

RESEARCH/CREATIVE ACTIVITY (RCA) GRANT APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

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Overview of Program

Applicants must follow the guidelines and instructions below. Applicants should also review the separate “*Policies, Procedures, and Evaluation Criteria for Awarding Research/Creative Activity (RCA) Grants*” for scoring criteria and more details about the program

Applications are reviewed and funds are awarded by the University Research Council (URC) and managed by the Office of Research and Graduate Studies (ORGS). The URC may choose not to review a proposal that does not meet the specifications stated in this document.

Applicants may seek advice from URC members or from ORGS in preparing a proposal. It is strongly encouraged that advice be sought prior to the deadline for submitting a proposal to the applicant's academic departmental chair. ORGS will notify applicants of any deviations from the proposal guidelines as time allows up until the final deadline, but ultimate responsibility for adherence to guidelines rests with the applicant.

For purposes of this competition, **research** is defined as “a systematic study directed toward fuller scientific knowledge or understanding of the subject studied.”¹ **Creative activity** is defined as the preparation and execution of original works and creative contributions designed to advance artistic accomplishment, principally in art, music, theater, dance, and similar areas within the performing and visual arts. Summer salaries are intended to compensate faculty members while they conduct intensive project activities during the term in which they are paid.

Application Categories: Applications are divided into the below two categories and are evaluated based on separate criteria:

1. Research
2. Creative Activity.

Application Submission: Prepare and submit in Cayuse via the Research tab in mySFA.

Eligibility: Individuals with a full-time, tenure-track academic appointment detailed in SFA policy 8.11 are eligible to apply for the RCA Grant. These are: Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor, Instructor, and Librarian I-IV. Non-tenure track faculty are not eligible.

¹ From the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board rules, Chapter 13. Financial Planning, Subchapter G. Research Development Fund

Number of Awards: The number of awards and the total amount of each award is dependent on the amount of funds available annually through the Research Enhancement Program (REP). This amount is approved by the Board of Regents in the annual SFASU budget.

Time Line: The annual RCA competition is held during the fall semester. Funded proposals are carried out in the spring and summer semesters (January – August).

Allowable Costs: In addition to faculty 6-week summer salary, the RCA will fund up to \$10,000 for the following purposes:

- Supplies and materials
- Hourly wages and benefits for student assistants
- Wages and benefits to other staff to assist in the project
- Non-capital equipment (a single item less than \$5,000; See the SFASU Property Manual for definitions and examples)
- Expendable materials, supplies, chemicals/reagents
- Travel to collect data (travel to conferences is not allowed nor is student travel). For Creative Activity proposals, the collection of data may include residencies or appropriate site visits to aid in the creation of project materials.
- Contractual services (i.e., translator, sample analysis, etc.)

Note: All items purchased are the property of SFA, not the investigator. At the conclusion of an award, all items purchased using RCA funds may continue to be used by the faculty member. In the event that the faculty member leaves SFA, the items remain with the department of the faculty member.

Unallowable Costs: Activities/items that are never eligible for Research Enhancement Program support, regardless of worthiness, include:

- Development or evaluation of curricular materials or instructional support;
- Non-faculty requests (students or staff), or requests from lecturers, adjunct or visiting faculty;
- Professional or support staff salaries;
- Personal computers, printers, and portable communication devices (upgrades or software will be considered if directly related to research activities; laptops or computers required for field or advanced computational work may be considered with adequate justification);
- Materials for routine use in academic courses;
- Professional development activities, including speaker fees;
- Program development, curriculum development, or related evaluation activities;
- University limitations on the use of the funds (e.g., non-per diem food, door prizes, gifts, participant support);
- Support for faculty dissertations or student theses and dissertations;
- Salary for research assistantships/graduate student appointments. Faculty that will require a fulltime GRA in order to conduct the research activity should contact ORGS to discuss alternative funding options.

In addition, requested funds should not supplant other funding sources (i.e., department, state, federal).

Proposal Components

The complete package contains multiple documents which are all uploaded into Cayuse. This section gives an overview of the documents and the required sections in each.

View the following section, [Instructions for Application and Cayuse](#) for detailed Instructions for completing the documents and Cayuse portal.

A. **Individual Documents and Cayuse**

1. Abstract – upload to the “Proposal Abstract” section
2. Budget Justification – upload under the “Internal Budget” section
3. Proposal– upload to the “Research/Creative Activity(RCA)” section

B. **Abstract**

Brief yet thorough explanation of the proposed project. This is either typed into provided box in Cayuse, or you may copy and paste from another document.

