

## TCU RESEARCH AND CREATIVE ACTIVITIES FUND GRANT PROPOSAL GUIDANCE AND REQUIREMENTS

### PURPOSE

The purpose of the TCU Research and Creative Activities Fund (RCAF) is to provide financial support to enable full-time, tenure-track and tenured faculty members to engage in research or pursue artistry that will make a significant contribution to the individual's discipline. The concepts of research and creative activity are viewed in a broad scope and the intent of the RCAF is to support meritorious projects from all divisions of the University.

The major goal of the program is to provide initial seed money that enables the investigator to:

- Do the preliminary work that precedes proposal submission for extramural funding;
- Sustain ongoing research for which external funding was sought but not received; or
- Pursue research and creative activities for which external funding is limited.

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### GENERAL INFORMATION

RCAF Investigators must

- (1) hold a full-time tenure track or instructor appointment to TCU; and
- (2) have filed a final report on all previously awarded RCAF grants (except for active award).

The grant period is June 1 through the following May 31.

Awards are limited to a maximum of \$4,500 (not including faculty salaries for the Junior Faculty Summer Research Program). Funding requests for less than \$500 are not encouraged as they are better funded from departmental resources and may not be competitive.

Only one proposal can be submitted by an individual in any given year.

Multiple proposals for the same project may receive only one award, regardless of the number of faculty involved.

Projects must be identified as one of the following:

1. **New (seed) projects**, which have not been funded anywhere previously and which will result in extramural funding applications. A repackaging of previously funded projects, or of existing (ongoing) research which led to previous submissions to RCAF or other agencies will not be accepted in this category.
2. **Continuation of an existing (ongoing) project for which extramural funds have recently been sought:** explanation is required in the appropriate text box of the online application form. Omission of this explanation will result in a 15 point deduction.
3. **Continuation of an existing (ongoing) project for which extramural funds are limited or unavailable:** explanation is required in the appropriate text box of the online application form. Omission of this explanation will result in a 15 point deduction.

In the absence of external proposal submission activity (at least one submission over the past three years) no more than three TCU/RCAF grants within a five-year period will be awarded to an investigator.

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### PROPOSAL PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION

Proposals are to be prepared and submitted using the Office of Sponsored Programs' InfoReady Review software. To start a proposal go: <https://tcu.infoready4.com/#competitionDetail/1755970> . You will need to create a login ID and password before proceeding with your application. The online application system is fairly user-friendly and should be self-explanatory. You can either type directly into the online form OR create your proposal elements in Word and then cut and paste each section into its appropriate text box.

Proposals that exceed the word count limitations may not be reviewed. Each textbox has a word count utility in the lower right hand corner.

Applicants should be sure to answer each section completely and concisely.

Reviewers are instructed to score an incomplete section with partial points, and a nonexistent or nonresponsive section with 0 points.

Proposals are reviewed by colleagues from a variety of disciplines. You must present the details and importance of the research and artistic activity in language that will be clear to a well-educated individual outside your field of specialization. Remember that reviewers are from disparate units of the University and may not understand a heavily jargon-laden application.

Consult the Evaluation Sheet for more detailed guidance on the section contents and how they will be reviewed.

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#### PROJECT NARRATIVE

The project narrative is completed using the sections described in the proposal software, and must adhere to the word count limits shown for each item. Please see the Reviewer's evaluation sheet for more detailed information about expectations.

#### 1. Special Requirements for Prior RCAF/JFSRP Awardees:

##### **For NEW proposals by faculty who have received previous RCAF funding:**

Provide a 500 word explanation of work that has been accomplished with funds provided from the previous three RCAF grants. The purpose of this section is to help reviewers distinguish the proposed work from work that has been carried out with previous funding, so emphasizing differences between the current proposal and work accomplished with prior funds would be most beneficial. (Omission will result in a 15 point deduction from the applicant's review score.)

##### **For continuing/renewal projects ONLY:**

An explanation of research/activities (limited to 500 words) completed and progress on previous RCAF grants MUST be included. The explanation must clearly delineate the reason for continued funding and include evidence of external grant submission directly related to the project to be renewed – **OR** – include evidence of non-availability of external grant funds for this work. (Omission will result in a 15 point deduction from the applicant's review score.)

