

## ***New Research Exploration – One-Time Funding Opportunity***

### **Request for Proposals and Instructions**

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- Request for Proposals (RFP)
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#### **Overview**

The *New Research Exploration Award* is a one-time funding opportunity for full-time faculty (tenure, tenure-track, and NNT with research and scholarly expectations) to enhance their research and scholarly competitiveness and productivity. 60% of the total funding amount will be allocated to support tenure-track faculty and NTT faculty members who have completed their highest degree within the past four years.

#### **Purpose**

This one-time funding opportunity (seed funding) supports faculty in pursuing new research, scholarly, and creative directions.

#### **Eligible Criteria**

- All tenure-track and tenured faculty members.
- Non-tenure track faculty members with expectations of research and scholarly activities to be outlined in the dean's or department chair's letter of support.
- Faculty must be in good academic standing.
- No restrictions on discipline or research area.
- Applicants must not have any available funds exceeding \$30,000.
- One application per faculty.

#### **Eligible Activities**

- Exploration of emerging research areas with NO preliminary data and aligned with new funding priorities.
- Research activities to develop proposals for new funding.

#### **Expected Outcomes**

Submission of a proposal to the funding agency within 18 months after the start of the funding period.

#### **Award Details**

- *Award Level:* Up to \$15,000 per faculty member; a total of six to seven awards, with 60% of the awards allocated to tenure track and NTT faculty who have completed their highest degree within the past four years
- *Performance Period:* 12 months from the award date, with the option of a no-cost extension up to six months

## Review Process

Applications will be reviewed by a committee consisting of representatives from the Provost's office, and Deans or Associate Deans from Colleges and Schools based on the criteria below. Subject matter experts may be consulted, provided they have no conflict of interest and agree to confidentiality. The committee will make recommendations to the Vice President for Research & Graduate Education for final approval.

## Review Criteria and Guiding Questions for Proposal Development

**Significance/Importance:** The proposal argues effectively that the project has the potential to lead to significant contributions to the concepts, theories, methods, technologies, applications, treatments, outcomes, services, and/or preventive interventions that drive the field or discipline.

- Does this study address an important scholarly or research problem or gap, or creative endeavor?
- Does the project demonstrate intellectual significance along with a clear and persuasive rationale? Is evidence provided to support how the project is expected to lead to advances in the field?
- Are the project's goals and objectives clearly articulated, well-reasoned, and adequately supported? If hypothesis driven, are hypotheses clearly stated?

**Innovation/Novelty:** The proposal demonstrates that the project develops or employs innovative/novel theoretical or creative concepts, approaches, methods, instrumentation, technologies, and applications.

- Are the theoretical or creative concepts, approaches, and methods innovative or novel to the field and/or more broadly?
- Is a refinement, improvement, or new application of theoretical concepts, approaches, methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions proposed?
- For creative or scholarly projects in the arts and humanities, is the project distinctive in offering fresh insights and new value for the field(s) and/or the public through innovative approaches, theories, discourse, interpretations, and/or methods?

**Approach and Timeline:** The proposal outlines a clearly articulated and well-reasoned plan of action.

- Are the conceptual or theoretical frameworks and methods adequately developed and clearly articulated? Are they appropriate to the goals of the project and reflective of intellectual rigor or artistic excellence?
- Is there a clear work plan for project activities, including roles and responsibilities of all project personnel, including community collaborators in community-engaged research, if applicable? Is the timeline adequate for achieving the project goals?

**Feasibility and Resources:** The project, as described in the proposal, is achievable and potential concerns about feasibility have been addressed.

- Are the resources and time available for this project adequate to ensure success?

- Is a plan proposed for handling eventualities that might impede the success of the project?
- If applicable, does it employ useful collaborative arrangements? For proposals involving community-engaged research, is the collaboration plan clear and well justified, and documented in the community partner organization's Letter of Commitment?
- Does the environment in which the work will be done contribute to the probability of success and will the project benefit from specific assets, such as archives, special collections, translation expertise, technical assistance, databases or tools, geography, facilities, or availability of subject populations?

