

UA Faculty Research Committee 2020-21 Summer Fellowship Guidelines/RFP

Submission Deadline:

Friday, January 22, 2021, 4:00 p.m., via email only

Award Information and General Eligibility

- Maximum Amount: \$10,000
- Proposals from all disciplines are welcome!
- All full-time tenure-track and non-tenure-track (NTT) faculty employed at the University of Akron are encouraged to apply. Faculty who receive summer fellowships in the previous two consecutive years are ineligible this year. See full details below.
- **New in 2020-21**, joint proposals from two or more full-time tenure-track or NTT University of Akron faculty are allowed. Joint proposals must conform to all of the same requirements as individual proposals (including a maximum amount of \$10,000 for the proposal). One person must serve as the PI.
- Certain types of research grants and certain items within approved proposals are ineligible. See full details below.
- Awards generally are made in late March or early April and the funds are expected to be spent between May and September of that year.

General Information

Program Title: UA Faculty Research Committee Summer Fellowship

Faculty Research Committee

The University of Akron annually provides funds for faculty research summer fellowships. The [Faculty Research Committee](#) (FRC) is a standing committee of the Faculty Senate and members are appointed by the Executive Committee. The FRC is composed of representatives from the various colleges and is charged with evaluating proposals submitted by the faculty and determining which of these will be funded.

The Office of Research Administration (ORA) is responsible for the administration of this program on behalf of the FRC.

Description of FRC Summer Fellowship Program

The goal of the program is to support and encourage the development of strong programs of research by faculty members throughout the University. It is recognized that the nature of research varies significantly from discipline to discipline. In the evaluation of the research proposals, the reviewers attempt to judge the merits of each proposal from the perspective of what would be considered significant research within the field (or fields) from which the proposal is submitted.

Grants for this program, in the majority of situations, are intended to support the development of new programs of research and creative scholarship. In this sense, the grants may be considered “seed money” for research in that they should lead to the growth and development of continuing programs of research. They are not a source of funds for programs already developed to a level that normally would justify support from external agencies. Certain types of research grants and certain items within approved proposals are not considered eligible for funding from this program.

Eligibility – Full Details

1. All **full-time tenure-track and NTT faculty** are encouraged to apply. Faculty who receive summer fellowships in two consecutive years are ineligible in the third year (including for joint proposals). The Committee will consider exceptions only in extraordinary circumstances. Those ineligible to apply for these fellowships include (a) administrators with more than four credit hours of summer administrative duty and (b) Visiting Professors.
- Principal investigators who have not submitted a final report, or are in deficit with a previous FRC award, are ineligible.
- Certain types of research grants and certain items within approved proposals are **ineligible**. These are:
 - a. Publication charges for papers, articles or books.
 - b. Research or other work to be submitted by the faculty members as part of a degree requirement.
 - c. Work by students or others without substantial involvement by the faculty member.
 - d. Long-term projects that have received or will require repeated support from the Committee.
 - e. Commercial ventures.

- f. Administrative aspects and/or writing of proposals.
- g. Expenses for attendance at professional meetings. (This is considered a departmental responsibility.)
- h. Work intended solely to improve the teaching skills or resources of the faculty members. However, the Committee may support proposals concerning the scholarship of teaching. To qualify, the outcomes of the proposed research project should be generalizable and applicable beyond the participants in the project. The researcher should have a plan to disseminate project findings to an audience outside The University of Akron.
- i. Proposals focusing on course improvement or curriculum development are not considered as part of this program.

Proposal Preparation and Submission Instructions

In preparing proposals for this program, applicants should remember that the members of the Faculty Research Committee who will be reviewing proposals (usually 20 – 30 members) come from a wide variety of backgrounds. It is very important that the applicants be able to communicate the proposed research and the significance of this research to scholars from other disciplines, as well as provide enough detail to permit technical evaluation by those more familiar with the area.

