

Provost's Pilot Research Grants in the Humanities and Social Sciences

The Provost's Pilot Research Grants (PPRGs) support innovative research in the humanities and social sciences—across and between all disciplines—with the potential to have broad and sustained impact. Pilot projects should engage at least three Duke faculty members, reflecting different fields or levels of analysis. We encourage proposals that include investigators from multiple schools, as well as proposals that incorporate students (graduate and undergraduate) in research activities.

PPRGs will support projects that have successfully completed an initial phase of inquiry/preparation, but have not generated sufficient findings/analysis to be competitive for external funding, or that are in fields for which external funding is especially difficult to obtain. Project funding ranges from \$5,000 to \$50,000 per project for a fiscal year. These funds are intended to advance mid-stage projects, ultimately leading to larger funding awards, both internal and external to the university.

RFP Process

We seek to fund up to eight project teams in the first year. All proposals must meet eligibility requirements and satisfy proposal guidelines. Proposals should be for one year; in future years, we anticipate we will entertain renewal proposals. Renewal will be based on progress to date, likelihood of success, and demonstrated effective collaboration.

Eligibility

- Principal Investigator (PI): The PI on the project team must be a Duke faculty member who is eligible per Duke policy. (<http://policies.duke.edu/research/institutional/investigator.php>). A faculty member may serve as PI for at most one proposal.
- Funding recipients agree to the terms for inventions, patents, and licensing described in the research policy section of the Duke University Faculty Handbook.

Selection Criteria and Review Process

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. Creativity and potential for the project to have sustained impact on a given field in the humanities or social sciences, on the junctures across fields, and/or on the translation of knowledge into practice.
2. Evidence of initial success in: forging a team of faculty committed to the project; articulating important research questions; laying out a clear research plan; specifying the logistical requirements for carrying out that plan; and completing some initial phases of research.
3. Extent of envisaged collaboration across researchers and units.
4. Prospects for tapping other sources of funding, once envisaged research is completed.
5. Persuasiveness of the budget justification.

The review process will draw on faculty expertise from across Duke University. All proposals, and discussions thereof, will be kept strictly confidential.

Proposal Requirements

The Provost's Office uses *MyResearchProposal* online application software to submit applications. You will be asked to upload the following documents:

1. **Abstract** (maximum 200 words, 12 pt font): A non-technical summary of the proposed project.
2. **Research Proposal** (maximum of 2-3 pages, 12 pt font): Description of the project in sufficient intellectual/technical detail that it can be assessed by domain experts. Provide background and motivation; research objectives and methods; potential impact.
3. **Participant List**: Provide a list of the project team members including name, email, affiliation, project role. Every proposal should clearly identify a project manager who is responsible for ensuring the overall success of the project.
4. **Metrics for Success** (maximum 1 page, 12 pt font): Key performance metrics for evaluating the project, including expected target dates during the year.
5. **Budget and Budget Justification** (maximum 1 page, 12 pt font): explanation of how each budget line is crucial to the goals of the project;
6. **Additional Funding** (maximum 1 page, 12 pt font): Provide a brief description of any other funding received from Duke or external funders related to the project (and/or any relevant pending grant proposals, whether internal to Duke or to external entities);
7. **Supporting Letter** (maximum 1 page, 12 pt font) from your unit (school, department, institute, initiative, center) that addresses the unit's ability and willingness to provide administrative support for the Pilot Program.

Instructions:

- To apply visit <http://bit.ly/myresearchproposal>, click on "Create New User" (or log in if you already have an account). Proposals must be submitted under the Principal Investigator's name.
- A step-by-step user's guide for applying via the *MyResearchProposal* software is available - Please review this [document](#).
- Enter Access Code '**PROVOST**' then select the **Provost's Pilot Research Grant** opportunity and follow the instructions.
- For any questions concerning *MyResearchProposal* passwords or system issues, please contact Anita Grissom or Kara McKelvey at myresearchproposal@duke.edu.

Timeline

RFP released	09/20/2017
RFP deadline for submission	12/15/2017
Project winner(s) notified; funds made available shortly thereafter	04/01/2018

Contact

For any questions related to your project proposal, please contact:
Ed Balleisen, Vice Provost for Interdisciplinary Studies, eballeis@duke.edu
Jennifer Francis, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, jfrancis@duke.edu

FAQ

Who can apply?

Any group of Duke faculty members, with at least two whose training and research interests lie in the humanities or the social sciences.

Our project idea is not very interdisciplinary. Is this ok?

Yes, we are interested in projects of all types, especially ones that are creative and have the ability to make an impact.

Is this our only chance at submitting a project proposal?

No, we plan to have RFP requests again in at least 2018 and 2019.

Is there an optimal number of researchers for a project team?

No, there is no optimal number of participants on the project team. But we do expect to see evidence of meaningful collaboration, and clarity about the roles that different faculty participants will play.

What kinds of items and expenses would Pilot Program funds be able to cover?

We will support funding for direct research-related items including, but not limited to, research assistance, research-related travel, partial graduate student stipends, workshops, and data. The funding is not intended to support course buyouts, course development or conferences, nor is it intended to support incremental staffing or to be used for faculty salary support.

What kinds of deliverables do you expect the project teams to produce?

Deliverables might take a range of forms from peer-reviewed scholarship, white papers, and reports, to digital/visual products and new databases.

How are the Provost's Pilot Research Grants different from other calls for proposals we've seen, like, Bass Connections, Interdisciplinary Community Planning Grants (ICPG), and Collaboratories?

ICPG provides a much smaller level of initial funding. Bass Connections project teams receive comparable funding amounts, but require participation of students at multiple learner levels and a focus on applied problems; the application process also highly encourages engagement with partners from outside the university (NGOs, government agencies, corporations, etc.). ICPGs are aimed at faculty groups in the initial stages of exploration of a topic, to begin or test a new collaboration around a shared intellectual interest. PPRGs support collaborative work across a wide range of disciplinary and interdisciplinary topics that has achieved initial stage success and which has the potential for broad impact. Collaboratories are a new opportunity to support groups of faculty working on more established projects that seek to provide tangible solutions to targeted problems in three areas: energy and water resources; race, religion and citizenship; and population health.