1. Max word count: 200 words
2. Single or double spaced

C. **Budget Justification**

Written explanation of budget line items. This document will be uploaded as a single PDF file in Cayuse.

1. No page limit
2. Single- or double-spaced

Justification contains the following sections, in this order:

1. Investigator’s salary
2. Student Assistant
3. Other salaries
4. Operating supplies
5. Purchases over \$500 each
6. Travel to collect data
7. Contractual (non-SFA employees)
8. Other
- 9.

D. Proposal

The proposal contains the following four sections which will be uploaded as a single PDF file in Cayuse:

1. Narrative.
2. Bibliography/references
3. Appendices
4. Vita for PI and Co-PIs.

Place the proposal in the following order:

5. Narrative – limited to 10 pages
 - a. objectives or specific aims
 - b. literature review
 - c. project justification*
 - d. methodology or procedures/plan of operation/activities
 - e. work schedule
 - f. expected outcomes
 - g. proposed evaluation
 - h. plans for dissemination
6. Bibliography/references
 - a. May be single spaced
 - b. No page limits
7. Appendices (if any)
 - a. No page limits
 - b. May be single spaced
8. Vita for Principal Investigator
 - a. May be single spaced
 - b. Limited to 2 pages
9. Vita for Co-PI, if applicable
 - a. May be single spaced
 - b. Limited to 2 pages

** If your discipline is considered creative and you are applying for a research project, or your academic field is considered research based and you are applying for a creative activity, your narrative should also explain why your project meets the criteria for that proposal type.*

Instructions for Application and Cayuse**A. Formatting**

1. Type the proposal on 8½x 11-inch page size.
2. Use one-inch margins on all sides.
3. The print must be clear and legible and no more than 15 characters per inch (e.g., Times Roman 12 or Arial 11).
4. Pages should be numbered at the top right or bottom center of each page.
5. All attachments/uploads must be PDF.

B. Proposal Information

1. Proposal Information section:

- a. Proposal type: Select “Internal”
- b. Internal Proposal type: Select either “Research/Creative Activity (RCA)”
- c. Proposal title: Enter the project title.
- d. Internal Proposal type: Select either “Research” OR “Creative Activity.”
- e. SFA Department Managing Award: Select the department that will enter EPAFs, requisitions, and otherwise provide administrative assistance for the grant. Select only *one* department.
- f. SFA Primary Contact That Will Manage This Project If Awarded: Select the person who will also need access to this proposal for award management purposes. Select only *one* person.
- g. Collaborative Unit(s) (IF Applicable): Select any SFA Centers or other departments that will help manage the project.
- h. Project Start Date: Can be no earlier than 12/1. Select from calendar or enter in mm/dd/yyyy format.
- i. Project End Date: Can be no later than 8/31. Select from calendar or enter in mm/dd/yyyy format. You still may be completing some research or preparing final reports. However, no funds will be paid after this date.
- j. Anticipated Award Instrument: Select “Internal”

2. Institutional Considerations Section—answer all questions

C. Personnel

1. Name: Enter your name (investigator) first.
2. Role: Select “Principal Investigator” (the main Project Director or Principal Investigator must always select this response as this will populate on the Cayuse dashboard).
3. Internal Association: Select your department/unit. If you are associated with multiple departments, all will be listed. Only select one.
4. Credit: Enter “100”. This number reflects your assignment for the RCA.
5. If there are co-PIs, then select ‘Add Team Member’ and repeat the above steps. All co-PIs are listed as “Co-Principal Investigator”
6. If there are no co-PIs, then continue to the next section

D. Sponsor Information

1. Funding Agency: Select “SFA Internal (SFA INTERNAL)”

E. Conflicts of Interest Disclosure

1. Review questions and answer as appropriate.
2. The PI and any Co-PIs will also need to complete a ‘PI/PD/Key Personnel Financial Conflict of Interest and Nepotism Disclosure and Certification Form’. Follow the hyperlink to access the form.

Consider all budget components, the selection of proposed other employees and students, selection of contractors, etc.

F. Research Subjects

This section pertains to the use of human subjects or vertebrate animals in research. Answer all questions.

G. Research Materials

This section pertains to the use of any select agents, chemicals, toxins, etc. that require special handling. Answer all questions.

H. Export Control

This section pertains to any project work containing an international component. Answer all questions.

