

# 2022-2023 Faculty Research Grants Program

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UNC Charlotte, through its Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Economic Development, sponsors an internal Faculty Research Grants (FRG) program designed to assist faculty in conducting well-defined, purposeful, new research or creative or scholarly activities. The program is divided into two categories: continuing faculty and newly appointed assistant professors.

The Faculty Research Grants Committee (FRGC) is soliciting proposals for the 2022-2023 (18-month) program. Each individual project may have a maximum budget of \$8,000, including a stipend of up to \$4,200. Faculty submitting joint proposals may request up to \$16,000 (\$8,000 per faculty member; maximum stipend of \$8,400).

The deadline for submissions is **5:00 p.m. on Monday, October 18, 2021**.

***New this year:*** Proposals must be uploaded electronically as a single PDF file to Niner Research, UNC Charlotte's electronic research administration portal. See below for more information on Niner Research. Name your file in the following manner: Last name\_first name. Joint proposals should use the last names of both faculty members.

Funds from these programs may be used for research expenses, but **not** for the following:

- Academic-year release time or reduced teaching loads.
- Research that informs curriculum or teaching or retention at the local (course, department, college, University) level. These proposals must be submitted to the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SOTL) Program. The FRGC will not consider these proposals, and they will be returned without review.
- Preparation of textbooks or other manuscripts with a primarily pedagogical purpose.
- Projects conducted primarily to produce financial reward for the investigator.
- Production costs for books or other manuscripts, including manuscript preparation or evaluation, copyediting, page charges and illustrations.

- Travel to conferences for disseminating research results.
- Computers (expected through departmental funds).
- Professional transcription services.
- Food.

The FRGC will consider only those proposals that adhere strictly to the following guidelines, procedures, and deadlines. ***Proposals that do not conform to these guidelines will be returned without review.*** Questions about the suitability of a proposal may be directed to Dr. Jaclyn Piatak, FRGC Chair, Department of Political Science and Public Administration, at [jpiatak@uncc.edu](mailto:jpiatak@uncc.edu), or to Lesley Brown, Director, Center for Research Excellence, at [labrown@uncc.edu](mailto:labrown@uncc.edu).

### PHILOSOPHY AND PURPOSE OF FUNDING

Funding decisions will be based strictly on the merit of the proposal submitted. No effort will be made to distribute awards among departments or colleges.

Because funds are limited, the FRGC cannot fund all meritorious proposals. Therefore, in those fields where external funding is available, it should be sought. In some fields, University funding may be the only source of financial support, but it is expected that a good-faith effort will be made to find outside support. In making its decisions, the FRGC will consider an applicant's record of efforts to obtain extramural support.

***All faculty who are funded through the FRG program are required to submit a proposal to an external funding agency before they may reapply to the FRG program.*** Faculty must submit an external proposal between the submission date of their previously funded FRG proposal and the current FRG submission date. The external proposal does not have to be related to the FRG project. The Center for Research Excellence will help faculty identify appropriate external funding opportunities and give guidance where needed on writing external proposals. A proposal is “counted” as submitted to an external agency once it has been approved in the Office of Research Services and Outreach (ORSO) Niner Online Research Management (NORM) system or in Niner Research. All external proposals must be routed through official University channels (NORM or Niner Research) prior to submission to the agency. Service contracts in recharge units and consulting agreements are not considered proposals for the purposes of this requirement.

The objective of the University's research support programs is to promote research at this institution. Therefore, an individual who leaves employment at UNC Charlotte by that action immediately forfeits any claim to funding under this research program. This means, for example, that a faculty member who resigns from UNC Charlotte effective the next fall semester is automatically declining any offer of research support, including the faculty stipend.