- The formal requirements for proposals are given below and follow the checklist provided on the coversheet. Proposals must follow these guidelines.
- Proposals are to be submitted as a single pdf document, via email, to frc@uakron.edu.
- Use a 12-point font for the proposal, with 1-inch margins.
- The proposal must be in full-page format (no columns).
- **New in 2020-21**, the proposal coversheet no longer requires Dean and Chair signatures. The Deans and Chairs will be notified prior to the award setup for successful submissions.
- The Research Plan is limited to 7 pages.
- If you are submitting a revision of a previously unfunded proposal, please explain in detail (**in bold face type**) the specific changes that you made per the Committee's recommendations, if any.

Required Format

1. Application Checklist. Complete the checklist. This will serve as the first page of the proposal. Submit a single pdf of the completed proposal, including the checklist/cover page, and any appendices, to the Office of Research Administration (ORA) at frc@uakron.edu by 4:00 pm on 1/22/2021.

If appendix materials cannot be scanned, email frc@uakron.edu, before the deadline, to discuss arrangements.

2. Budget Page with Justification. This is the application's second page. The Summer Fellowship can be used entirely for salary support or can be split between salary and other research-related expenses (i.e., to be paid for directly from a university account). Please provide a clear justification for the need for summer salary. Please justify money for other expenses (e.g., purchases, travel). **New for 2020-21, consider the possibility of COVID-19 restrictions prior to requesting travel.**
3. Non-Technical Abstract. (not to exceed 300 words). The abstract provides elementary review of the proposal content and must be easily understood by diverse reviewers.
4. Research Plan. This entire section (a-i) must not exceed **7 single-spaced pages**. **New for 2020-21, consider the possible impacts of COVID-19 while drafting the research plan.** The Research Plan is composed of the following sections:
 - a. Nature of the Research and Significance. This is the description of the research and should include an introduction suitable for the diverse faculty grant reviewers, a summary of what you intend to do, how it relates generally to research or creative work in your field, and why it is significant. If applicable, describe consortia or collaborative research arrangements involved in your project.
 - b. Goals and Objectives. The research program must be clearly defined. In the case of quantitative research, you should specify the hypotheses being tested or the questions being asked. In other fields, describe the basic ideas, problems, works or questions the study will examine, and explain the planned approach or line of thought.

- c. Procedures. This section should provide a detailed description of what you propose to do, including (as appropriate) methods, techniques, equipment and facilities available for the project. For all proposals, a timetable for completing the work is essential (e.g., a writing schedule, data collection schedule). Proposals involving quantitative measures should use the Systems International (SI) units in Federal guidelines.
- d. Expected Results and Data Analysis. This section should describe the types of results that are expected and how the data will be analyzed. Good data often has preset limits that are used to confirm or reject your hypotheses.
- e. Publication or Presentation. In what form will the results of the research be communicated and to what audience? Explain how this is viewed as substantive in your unit's RTP and/or merit guidelines.
- f. Feasibility of the Project. This includes the consideration of the background and expertise of the applicant(s) as they relate to the project. Discuss as applicable access to primary sources such as archives, travel, and foreign languages needed along with your competence in them. A list of the applicants' previous research or work relevant to the proposal should be included. This section should assure the reviewers that the applicants have the ability and/or the experience to complete the proposed research successfully.
- g. Pertinent bibliography. This generally consists of 5 to 10 references in the field of study, but can occasionally be longer.
- h. Collaborators. Joint proposals are allowed, but all applicants must be UA faculty. If you have other collaborators, please list them (and their roles) in this research proposal.
- i. Funding Status. Please list current funding, pending funding with status, and any start-up funding.