I. Internal Budget

1. Budget Summary
 - a. Total Amount Requested: Enter the total dollar amount requested,

up to \$10,000. This does not include summer salary for the PI or Co-PI.

- b. Supplies and Material (operating supplies): Enter the total dollar amount requested.
- c. Minor-equipment (non-capital under \$5,000 per item). Enter the total dollar amount requested.
- d. Other salaries: Enter total dollar amount requested for salary and fringe benefits for other SFA faculty or staff.
- e. Student Assistant Wages (hourly): Enter total dollar amount requested. RCA grant can pay for hourly student wages for undergraduate or graduate students.
- f. Contracted Services: Enter total dollar amount requested for services performed by non-SFA personnel/external entities.
- g. Travel to Collect Data: Enter total dollar amount requested.

J. **Budget Justification**

1. Upload the justification as a single PDF document.

This document explains what you are requesting and details the cost by relating to the purpose of your project. If you have costs that do not appear to fit the below categories, contact ORGS for assistance.

- a. Investigator's Salary: Explain your work on the project for spring and summer but do not list an actual salary amount. As the Investigator, you may request salary and benefits for up to 100% of one summer session, 50% for two summer sessions, or you may elect to receive no summer compensation from the project.

If a Co-PI is named on the project, there are three possibilities for salary. You will make a selection as to distribution of salary on the next section in Cayuse.

- i. Neither the PI or the Co-PI receive summer salary
- ii. Either the PI or the Co-PI receive summer salary
- iii. Both the PI and the Co-PI receive 50% of a full-time 6-week summer salary.

Your salary and benefits will be calculated based upon the amount and percent of time the URC approves. Pay rate cannot exceed an individual's institutional base pay.

- b. Supplies and Materials (operating supplies): Enter the total amount requested for materials, operating supplies,

chemicals/reagents, photocopies, postage, lab supplies, etc. Remember to include estimates for shipping and handling as needed.

Explain the types of materials requested, how they will be used, and why they are necessary to your project.

- c. Minor-equipment (non-capital under \$5,000 per item). List the total amount requested and then detail each item requested and the necessity for your project.
- d. Other Salaries. List the total amount requested for other SFA employees (non-student) who would be paid to work on your project. This may include a statistician, analysis of samples, etc.

- i. List each person and outline each individual's responsibilities.
- ii. Indicate the amount to be paid to each individual and include the pay rate and number of hours to be worked. Pay rate cannot exceed an individual's institutional base pay.
- iii. Faculty and staff cannot receive salary that exceeds their normal institutional base pay.

Fringe benefits will also be charged to the project based on the other salaries but will be paid in addition to the awarded amount.

- iv. Student Assistant Wages (hourly): List the total amount requested. RCA grant can pay for hourly student wages for undergraduate or graduate students.
- v. Outline the student's responsibilities.
- vi. Indicate the number of hours the student(s) will devote and the rate of pay for each.
- vii. The requested rate of pay rate should be reasonable in relation to the level of work the student will be performing. Contact your department administrative assistant or chair with any questions concerning what your department typically pays for that type of work. You must pay at least minimum wage; contact Human Resources for the current rate.
- viii. Contracted Services: List the total amount requested for services performed by non-SFA personnel or external entities that will be hired to provide services.

- List the amount each will be paid.

- Explain why the work is required.
 - Explain how the individuals/entities were chosen.
- e. Travel to Collect Data: List total amount requested. Consult the SFA Travel Office for information on allowability of costs and rates for meals, lodging, and mileage. Unallowable costs on RCA: travel to present research findings
- i. Detail travel costs, either by line item or by trip.
 - ii. Explain the necessity of the travel for your project.
 - iii. For Creative Activity proposals – this travel may include residencies or appropriate site visits to aid in the creation of project materials.

K. Abstract

Answer yes or no to indicate if you will allow SFA and/or ORGS to use the abstract.

If you select yes, then either copy and paste your abstract or you can type directly in the box.

L. Research/Creative Activity (RCA)

1. Estimate of time per week on project during the spring
2. Select the desired salary option.

If awarded, ORGS will confirm with the faculty in April/May which summer session the salary will be paid.

3. The investigator has been in their RCA-eligible position at SFA less than 5 years. This applies to the PI and not any co-PIs

4. Investigator RCA History

Indicate the PI history of applying for / receiving an RCA award as the lead investigator

5. Is this a resubmission?

If the answer is yes, you should incorporate previous URC reviewer comments in your proposal as appropriate.

6. Research/Creative Activity Proposal

Attach the PDF of the narrative