## ELIGIBILITY

The FRG program is available to all full-time faculty with the title of assistant professor or higher whose job description includes professional expectations for research. In addition to tenure-track and tenured faculty, this includes Atkins Library faculty and faculty on research or clinical appointments. The program is divided into two categories: continuing faculty and newly appointed assistant professors. Newly appointed assistant professors are assistant professors in their first or second year of appointment at UNC Charlotte. All other faculty, including newly appointed associate professors, will apply as continuing faculty.

Faculty members are eligible with either 9-month or 12-month appointments. Faculty with 12-month appointments may not receive faculty stipends; however, they may still apply for the entire \$8,000. Members of the FRGC are eligible to apply; however, they neither rank nor participate in the discussion of their proposals.

Part-time faculty, EHRA staff, lecturers, visiting professors, adjunct professors, postdoctoral associates, and faculty on phased retirement are NOT eligible to apply. Faculty with active FRGs who enter phased retirement must give up the remaining funds.

nor may  
department  
chairs,  
endowed  
chairs, or  
distinguished  
professors

A faculty member may participate in only one proposal for the FRG program. Additionally, an award recipient may hold only one (1) FRG during any single 18-month award period. That is, if you are awarded a grant one year, you may not apply the following year. For example:

In Fall 2019, you are awarded a grant for 2020-2021

In Fall 2020, you are *not eligible* to apply for a grant for 2021-2022

In Fall 2021, you *may apply* for a grant for 2022-2023

### *Joint Proposals*

Two faculty members may prepare and submit a joint request in a single proposal. Those submitting a joint proposal are required to complete the Justification for Collaboration section of the application package. Limited to one double-spaced page, this page *must* be used to explain clearly how the expertise of each researcher is needed in order to conduct the research. Each faculty member on a joint proposal may ask for up to \$8,000; therefore, two faculty members as co-PIs on one proposal may receive \$16,000. The co-PIs will produce a joint budget request form and the funds must be allocated to one department.

### *New Assistant Professor Resubmission Program*

In order to provide support for newly appointed junior faculty, those first- or second-year assistant professors who submit a proposal and are turned down by the FRGC will be allowed to revise their proposal (working with a faculty mentor in their department) and re-apply in the same current funding cycle. The FRGC will reserve a separate pool of money to fund these resubmitted proposals. New assistant professors who submit a joint proposal with a more senior faculty member (*i.e.*, anyone who is not a first- or

second-year assistant professor) will have their proposal considered in the “Continuing Faculty” category and will lose the right to resubmit during the current funding cycle.

### PROPOSAL REVIEW AND CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION

Proposals are evaluated by the FRGC, which consists of faculty members elected by the faculty, with the Director of the Center for Research Excellence as an ex-officio, nonvoting member. In consultation with the Vice Chancellor for Research and Economic Development, the FRGC will establish three ad hoc subcommittees to read and score the proposals. These subcommittees will be (1) Arts and Humanities (AH); (2) Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM); and (3) Social Sciences, Business, Health, and Education (SBHE). These ad hoc committees will consist of elected members of the FRGC supplemented by ad hoc members with expertise in the appropriate disciplines. Ad hoc committee members will be appointed to one-year terms and will be full members of the FRGC for purposes of reviewing proposals only. Ad hoc members will not participate in policy decisions. The faculty member submitting the proposal will select which subcommittee reads the proposal by checking the appropriate checkbox on the application face page. Each ad hoc committee will evaluate proposals in the context of disciplinary expectations using the FRGC criteria. Committee recommendations are forwarded to the Center for Research Excellence.

The FRGC will strongly consider the researcher’s publication record for work supported by past grants, as well as efforts to secure extramural funding where appropriate to the discipline. Awards duplicated by outside granting agencies will be returned to the University research fund.

The ad hoc review committees, working with the Center for Research Excellence, will send written feedback to applicants whose proposals aren’t selected for funding. New assistant professors in their first or second year of appointment whose proposals are not recommended for funding by the FRGC may revise their proposal (working with a faculty mentor in their own department and/or the Center for Research Excellence) and re-apply in the same current funding cycle. Qualified faculty who are turned down by the FRGC will be notified by email of the procedures for revising and resubmitting their proposal.

