

College of Life Sciences Interdisciplinary Research Award

The College of Life Sciences Interdisciplinary Research Award (LS-IDR) aims to **encourage research at the intersections of disciplines within the college.**

What: Up to five grants will be awarded each year, with budget requests of up to \$30,000 per grant application. To be eligible, a minimum of two faculty (preferably more) from different departments must apply as co-investigators. If unsure of eligibility requirements, contact Mike Stark, the associate dean of research, for clarification.

When: Proposals must be submitted prior to the deadline posted on the [college website](#), usually October 15th of each year. Awards will be announced in December and the funding will become available immediately.

Application: Interested faculty should submit a written proposal of no more than five pages that describes the collaboration team and outlines the specific aims, significance, background (including preliminary data), methods, anticipated outcomes, and proposed budget. Research involving live animals must have IACUC approval before the money will be awarded. Research involving human subjects must have IRB approval before the money will be awarded. See accompanying *Instructions for Preparing an Application*.

Reviews: Proposals will be reviewed by college faculty selected by the associate dean of research. Alternatively, the dean and associate deans will review the proposals. See accompanying *Proposal Evaluation Sheet*.

Funding: Successfully funded applications will receive funds into faculty accounts according to requests outlined in the proposed budget, coordinated by the college controller. To encourage progress toward productive data collection leading to external grant funding, budgets should be created upon a 12-month research plan.

Accountability: Recipients should submit a one-page (maximum) report outlining research results, including students mentored (undergraduate and graduate), any publications or submitted manuscripts resulting from the project, and any submitted or planned grant proposals. This report is due December 31st in the year following funding (i.e. 12/31/2025 for applications reviewed/funded in fall, 2024).

Proposal Instructions for LS-IDR Awards

The application should be single-spaced with 1” margins and 12-point font. The sections described below are strongly recommended. The *Specific Aims*, *Background*, *Research Design* and *Collaborative Expertise* sections combined should not exceed five pages.

Abstract (< 300 words)

The Abstract should be a succinct and accurate description of the proposed work. It should include the specific aims, an abbreviated description of the research design and methods, a concise summary of the significance of the proposed work, and a description of how the proposal is relevant to the chosen endowment account.

Specific Aims

List the aim(s) of the specific research proposed (e.g., to test a stated hypothesis, solve a specific research problem, answer a specific question, develop a new technology, etc.).

Background and Significance

Using appropriate references, briefly outline the background leading to the present application. Critically evaluate existing knowledge and identify gaps that may be filled by the proposed research. Inclusion of preliminary data is encouraged. Explain the importance of the problem to progress in the field that the proposed project addresses. Describe how the proposed project will improve scientific knowledge or technical ability in the chosen area.

Research Design and Methods

Briefly describe the research design, procedures, and analyses to be used in accomplishing the specific aims of the project. Include how the data will be collected, analyzed, and interpreted. Describe any new or novel approaches, techniques, and methodologies and state their advantages. Explain any potential difficulties or limitations in the proposed procedures and alternative approaches that are being considered.

Collaborative Expertise and Plan

Describe the contributions and expertise of co-investigators, highlighting how each member of the team will contribute to the project. Highlight the innovation of the collaboration with a focus on the novelty of the team or the proposed research question. Describe planned interactions, such as joint lab meetings, interdisciplinary student group formation, etc. Identify which collaborator will ensure interactions between research groups occur regularly.

Budget

Itemize proposed expenditures into general categories such as student wages, supplies, equipment, travel, etc. While proposals can request up to \$30,000, Please budget appropriately for the proposed research since smaller requests and awards are common. Identify how the award will be divided between faculty.

Vertebrate Animals or Human Subjects

State whether the research will use vertebrate animals or human subjects. If so, protocols must be approved by IACUC (vertebrate animals) or IRB (human subjects) before money can be dispersed. The applicants must provide evidence of the appropriate approval.

Bibliography

List all publications cited in the sections above.

Curriculum Vita

NIH/NSF format preferred.

Proposal Evaluation Form for LS-IDR Awards

Proposal title:

Applicant:

Reviewer:

- 1) Significance – Does the project address an important problem or a critical barrier to progress in the field? If the aims of the project are achieved, how will scientific knowledge, technical capability, and/or clinical practice be improved? How will successful completion of the aims change the concepts, methods, technologies, treatments, services, or preventative interventions that drive this field?

Rating: _____ (5 = Exceptional, 4 = Very Good, 3 = Good, 2 = Fair, 1 = Marginal, 0 = Poor)

- 2) Investigators – Are the PIs well suited to the project? If a PI is in the early stages of an independent career, is there appropriate experience and training? If established, is there a demonstration of an ongoing record of accomplishments that have advanced the field?

Rating: _____ (5 = Exceptional, 4 = Very Good, 3 = Good, 2 = Fair, 1 = Marginal, 0 = Poor)

- 3) Approach - Are the overall strategy, methodology, and analyses well-reasoned and appropriate to accomplish the specific aims of the project? Are potential problems, alternative strategies, and benchmarks for success presented? Can the project be completed with the funds requested?

Rating: _____ (5 = Exceptional, 4 = Very Good, 3 = Good, 2 = Fair, 1 = Marginal, 0 = Poor)

- 4) Environment - Will the scientific environment in which the work will be done contribute to the probability of success? Are the institutional support, equipment and other physical resources available to the investigators adequate for the project proposed? How will students be involved in the research?

Rating: _____ (5 = Exceptional, 4 = Very Good, 3 = Good, 2 = Fair, 1 = Marginal, 0 = Poor)

- 5) Collaborative Score – Does the proposed project showcase a unique interdisciplinary team tackling a novel research question at the interface of disciplines? Do they have a good collaborative plan that includes regular interactions between groups? How are students benefiting from the collaboration?

Rating: _____ (5 = Exceptional, 4 = Very Good, 3 = Good, 2 = Fair, 1 = Marginal, 0 = Poor)