

APPLICATION GUIDELINES

OSP Seed Grant



The National Institutes of Health (NIH) designed the [SuRE program](#) to help qualifying institutions on their path toward building and sustaining a research infrastructure. And in partnership, the [SuRE Resource Center](#) provides free training, guidance, and expertise to help bridge the gap in taking those initial steps. To assist institutions in their move toward building a research culture, the OSP Seed Grant provides funds to establish or enhance an Office of Sponsored Projects.

Purpose of the Grant

The overarching goal of the Support for Research Excellence (SuRE) program is to increase research competitiveness of under-resourced institutions that serve underrepresented students in biomedical and behavioral sciences and receive limited NIH funding. NIGMS acknowledges that supporting investigator-initiated research at these institutions is not sufficient to achieve this goal; it is critical that the research infrastructure exists to facilitate access to funding resources and sustain these research programs. To help achieve this goal, the SuRE [OSP Seed Grant](#) program has been established as a mechanism to establish or strengthen Office of Sponsored Projects (OSP, or equivalent) at select SuRE-eligible institutions, ultimately expanding participation in the SuRE program. It is expected that these seed grants will increase the number of R16 grant applications ([SuRE](#) and [SuRE-First](#)) that are submitted and awarded; increase the number and enhance the geographical distribution of institutions that participate in the SuRE program; and increase the number of students (particularly underrepresented students) who are actively engaged in research.

Evaluation Process

OSP Seed Grants will be awarded on a competitive basis and administered by the SuRE Resource Center through a subaward. Applications must be submitted no later than the due date specified at each award cycle and will be reviewed by a panel convened by the SuRE Resource Center. A total of four to six OSP Seed Grants will be awarded each year with a maximum one-year budget of **\$50,000 direct costs** (there are no indirect costs); a one-year no-cost extension can be requested.

The criteria for evaluation include:

- Evidence of how the funds will enhance OSPs
- Strategies to sustain OSP activity after the seed grant ends
- Institutional commitment to research (as described by the letter from the institutional official).



The review committee will consider geographical location as a criteria to ensure broad regional distribution of seed grants. The program is particularly interested in transformational capacity-building applications. While all institutions with less than \$6 million in NIH research funding and >25% Pell-eligible students are eligible, those institutions that have not previously been engaged in NIH-funded research, including MSIs like HBCUs, HSIs and TCCUs, and institutions from IDeA states, are strongly encouraged to apply.

For questions, including eligibility, please contact SuRE.RC@uky.edu.

Post-Award Expectations

It is important for the SuRE Resource Center to evaluate the success of the OSP Seed Grant program. To help achieve this goal, OSP Seed Grant awardees must agree to complete yearly updates for five years after the seed grant ends. These updates must include:

1. Number and type of NIH grants submitted/reviewed/scored/funded and non-NIH grants submitted/funded and
2. Number of faculty who have submitted grants; abstracts submitted to national meetings (platform and poster presentations) and publications resulting from NIH funding (highlighting both faculty and students)

Applicant Profile

Each OSP Seed Grant application must have an Applicant Lead [an individual from OSP (or equivalent); although a faculty member can serve as Applicant Lead at those institutions which do not allow staff members to be the designated head of subawards]. This person will be responsible for seed grant oversight and proper distribution of seed grant funds. Awardees (Applicant Leads and others) will work closely with the SuRE Resource Center, including attendance at quarterly meetings, to ensure that the seed grant objectives are being met and to share best practices. OSP Seed Grant Applicant Leads must also agree to attend biennial SuRE conferences (costs will be covered by the SuRE program).

Funding Ideas

The OSP Seed Grant applicant can request funds in a variety of areas. These include, but are not limited to:

- Technological investments, including technology/software for grant processing, centralization, transitioning from pre- to post-award, tracking faculty effort and progress (presentations, publications, service on review panels).
- Engagement of research administrators and support staff in relevant research administrative societies (NCURA, SRAI, etc.) through competency-based training, webinars, membership fees and/or attendance at meetings to train staff and implement management systems.
- Continuing professional development activities for administrative staff.
- Integration of research support functions.
- Conducting external evaluation of OSP operations and/or hiring consultants to initiate/improve OSPs.



- Improve financial management services (budget development and post-grant management).
- Processes to ensure compliance with NIH guidelines.
- Hiring OSP staff and/or improve OSP structure.

IMPORTANT: funds for the seed grant program **cannot** be used for faculty research purposes. Faculty who require funds to generate preliminary data for R16 and other external grants must utilize other funding opportunities.

Required Attachments

I. Current OSP and Institutional Environment

Required file naming convention: Institution Name_Narrative.pdf

Required File: PDF

In this section you will provide insight into your institution's current research environment. Supplemental graphics and charts may be included to support this narrative.

1. Describe your current Office of Sponsored Projects (OSP), including staffing and budget (or a proposed model if an OSP does not exist) and the current level of sponsored projects activity at your institution. Describe what you consider to be the current major shortcomings in your OSP operations. (500 words or less)
2. Describe the scholarly environment and the institution's goals for establishing or enhancing sponsored project support. Describe the specific activities that will be conducted to build/strengthen the OSP during the one-year period of the grant. Outline the expected impacts associated with the project activities. (500 words or less)

II. Letter of Support

Required file naming convention: Institution Name_LOS.pdf

Required File: PDF

A letter from an institutional official (Dean, Provost, Vice-President of Research, etc.) demonstrating their support for the OSP Seed Grant. This letter should also describe how OSP responsibilities will be sustained after the grant period ends.

III. Grant Budget & Justification

Required file naming convention: Institution Name_Budget.pdf

Required file: PDF

This attachment must include a brief justification/description for each budgetary item being requested. **Allowable Costs Include:** research development/administrative software, travel to meetings for research administration training, society membership fees, consultant costs to enhance research administrative infrastructure, personnel costs, etc. **Unallowable Costs Include:** direct grants to faculty investigators for scientific projects, Applicant Lead support, or indirect costs.



How to Connect

Those with an interest in the program may email [Melissa Nickell](#) at the SuRE Resource Center with questions. Your questions can also be answered during our virtual office hours each Friday from 3-4 pm, eastern time. [Add this event to your calendar.](#)

To stay informed of news and updates, [join our email list.](#)

Informational Webinars

Each year the SuRE Resource Center will hold information webinars describing the OSP Seed Grant program roughly two months before the application deadline. Join our [email list](#) to be notified about our next award cycle and visit our [YouTube page](#) to view our previous informational webinars.