### ***Review Criteria***

Applicants are required to write their proposal with non-experts in mind. Because the committee is composed of faculty from across the University, successful proposals are those that are easily understood by faculty outside the applicant’s discipline. The ad hoc review committees will be constituted along broad disciplinary lines, and you cannot assume that someone from your exact discipline or sub-discipline will be on the committee. Proposals will be evaluated by the FRGC using the following criteria:

- Has the author documented the significance of the project? Has the applicant placed the research or artistic endeavor in context with the existing scholarship or other works of this nature?

- Are the proposed activities related well to a specific question, problem, or hypothesis?
- Does the applicant show sufficient familiarity with recent developments in the field and/or provide a context for his or her research?
- Does the applicant demonstrate his or her ability to carry out the project?
- Does the applicant clearly explain the (appropriate) process and/or methodology? If in the arts (including creative writing): Does the applicant clearly explain the artistic process and product?
- Are the project goals and design clearly and adequately stated?
- Does the proposed research or artistic endeavor relate to the applicant's previous work and is it clearly explained? Or does it represent a new research agenda or artistic endeavor that is clearly explained?
- Is the proposal intelligible to an audience outside the proposer's discipline?
- Is the budget cost-effective?
- Does the applicant present evidence of efforts (successful or unsuccessful) to receive external funding? Does the applicant discuss plans to pursue future external funding?

### APPLICATION PROCESS

The application forms and information are available on the Center for Research Excellence [website](#).

- Download the Application Form (Microsoft Word) and complete all sections.
- Prepare proposals according to the guidelines in this document. ***Proposals that do not conform to the guidelines will be returned without review.***
- Convert your completed application package to PDF format. Check your application package to ensure that no errors were introduced in the conversion process.
- Upload your proposal as a single PDF file to the Niner Research portal by **5:00 p.m. on Monday, October 18, 2021.**
- Name your file in the following manner: Last name\_first name. Joint proposals should use the last name of both faculty members.

If you have questions about this process, contact Jaclyn Piatak at [japiatak@uncc.edu](mailto:japiatak@uncc.edu) or Lesley Brown at [labrown@uncc.edu](mailto:labrown@uncc.edu).

## PROPOSAL FORMAT

The proposal should be prepared in a word processing program and uploaded to Niner Research as a SINGLE FILE ATTACHMENT in PDF format. Each proposal should include the following components in the order listed. These items constitute a complete application. ***If any required item is missing, the application will be considered incomplete and will be returned without review.***

**The components in 1 through 7 below should be MERGED INTO A SINGLE FILE. Appendices are not allowed.**

1. A completed application face page.
2. A Project Description. Unless otherwise specified, all pages should be **double spaced with 1" margins. Use 12-point type.** Type density, including characters and spaces, must be no more than 15 characters per inch, and type may be no more than three lines of text per vertical inch. **Sections a-e are limited to a total of five double-spaced pages.** *Proposals that do not adhere to these formatting restrictions will be returned without review.* The Project Description should include the following sections:
  - a. An **Introduction** that is clearly written and understandable to a person outside the applicant's discipline. The ad hoc review committees will be constituted along broad disciplinary lines, and you cannot assume that someone from your exact discipline or sub-discipline will be on the committee.
  - b. The **Significance** of the project. Because the committee members come from many disciplines, they must be able to understand the context in which your research is situated. You should explain how your project relates to current developments in your field and/or how the project builds on previous work you have done.
  - c. The **Objectives** of the proposed activity.
  - d. The **Methods** or **Steps** to achieve the objectives.
  - e. The **Method of Dissemination** of completed activities.
  - f. **Works cited/ References.** Limited to **one page**. It may be single spaced, and you may use 11-pt type on this page.
3. Justification for Collaboration: (**required for joint proposals**) to explain how the expertise of each faculty member is necessary to the project. This section is **limited to one double-spaced page with 12-point type.**
4. A detailed budget request and budget justification.
5. Biographical Sketch: Use the form in the application package. Joint proposals should include one biosketch for each investigator. Please note the **two-page limit**. An 11-point type size is acceptable for this section. Use the biographical sketch form provided. Do not substitute other forms.

