific project for extramural funding. Successful RPS awards must be tied to a specific research objective. Approximately 5 RPS proposals are awarded per competition (up to 15 a year).

Allowable Costs

- Travel to collect data
- Supplies and materials
- Minor equipment
- Student assistant wages

Unallowable Costs

Activities ineligible for RPS support, regardless of worthiness, include:

- Personal computers, printers, and portable electronic communication devices such as iPads except under special circumstances with adequate justification (upgrades or software will be considered if directly related to research activities);
- Materials for routine use in academic courses;
- Professional development activities, including speaker fees;
- Program development or curriculum development activities;
- Non-faculty requests (students or staff), or requests from adjunct or visiting faculty;
- State-imposed limitations on the use of the funds (e.g., non-per diem food, door prizes, gift certificates, or participant costs);
- Support for faculty dissertations or student theses and dissertations;
- Salary for research assistantships. Faculty that will require a full-time GRA in order to conduct the research activity should contact ORGS to discuss alternative funding options.

Timeline – Check the ORGS website for the latest updates on program deadlines.

	Submission Deadline (approx.)	Review Period	Award Notification	Award Period*	Report Deadline
Spring Projects	2 nd Monday in October	October	Nov 1	Jan 1 - May31	Jun 31
Summer Projects	1 st Monday after spring break	April	May 1	Jun 1 - Aug 31	Sep 30
Fall Projects	1 st Monday after spring break	April	June 1	Sep 1 - Dec 31	Jan 31

Results from previously funded internal grants will be considered in subsequent awards, as will the timeliness of the final report submission. Individuals with outstanding or incomplete reports will not receive additional internal Research Enhancement funds.

Eligibility

Individuals with a full-time, tenure track academic appointment as professor, associate professor, assistant professor, instructor, and librarian I-IV are eligible to apply for a RPS grant. Non-tenure track faculty are not eligible.

Applicants are limited to one competitive award (RCA, RGD, or RPS) per fiscal year. Other limitations include:

- a. Individuals cannot receive a competitive award (RCA, RGD or RPS) during the same semester(s) that they are on faculty development leave or sabbatical.
- b. Individuals cannot receive a Project Support award at the same time as an RGD or RPS award.
- c. Individuals who receive an RCA cannot receive a Travel Support or Project Support minigrant award during the summer.

Funding Priorities

Special consideration will be given to applications in the following categories. Priority consideration will not, however, overshadow the need for sound and innovative research or creative endeavor.

- Support for faculty beginning lines of new research
- Applications which are directly related to the acquisition of external funding for research
- Activities which will enhance the research capabilities of the faculty member, the department, or the university.

Review Criteria

All proposals are evaluated by the University Research Council which considers the following aspects of the application (not an exhaustive list):

- The scholarly, scientific, and/or creative merit of the proposal (originality of approach, appropriateness of techniques and clarity of presentation)
- Clear articulation of a broader research question that the pilot project is designed to support
- Likelihood that the project will lead to external funding
- Feasibility of completing the proposed work within timeline and budget.

Awarded RPSs

All awardees will receive an 'award email' from ORGS with details on the grant FOP, award amount, reporting requirements, etc. The awardees may be required to attend a project orientation with ORGS.

Expenditures

Funds should be expended within the time frame specified in the award notice. All funds must be expended in the fiscal year in which they are awarded. This deadline for expenditures (other than salaries and benefits) is August 1 of each fiscal year to meet purchasing deadlines. Salaries may be expended through August 31. All minigrant funds must be expended in accordance with the approved budget and are subject to applicable state and federal laws and regulations, as well as university policies and procedures.

Publication Credits:

Any publication resulting from a minigrant shall acknowledge that the project was "Conducted under a grant from the Stephen F. Austin State University Research Enhancement Program."

Final Report:

A final report is due within 30 days of the project end date. Reports should be three to five pages in length, single-spaced, and should detail your research activities and findings for each project objective. A 200-word abstract is also required. Both of these items should be submitted electronically in a format suitable for internal publication and posting on the ORSP website.