

The University of Cincinnati Office of the Vice President for Research  
Internal Funding Program Announcement

**University Research Council (URC)  
Faculty Scholars Research Awards**

The Office of the Vice President for Research is pleased to announce the 2020-2021 RFP for the *inaugural* URC Faculty Scholars Research Awards Program. Building upon the rich legacy of the University Research Council (URC), UC's oldest and most prestigious internal funding program, the URC Faculty Scholars Research Awards are meant to recognize promising UC early career faculty who are proposing transformative ideas that will shape our future. This program is for individual faculty and may be discipline-focused or interdisciplinary in nature.

This program will follow a two-stage application/evaluation process. The first stage involves submission of a 3-page *concept* paper. Up to five finalists in each area will then be invited to submit a full proposal and agree to a 10-minute presentation/Q&A to discuss their proposed activities.

Two URC Faculty Scholars Research Awardees will be designated annually in the areas of:

- Arts & Humanities
- Behavioral & Social Sciences
- Life Sciences
- Physical Science & Engineering

**Awards:** All awards will be for \$25,000 and for a period of 24 months. Budgets will only be required from awardees and will be created in collaboration with the Office of Research. Award start dates will be no sooner than April 1, 2021.

**KEY DATES**

RFP released October 28, 2020

Concept/White Paper Application Deadline: November 23, 2020, 5:00 pm EST

Finalists Notified: December 13, 2020 (anticipated)

Final Proposal Deadline: January 13, 2021, 5:00 pm EST (for finalists only)

Finalist Presentations: (Week of January 18<sup>th</sup> 2021)

Awardees Announced: February 2, 2021

## Program Information

The University Research Council (URC) funding program is UC's oldest and most prestigious internal funding mechanism. Since 1971, the URC has worked in partnership with the Office of the Vice President for Research to advance high-potential faculty who demonstrate excellence in research, scholarship and creative work.

Recognizing there has been a significant gap in internal programs that are dedicated to nurturing and supporting our outstanding early career faculty, the new URC Faculty Scholars Program has been established as part of UC's **Research2030** strategic plan for research. Such faculty represent the bright future for UC, and this program seeks to bolster their efforts early in their career to help them identify solutions to the complex questions, problems and challenges facing society.

The goals of the URC Faculty Scholars program are to 1) Recognize outstanding early career researchers, scholars and creatives for inclusive, impactful, and innovative work; 2) Drive excellence in all areas of research, scholarship and creative endeavors; and 3) Advance high-potential, high-impact activities to the next level.

The expected outcomes for this program are to: 1) Support and propel early career investigators towards greater success and prominence; 2) Advance high-potential research and creative activities in emergent areas; and 3) Increase faculty competitiveness and capacity for major extramural awards and funding.

Awardees will be selected based on the quality, novelty, and impact of their research, scholarship and creative activities, along with a clear potential to make further, sustainable contributions to knowledge creation and improved societal outcomes. URC Faculty Scholar Awards are essentially unrestricted funds that can be used as best determined by the Awardee to achieve the desired outcomes and goals of the proposed activity.

## Eligibility

- *This is an early career program*; therefore, UC faculty members must be tenure-track faculty who have not yet been granted tenure at UC or elsewhere.
- Eligible applicants include UC faculty members with at least an 80% FTE appointment, with UC being the primary appointment.
- Only one application per eligible faculty member is allowed. There are no limits to the numbers of applicants per unit or college.
- As this is the inaugural offering of this program, otherwise eligible faculty who received past URC or Office of Research funding may apply. Such previously funded applicants must have met all requirements of former awards within budget and timeframe AND the proposed area of research, scholarship or creative activities may not duplicate that previously supported by a former award. Note: such previous awardees will be required to provide data/evidence that the previously funded project was successful and impactful if invited to the finalist stage for this program.
- Otherwise eligible faculty with external funding may apply but the proposed activities must not duplicate those already funded.

## Concept/White Paper Application Materials

Applications will be submitted online via Wisehive, our internal program software. When the application is available, the link will be posted on <https://research.uc.edu/funding/overview>.

All applicants will be required to provide their name, UC email, M-number, college, department/unit, date of hire/appointment at UC, anticipated academic year for tenure review, and proposal title within the Wisehive application portal prior to uploading the required pdf files.

*All applicants should select the area designation for review/award based on their proposed activities, which can differ from their department/unit home.*

All documents must adhere to general requirements of 12 point font, 1 inch margins, and single column layout. All materials below **must** be submitted in the order listed as separate PDF files.

1. Concept/White Paper Contents (3 page maximum).  
The concept/white paper should contain the following information in the order listed below. *Word limitations for each section are merely provided as suggestions.* Figures may be included but cannot be used to exceed the page limit. No hyperlinks or redirects to external information may be included.
  - Problem Statement and Significance (200 words)
  - Background including Prior Approaches/Relevant Literature (200 words)
  - Project Description/Proposed Approach (400 words)
  - Anticipated Results/Outcomes (200 words)
  - Broader Impacts (200 words)
  - Project Sustainability/Follow-on Funding (150 words)
2. Bibliography/References Cited. Full reference details for all citations in concept/white paper (1 page maximum)
3. Biographical Sketch/CV (3 page maximum)

### Concept/White Paper Review Criteria:

- Project Merit
  - Clarity, significance and relevance of problem being addressed
  - Accurate presentation of the state of the field/current approaches, methods or techniques being used
  - Innovation/creativity/feasibility of the proposed approach
  - Project outcomes including contribution to field of study or potential to establish new multi/interdisciplinary area along with assessment measures
  - Broader impacts (e.g., efforts to broaden participation; potential to place UC/college/unit as leader in field; alignment with UC, local or state priorities)
  - Appropriateness of plan to obtain additional/follow-on external support for project
- Suitability of the proposer to undertake and complete the proposed project.
- Compliance with Application Guidelines in the RFP and the Submission Portal.

The Vice President for Research will be hosting a webinar to discuss the opportunity, RFP details (e.g., application materials, LOI components and review criteria) and answering applicant questions on **November 5, 2020 at 12:00 pm (noon)**. Interested applicants to this program are encouraged, but not required, to attend this webinar. Registration details for this webinar can be found at <https://research.uc.edu/funding/overview>.

**Finalist Selection & Review Process:** Each URC Faculty Scholars Research Award concept/white paper will be reviewed by a team of UC faculty reviewers. The review process will be managed such that no conflict of interest issues arise. No more than five (5) finalists in each topic area will be invited to submit a full proposal. Details on the full proposal process and required materials will be distributed to all finalists directly.

**QUESTIONS?** Email [research@uc.edu](mailto:research@uc.edu)