6. Efforts to Secure External Funding: Limited to one page. Provide a description of your efforts to secure external funding for research, creative activity, or service (including development, training, evaluation, etc.) during the last five years by listing each proposal during that period, including the date, title, agency and whether you were the PI or a co-PI. Indicate the amount of the grant and if it was funded or is currently under review. Include a description of your plans to seek external funding in the next two years, either related to this proposal or in another area. Seeking external funding for this and/or other projects is an expectation of the University. Faculty who receive an FRG award will be required to submit an external proposal before reapplying to the FRG program. If your history of proposal activity will not fit on one page, please limit your description to the last three years. An 11-point type size is acceptable for this section, and this page may be single spaced. Joint proposals should provide one page for each faculty member.
7. Provide a list of all UNC Charlotte Faculty Research Grants received in the last five (5) years and a brief progress report that describes the results of your last Faculty Research Grant received. Joint proposals should provide this information for each investigator. An 11-point type size is acceptable for this section, and this page may be single spaced.

### **Acknowledgments for Publication**

Any research published that has received support from a UNC Charlotte Faculty Research Grant should have a citation as follows:

*This work was supported, in part, by funds provided by The University of North Carolina at Charlotte.*

### **Final Report**

A final report following the suggested format (in Microsoft Word or PDF format) and summarizing the project funded by the Faculty Research Grants Program should be sent to [proposals@uncc.edu](mailto:proposals@uncc.edu) no later than two months after the end of your award period. Faculty who fail to submit a final report will be ineligible for future funding. The final report form can be found on the Center for Research Excellence “Locating Funding” page: [Final Report Form](#)

### **BUDGET GUIDELINES**

See [“Frequently Asked Questions for FRG Budgets”](#) for more information.

### ***Budget Options***

UNC Charlotte’s fiscal year runs from July 1 to June 30 each year, and, because this award is state-funded and is available for 18 months, you will cross two fiscal calendars.

***Because you cannot carry funds over from one fiscal year to the next, you should carefully consider how you allocate funds between Fiscal Year One and Fiscal Year Two.*** If you choose Budget Option 1 (start date of January 15, 2022) and your project will require compliance committee approvals (for human or animal subjects or biosafety review), please carefully consider whether you will be able to have your protocol written and approved within the first six-month budget period. You will not be able to receive any funds (including stipends or graduate assistant salary) until your protocol has been approved.

You have the option of two start and end dates for your project. Indicate which option you want by filling out the appropriate budget page. Be careful in selecting your budget option because ***it will not be possible to change your start date once an award is made.***

### ***Budget Option 1***

**Start date of January 15, 2022, ending May 31, 2023.** Fiscal Year One funds will run from January 15, 2022, through May 31, 2022. Fiscal Year Two funds will run from July 1, 2021, through May 31, 2022. Funds must be expended by May 31, 2022, for Fiscal Year One budgets and May 31, 2023, for Fiscal Year Two budgets. Faculty stipends, where appropriate, will be included in the grantee's May 15 payroll check of the year indicated on the budget. The maximum stipend amount allowed by the FRG program is \$4,200 per faculty member. If you choose Budget Option 1 and if your stipend in Year 1 was less than that amount, you may include funds that total up to that maximum in the second year.

In rare instances it is possible to request to move Fiscal Year One funds to Fiscal Year Two, but such requests must be made by May 15, 2022. Contact Tonya McMannen ([tmcmannen@uncc.edu](mailto:tmcmannen@uncc.edu)) in the Academic Affairs Budget Office to make this request.