**Investigator:** The proposal provides evidence that the applicant is eligible for the New Research Exploration award and is well-suited to carry out the project.

- Does the applicant demonstrate an emerging/ongoing record of accomplishments?
- Does the applicant provide evidence that they have no access to funds more than \$30,000?

**Impact and Outcomes:** If the objectives of the project are achieved, the project has high potential for leading to further work with value or impact in the field and will lead to disciplinary achievement and extramural funding.

- Does the proposal adequately describe the project's future potential value or impact in the field?
- Does the proposal provide a mechanism to assess success and provide an adequate plan for evaluation of outcomes?
- Will the proposed work advance the PI's scholarship, creative productivity, or research program, and the likelihood of obtaining an external award or disciplinary recognition?

**Budget and Budget Justification:** The proposed budget is appropriate and sufficient to conduct the proposed work.

- Is the budget request adequately justified, clearly articulated, and necessary for the scope of work and timeline?
- If there is a contract with a Community Partner Organization for community-engaged research, is the community collaborator appropriately compensated and are the line items clearly justified and consistent with the Letter of Commitment and Statement of Work?

# Instructions for Proposal Preparation and Submission of the Proposal

**Submission Deadline: Monday, February 16, 2026, at 12 (Noon) PM**

Application materials may be downloaded from the Office of Research website [here](#).

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## Preparation Guidelines

The complete proposal application packet includes the following elements and adheres to the specified page limits. All items must be uploaded into [Cayuse SP](#).

1. [Current, Pending, and Planned Support](#) – Use the provided form, duplicating as needed.
2. **Project Narrative** – Maximum four pages, single-spaced, Arial 10 point or Times New Roman 11 point, 1-inch margins. Write in clear, accessible language for an interdisciplinary audience. Proposals should avoid the use of technical or discipline-specific jargon. Acronyms that may not be universally understood should be kept to a minimum and should be spelled out the first time they are used.
  - **Significance/Importance:** Provide a clear and compelling rationale for why the proposed project, scholarly activity, or creative work matters. Indicate how the proposed project will advance knowledge, address an important scientific or scholarly problem, or demonstrate intellectual or creative significance. Include specific goals and objectives, and relevant background, information, and/or preliminary data in support of the project.
  - **Innovation/Novelty:** Outline the ways in which this project's proposed work is new/innovative in its theoretical or creative concepts, approaches, methods, instrumentation, technologies, and applications, in comparison to current and previous work in the field.
  - **Approach and Timeline:** Describe the plan for carrying out the proposed activities, including the methodological approach and work plan. Provide a timeline for completing the project.
  - **Feasibility and Resources:** Provide evidence that it is feasible to undertake and complete the work proposed and that a plan is in place to handle potential contingencies that might hinder success. Describe the environment in which the work will be done and specific resources that the project will employ. Include a collaboration plan, if applicable.
  - **Investigator:** Provide information to establish your eligibility for the award and the ways in which you are well-suited to carry out the proposed project. Discuss your record of accomplishments and how the proposed project will advance your research, scholarship, or creative work.
  - **Impact and Outcomes:** Describe the value or impact of the proposed project, once complete, and how it will lead to extramural funding and disciplinary achievement. Outline your plan for assessing the project's success and evaluating outcomes.
3. **Bibliography and References Cited** – Maximum 1-2 pages.
4. [Budget and Budget Justification](#) – Use the provided form.  
The Total Budget Request must total the Budget Request on the Cover Page. Budget

categories include undergraduate and graduate student costs and fringe benefits, community collaborator service payments, travel, equipment, supplies and materials, participant support costs, and contractual services. Use the Budget Template provided and follow the budget preparation guidelines below to prepare the budget and budget justification. You must justify each budget item.

Budget Justification. Use the Budget Justification column of the budget form. Each item must be justified in terms of purpose and include a unit breakdown explaining how the amount was calculated. (E.g., Graduate Research Assistant will consent participants, administer surveys, and do data entry. 10 hours/week for 10 weeks @\$xx per hour.)