**NOTE: If the applicant does not fit into one or both categories, please enter N/A in the pertinent text box(es).**

2. Abstract: Concisely describe what you intend to do, why it's important, how you propose to do it and your anticipated results. 5 points
3. Purpose: State the purpose of the project in a concise introductory paragraph. Describe exactly what you hope to determine or produce. 5 points
4. Project Background: Provide an adequate review of the pertinent previous work (either by you or others) so that it is clear how the proposed project fits into the current state of knowledge or artistry. 10 points
5. Project Need/Significance: Provide a convincing argument that the proposed project will make an important contribution to the field of study or area of artistry. 15 points

6. Project Potential: Provide an explanation of 1) how this project will contribute to your scholarly/artistic development, 2) how this project will allow you to seek external funding, and 3) the potential for publication, or other appropriate form of external recognition, based on the activities of the project. 10 points
7. Methods: Provide a description of the project activities, making it clear how these activities will allow you to reach the purpose described in Item 3. 15 points
8. Budget and budget justification: Complete the detailed budget form (upload using the Budget Form included on the RCAF submission site. Justification for each major line item should be provided in narrative form. 30 points
9. (REQUIRED) Appendix I: A record of scholarly/artistic activity (publications, presentations, juried performances or exhibitions, and external grants) during the past three years must be included in an Appendix. Include a description of how this project relates to previous TCU/RCAF grants (if appropriate). 10 points
10. Additional information essential to a clarification of the project narrative (e.g., literature cited, measurement instruments, justification for collaborative research, co-investigator's vitae, etc.) may be included. The application form allows for insertion of up to two additional appendices. Although no additional points are added for these materials, they should be designed to help the reviewer assess the likelihood of success of the proposed project.

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#### BUDGET GUIDANCE

- Expenditures must be justified in no more than 250 words in the text box immediately following the upload location for the budget page.
  - When possible, include cost estimates from intended vendors, especially for high-cost items.
  - Requests for equipment (including computers) must be documented and include:
    - An explanation of why the equipment is vital to the proposed project;
    - Why equipment available on campus is not sufficient to meet the needs of the project; and
    - A plan for disposition of the equipment at the end of the project.
  - Requests for publication costs must be documented and include:
    - A letter from a publisher and a justification for associated publication costs as it pertains to research, or
    - Documentation of author fees assessed by an open-access journal
  - Funds will not be provided for:
    - Travel that is not directly related to the conduct of the proposed research or creative activity, for example, travel to attend a conference;
    - Completion or publication of dissertations;
    - Faculty salaries (Except pre-tenure, tenure-track faculty salaries for the Junior Faculty Summer Research Program); and
    - Support of graduate students who are already receiving fellowships or assistantships.
  - NOTE that your budget represents **30** points of your project evaluation score. Reviewers take their fiscal stewardship of RCAF funds very seriously.
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#### ADMINISTRATION

It is the ultimate responsibility of the principal investigator on each project to assure that available grant resources are used judiciously to accomplish the objectives specified in the proposal and that expenditures remain within the approved budget.

Funds approved for one purpose may not be used for another purpose without prior approval of the Director of Sponsored Programs.

The Office of Sponsored Programs must be notified if whole or partial support is received from other sources for approved budget items.

Grant recipients are required to submit a one-page final project report to the Office of Sponsored Programs by August 31st after the grant period has ended. This report should be completed in the InfoReady software used to prepare your proposal. The report should describe in detail the progress made and the relevance of the project. The report should also include a listing of any publications, presentations or proposals to external funding agencies that were an outgrowth of the project. The status of submitted proposal(s) should also be included.

Funds not spent before the termination of the grant period revert to the RCAF account. However, purchase orders executed just prior to the end of the grant period will be honored even though requested items may be not be received until after expiration of the grant. Investigators are encouraged to make purchases early in the grant period to avoid this situation.

Manuscripts submitted for publication or performances/exhibitions, etc., resulting from a project supported wholly or in part by the TCU/RCAF should include acknowledgement of that support. This statement is suggested: *"This work was supported in part by a grant from the TCU Research and Creative Activities Fund."*

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