### ***Budget Option 2***

**Start date of July 1, 2022, ending December 31, 2023.** Fiscal Year One funds will run from July 1, 2022, through May 31, 2023. Fiscal Year Two funds will run from July 1, 2023, through December 31, 2023. Funds must be expended by May 31, 2023, for Fiscal Year One budgets and December 31, 2023, for Fiscal Year Two budgets. For Budget Option 2, faculty stipends, where appropriate, are only available in Fiscal Year One and will be included in the grantee's May 15, 2023, payroll check.

In rare instances it is possible to request to move Fiscal Year One funds to Fiscal Year Two, but such requests must be made by May 15, 2023. Contact Tonya McMannen ([tmcmannen@uncc.edu](mailto:tmcmannen@uncc.edu)) in the Academic Affairs Budget Office to make this request.

***Round all budget figures to the nearest dollar.***

If you are submitting an individual FRG proposal, the maximum amount of funding you may request is \$8,000. You may request up to \$4,200 for a stipend. For joint proposals, your total budget must not exceed \$16,000 (\$8,000 per PI). Faculty stipends on joint proposals are limited to a total of \$8,400. PIs on joint proposals must produce one budget request document and designate one department to receive the funds.

***The Committee reserves the right to modify any budgetary requests that it considers unreasonable, unexplained, or not in keeping with the allowable expenses. The Committee may also reduce allocations to all funded proposals to accommodate funding a greater number of projects.***

***Budget Documentation***

A budget justification is required. You must include precise documentation for items such as travel and equipment. Describe how you arrived at your cost estimates. You may name the vendor you consulted, but do not attach quotations. If faculty from more than one department are involved, specify which department is the home department for budget purposes.

**Allowable Expenses:** Allowable expenses include the following:

- **Stipends:** Faculty with 12-month appointments may not receive faculty stipends (they may still apply for the entire \$8,000.) For those faculty with 9-month appointments who receive a stipend, the stipend is treated as salary and is subject to state and federal income tax, as well as social security tax and retirement deductions. You are not required to request a stipend, in which case you may still request up to the full \$8000.
- **Graduate Student Salaries:** Applicants who propose paying more than **50%** of the budget funds to student salaries should carefully explain how the graduate student's work will advance the faculty member's research agenda. Graduate student salary amounts should be consistent with other graduate student salaries in your department.
- **Special Pay to Faculty other than Grantee:** Fees for normal peer consultations will not be paid to UNC Charlotte faculty. Budgets may include resources allocated to UNC Charlotte faculty other than the proposers, but such allocations must be specifically justified and are subject to special scrutiny by the Committee. Such allocations must be justified in terms of specialized expertise. In each case, you must identify the UNC Charlotte faculty member(s) who will provide the service and attach to the proposal a statement of his/her ability and agreement to provide the service, along with documentation of how the service will be provided and how it differs from the normal scope of peer consultation.
- **Student Temporary Wages (Graduate or Undergraduate):** Funding for undergraduate student support is allowed only to the extent that student

participation is central to the proposed project. Applicants who propose paying more than 50% of the budget funds to student salaries should carefully explain how the student's work will advance the faculty member's research agenda. Applicants are encouraged to provide an exact hourly rate for all student help. Generally, undergraduate students are paid at a rate of not less than \$7.25 per hour. An investigator who proposes to pay a higher wage rate should justify this, as well as the amount of student time required, in the budget justification. All investigators who propose hiring students should specify what duties the students will carry out.