This is the end of the Research Plan, limited to 7 single-spaced pages

5. Previous, Current, or Future Efforts to Obtain External Funding for this Research.

- a. One of the purposes of the Faculty Research Committee is to provide seed money for research with potential for external funding. This section helps to assure that the applicant is thinking along these lines. If the proposed research is in any way related to other external funding that has been planned, proposed or funded, explain how the projects relate. Failure to address this section will significantly decrease your score.
 - b. Summary of funding and results of any previous University of Akron Faculty Research Committee support. If prior support has been received from the Committee, a short summary of the amount of funding, a sentence or two describing results, and a listing of any publications or proposals (submitted and/or funded) should be included. If funding was received from the Committee within the previous three years for a similar project, explain how this proposed project is different.
 - c. Applicants who are submitting to outside agencies substantially similar proposals in the same cycle as this proposal should note this in the FRC proposals. In the event that such an outside application is successful, it is required that the committee be notified immediately. At that point a further review will determine whether there is substantial overlap in the budgets; if there is, the committee may, depending on individual circumstances, require the proposer to relinquish the Summer Fellowship. Violation of this requirement may result in the investigator being ineligible to receive future funding from this committee.
6. Vita. There is a two-page limit to the vita. Focus on the aspects of your vita significant to the proposed research. If this is a joint proposal, each investigator should submit a separate vita (of no more than two pages).
 7. Appendix. Survey or data collection instruments that are being developed for the proposed project should be submitted at the end of the proposal as appendix materials. These materials are not counted in the 7-page limit.
 8. Institutional Committee Approvals. If the research requires approval from Biohazard, Radiation Safety, Human, or Animal Committee(s), the protocol for such approval must be submitted with the proposal. The PI is responsible for submitting the protocol to the appropriate committee. The ORA will notify the appropriate University committee if the proposal is selected for funding. Regulatory committee approval is required before any work can begin.

FRC Proposal Processing and Selection Procedures

All proposals are reviewed by the members of the Faculty Research Committee. All proposals must be written so that committee members of diverse academic backgrounds understand the project and its significance. Proposals that only include highly technical details and discipline-specific jargon may be hard for the committee to understand and evaluate. While a technical treatment of the content is important, there should also be an attempt to describe the proposed work so a more general academic audience can understand and evaluate it.

Proposals are reviewed for their strengths and weaknesses in three areas: (1) significance, (2) methods, and (3) additional reasons to support the project. Each category has a maximum of five points for a potential total score of 15. Below are anchors for the 0-5 scale used for each of the three areas:

Score of 5 ~ Truly excellent, no critical weaknesses.

Score of 4 ~ Very strong with very few weaknesses.

Score of 3 ~ Strong, but with some weaknesses.

Score of 2 ~ Some positive features, but with significant weaknesses.

Score of 1 ~ Several critical weaknesses.

Score of 0 ~ Inadmissible.

Please note that decimals are allowed in the scoring.

Award Notification and Administration

- All persons submitting proposals will be notified of the FRC's decision.
- Awards are generally made within six to eight weeks after the proposal submission deadline.
- The ORA will set up an account specifically for each funded proposal.
- Unsuccessful applicants will receive the FRC comments within 2-3 weeks of the decisions.

Award Conditions

1. Paid assistants must be University of Akron students.
2. University [travel regulations](#) apply, and costs for travel to conduct research must be at the lowest reasonable rates.
3. Upon completion of the project, equipment becomes the property of the department or any other university unit designated by the Committee.
4. Faculty members who receive summer fellowships are permitted to teach **no more than four (4) credit hours in the summer** (including for joint proposals). Those ineligible to apply for these fellowships include (a) administrators with more than four credit hours of summer administrative duty and (b) Visiting Professors.
5. Publications must credit support from the Committee with wording similar to, "Financial support for this research was received from the Faculty Research Committee of The University of Akron."
6. If the faculty's research grant account becomes overdrawn, **it is the responsibility of the faculty member or his/her department to cover the overage.**
7. The FRC will not review or fund any proposals in which the principal investigator is in a deficit with a previous FRC award. Also, the funds awarded by this Committee will not be used to pay off any grant(s) that are in a deficit.

Reporting Requirements

A final report, http://www.uakron.edu/research/ora/docs/FRC_FinalReport.pdf (generally one page in length) must be submitted to the Office of Research Administration at the end of the funded period of time. The report should include a listing of publications, grant proposals submitted, additional funding received, and other significant outcomes from the research. In addition, there will be a follow-up 5-year report aimed at understanding the longer term impacts of the FRC summer fellowship funding.

FRC Contacts

General inquiries regarding this program should be made to:

- James M. Diefendorff, Chair, x-7317, email: jdiefen@uakron.edu.

For technical questions relating to forms, Brightspace, regarding viewing sample awarded proposals, award set-up, and other administrative components of the FRC contact:

- Kathee Evans, ORA Coordinator, x-8579, e-mail: frc@uakron.edu.