

The University of Cincinnati Office of Research University Research Council (URC) Faculty Scholars Research Awards

Eight Faculty Scholar \$25,000 awards annually

The Office of Research is pleased to share the FOA for the 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 recognize outstanding early-career faculty whose work demonstrates exceptional promise and vision. *This is not a traditional grant opportunity* – it is an award designed to provide recipients with the freedom and flexibility to pursue bold ideas that may shape the trajectory of their career and field.

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 Letter of Intent (LOI). Up to fifteen finalists will then be invited to submit a full proposal and share a 15-minute presentation/Q&A to discuss their proposed activities.

Eight URC Faculty Scholars Research Awardees will be designated annually. Faculty across all UC, whose research, scholarship and creative activities fall within the areas of Arts & Humanities, Behavioral & Social Sciences, Physical Science & Engineering, and the Life Sciences, are encouraged to apply.

KEY DATES

FOA Released: September 3, 2025

LOI Due: November 13, 2025 by 5:00 pm EST

Finalists Notified: Week of December 8, 2025 (anticipated)

Final Proposal Deadline: January 21, 2026 by 5:00 pm EST (for finalists only)

Finalist Presentations: Week of February 16, 2026 (anticipated)

Awardees Announced: Week of March 16, 2026 (anticipated)

Award Project Period: May 2026 – April 2028

Program Information

The URC Faculty Scholars Program was established as part of UC's [Research2030](#) strategic plan for research to support faculty representing the bright future for UC. This program seeks to bolster tenure-track faculty efforts early in their career to help them tackle 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 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.

The program supports scholars who are poised to explore transformative ideas. We seek applicants who are thinking ambitiously and expansively. The focus should be on a big idea, a line of inquiry, or a long-term vision that reflects deep intellectual ambition.

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. No collaborative applications will be accepted. There are no limits to the numbers of applicants per unit or college.
- Otherwise eligible faculty who received past URC or Office of Research funding may apply. 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. Note: such previous awardees will be required to provide evidence that the previously funded project was successful if invited as a finalist.
- Otherwise eligible faculty with external funding may apply but the proposed activities must not duplicate those already funded.

Letter of Intent Submission Requirements

Applications will be submitted online via Wizehive, a user-friendly, internal funding software. When the application is available on the Wizehive platform, the live link to apply will be posted at <https://research.uc.edu/funding/overview>.

Letter of Intent Materials

All applicants will be required to provide their name, UC email, UC ID-number, [ORCID](#), college, department/unit, date of hire/appointment at UC, anticipated academic year for tenure review, and proposal title within the Wizehive portal prior to uploading the required pdf file.

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

The LOI should be written for a general university audience in terms readily understood by those who are not experts in the field. Avoid jargon, acronyms, or other technical terminology.

The LOI should contain the following information in the order listed below and will be submitted as a single PDF file. Figures may be included but cannot be used to exceed the page limit. No hyperlinks or redirects to external information may be included. Your submission must adhere to general requirements of 12 point font, 1 inch margins, and single column layout.

1. Research Interest and Impact (2 pages maximum).
 - PROPOSAL TITLE AND APPLICANT NAME
 - THE BIG IDEA: What big idea, line of inquiry, or long-term vision are you passionate about and why is this worth addressing?
 - APPROACH: Describe – at a high level – what guiding methods, strategies, or principles will shape your work.
 - OUTCOMES/IMPACT: Describe why this research will be important as evidenced by the potential outcomes and impacts your work will have on the field and more broadly.
2. Bibliography/References Cited (1 page maximum)
3. Biographical Sketch/CV using the [TEMPLATE](#) (3 page maximum)

LOI Review Criteria

- Ambition and vision
- Clarity, significance and relevance
- Innovation, creativity, feasibility
- Outcomes including contribution to field of study or potential to establish new multi/interdisciplinary area along with assessment measures; and 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)
- Readiness and capacity to undertake this work
- Compliance with Application Guidelines in the RFP and the Submission Portal.

Finalist Selection & Review Process

Each URC Faculty Scholars Research Award LOI will be reviewed by a team assembled by and including the VP for Research. No more than 15 finalists will be invited to submit a full proposal.

Neither comments nor feedback on LOIs will be provided to applicants, however comments and feedback on full proposals will be made available to finalists.

Details on the full proposal process and required materials will be distributed to all finalists directly.

Note: Awardees who accept Office of Research internal funds to conduct research agree to serve as a reviewer for Office of Research funding competitions for two years following their acceptance of funds.

QUESTIONS? Email research@uc.edu