- **Non-Student Temporary Wages:** If you employ someone who is not currently enrolled at UNC Charlotte, including a recent graduate, that employment assignment is subject to policies relating to non-student temporary wage employment ([PIM-8](#)). Hourly pay rates are determined by the type of work performed and the candidate's experience, based on the current N.C. state grade and salary schedule. Non-student temporary wage employees are typically paid at the minimum of the grade level considered by Human Resources to best match the level of the duties performed. A rate above the minimum of the salary grade level may be approved providing the rate is justified, does not create salary inequity with other current employees doing similar work, and the candidate qualifies for the rate requested. Investigators needing assistance on estimating hourly rates for temporary employees should contact the staff employment manager in Human Resources.
- **Honoraria:** Consultants may be included, if justified and if the expertise is not available at UNC Charlotte.
- **Participant Incentives** for payments to human subjects.
- **Travel:** The FRG Program will fund foreign and/or domestic travel, to libraries, archives, museums, laboratories, computer facilities, natural settings, government agencies, corporations, etc. that are essential to the research. ***The FRG Program does not fund travel to conferences to disseminate the results of your research.***

You must fully justify the need for travel and explain what materials and/or facilities you will use, and you should document travel expenditures as completely as possible with price quotations from specific vendors. Airfares must be tourist class, with every effort made to obtain the most economical rates. Mileage and subsistence expenses are normally allowed up to the state guidelines for in-state and out-of-state or foreign travel; requests for subsistence expenses in excess of these limits must be fully documented.

- **Communication and/or Printing (and photocopying).**
- **Supplies and materials.**
- **Computing Equipment:** This program funds project-specific software, but does not fund computer equipment (that is the responsibility of your department). If you propose to develop a computer software package, you must document that

similar software is not already available in the public domain (contact the Office of OneIT at 704-687-5500).

- **Educational Equipment** required for the proposed project. Equipment purchased with FRG funds belongs to the University.
- **Other Contracted Services** includes payments to the UNC Charlotte Urban Institute or Conference Services.

## **NINER RESEARCH**

Beginning with the October 18, 2021 deadline, all FRG proposals must be uploaded to [Niner Research](#), UNC Charlotte’s new integrated electronic research administration (eRA) system that will help manage UNC Charlotte's research and research compliance activities.

The Niner Research homepage includes references guides and video tutorials and demos. Under “Video Tutorials and Documentation” at the bottom of the page, click on “General” for a Niner Research Basics video. Click on “Grants (Proposal Development, Proposal Tracking, Award Tracking, Financial Tracking)” to find the Proposal Development reference guide and an Internal Grants guide with step-by-step instructions for entering information into Niner Research. There you will also find more how-to videos for working in Niner Research.

In addition, the following staff members in each college can help you with Niner Research:

CCI	Audrey Callahan	acalla12@uncc.edu	
CHHS	Vikki Cherwon	V.Cherwon@uncc.edu	704-687-7912
CLAS	Peter Szanton	pszanton@uncc.edu	704-687-0056
CLAS	Paul Cryer	pcryer@uncc.edu	704-687-0055
COA+A	Stafford Farmer	sfarme15@uncc.edu	704-687-1860
COB	Stafford Farmer	sfarme15@uncc.edu	704-687-1860
COED	April Scheck	April.Schenck@uncc.edu	704-687-1890
COEN	Shanda Wirt	swirt@uncc.edu	704-687-8246
COEN	Stacy Leotta	sleotta@uncc.edu	

All FRG proposals must be submitted in Niner Research in accordance with Research Administration [Policy 20.2](#): Deadlines for Proposal Submissions to University Offices, which establishes the following deadlines:

- 1) At least **10 business days** in advance of the sponsor’s submission deadline, an IPF must be initiated in [Niner Research] and the following sections completed (1) Setup Questions, (2) Personnel, and (3) General Information.

2) At least **5 business days** in advance of the sponsor's submission deadline, the final proposal budget and all remaining sections of the IPF must be completed and the routing process for approvals initiated.

3) At least **2 business days (48 hours)** in advance of the sponsor's submission deadline, all final application materials must be entered into the eRA system and received by the office responsible for authorizing the submission (i.e., the Office of Research Services and Outreach, the Center for Research Excellence, or the College-Based Research Office).