Contractual Service Payments to Community Partner Organizations, if applicable, should be itemized and entered in the Contractual Services column on the Budget form, and be fully justified. The Contractual Service budget request should match the budget to which the community partner organization has committed in the Statement of Work for Contractual Services.

### **Personnel Salaries and Wages**

Costs. Under each category: Graduate Student, Undergraduate Student, Community Partner Collaborator, Other, list names and roles of all personnel who will be compensated for work on the project. Indicate “TBN” for future hires. For personnel being paid hourly, give the rate for the year in which the work will be performed, the number of hours per week, and the number of weeks. For salaried personnel, list salary and FTE.

Fringe Benefits. List fringe by category. The fringe benefit amount [[link to calculator](#)] should be computed using the rate schedule for each employment category that will be in effect during the grant period.

### **Other Direct Costs**

Travel (Transportation and Per Diem). Travel in connection with research, scholarly, and creative work, including for archival research or creative work that is site-specific. All travel costs must be well-justified in relation to the project goals.

Equipment. Equipment is defined as tangible, non-expendable, personal property with an anticipated life of one year or more and a unit acquisition cost of \$5,000 or greater. Identify the individual pieces of equipment requested, the importance to the project, and why existing equipment does not suffice. Requires a price quotation from the vendor.

Materials & Supplies. These costs should be project-specific, reasonable, and based on actual or historical use. Provide a summary description and amount for each (e.g., software, art supplies).

Software. Identify the software packages to be purchased, their importance to the project, and why existing software does not suffice.

Participant Support Costs. Include incentives, travel, and other subsistence costs necessary for the project.

Contractual Services. Explain and justify all fees and charges for specialized services, such as

library access fees, translation/transcription fees, recording fees, consultant fees, etc.

**Unallowable Costs:**

- Salaries or other direct remuneration to faculty members of Chapman University.
- Administrative support or office expenses related to research.
- Maintenance contracts on equipment.
- Travel to meetings, conferences, and sabbatical sites for purposes other than conducting the proposed work.
- The writing and preparation of manuscripts intended to be used as standard textbooks.
- Projects that could receive support from publishers or other contracting entities.
- Publication costs or reprints for individual faculty or for departmental monographs or series.
- The preparation of lectures, demonstrations, syllabi, or other course-related materials.
- Departmental symposia, seminars, retreats, or colloquia.
- Projects whose purpose is to support undergraduate or graduate students pursuing their own research.
- The remedy of budgetary deficiency in other research contracts or grants.
- Bridge funding or marginal support for other substantially funded research.

5. **Letter of Commitment from Community Partner Organization(s), if applicable** – Maximum two pages: The letter should:

- Be signed by a person authorized by the organization, such as the Board Chair or Executive Director.
- State specifically the partner's intention to collaborate on the project and what community problem or opportunity will be studied.
- Describe the partner's involvement in developing the project, how they will participate, and the resources they will devote to the project, including the name, title, and position of the lead collaborator and key staff, activities, timeline, and expected outcomes and impact.
- Describe any financial and in-kind contributions. If the partner organization will be a sub-awardee, the letter should reference the Statement of Work for Subawards.

6. **Statement of Work for Subaward** – Maximum 1 page. In collaboration with the community partner, the applicant should develop a short document that describes in more detail the activities and deliverables of the subaward. It should include a leadership statement (stating who will be directly responsible for accomplishing the work) and an itemized budget and justification that match the subaward items listed on the applicant Budget and Budget Justification form. The Statement of Work for Subaward document accompanies the letter of commitment and should be referenced in that letter.

7. **Supporting Documents:**

- Brief Curriculum Vita (2 pages maximum)
- Brief rationale for change of research or scholarly activities (~1 page)
- List of targeted funding opportunities and submission timeline (~1 page)

- Letter of support from your department chair or dean
- Equipment Price Quote from Vendor, *if applicable*

You may have questions when working on your proposal in [Cayuse SP](#). Please reach out to [officeofresearch@chapman.edu](mailto:officeofresearch@chapman.edu).

### **Submission of the Proposal**

**Submit your proposal via Cayuse SP by Monday, February 16, 2026, at 12 (Noon) PM.**  
**Award Start Date:** April 15, 2026