



**2012
UAHUNTSVILLE RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE
INVESTMENT (URII) GRANT PROGRAM**

SPONSORED BY

**THE OFFICE OF VICE PRESIDENT FOR RESEARCH
at
THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA IN HUNTSVILLE**

**Release Date: 5 March 2012
Due Date: 6 April 2012**

1.0 MOTIVATION

Research universities perform multiple missions, with the primary focus of utilizing the advancement of knowledge for the enrichment of the academic experience for its faculty, students, and staff. The UAHuntsville Office of the Vice President for Research (OVPR) strives to play a strategic role in the academic mission of the university through supporting the development of innovative scholarly activities that involve faculty, students, and research staff in leading-edge basic research and external sponsor-driven applied research. As a result, UAHuntsville advances the discovery and communication of new knowledge, helps prepare society's next generation workforce, and imparts significant economic impact to its stakeholders.

2.0 OVERVIEW

To stimulate innovative new, sustainable research efforts at The University of Alabama in Huntsville, the Office of Vice President for Research (OVPR) announces the availability of \$285,000 in intramural grant support to lead to the sustainable development of extramural scholarly research funding. The UAHuntsville Research Infrastructure Investment (URII) Grant program is intended to support basic and applied research activities, which are motivated by an effort to probe toward the discovery and development of new ideas, information, or applications. Collaboration across colleges, academic departments, and research centers allows for fresh multidisciplinary approaches to problem solving and is strongly encouraged; it is therefore weighed positively in the proposal evaluation process.

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This grant program is not intended for support of work which is a part of a scheduled course, development of course curriculum, purchase of equipment for non-research purposes, or to satisfy requirements for a student's degree.

The program, however, is intended to enhance the competitiveness of UAHuntsville faculty and research staff in their pursuit of extramural research funding opportunities in their field of study. *Therefore, successful proposals must include a sound strategy for how the proposed investment would play a key role in the pursuit of a specific opportunity for extramural funding support.* At least one competitive proposal must be submitted to an appropriate external funding sponsor within one year of the completion of an awarded UR II grant. Awardees are also encouraged to communicate their efforts under this program to the broader scientific community through the submission of their results to a peer-reviewed journal or in a conference presentation.

3.0 ELIGIBILITY

At UAHuntsville, faculty and research staff work as an integrated team to accomplish the university's primary mission of providing an outstanding academic experience to our highly-talented students. Therefore, participation in the UR II Grant Program is open to all UAHuntsville faculty and research staff that are eligible to apply for external funding support. Individuals may submit only one proposal as the Principal Investigator; however there is no limit to the number of proposals on which an individual can serve as a Co-Investigator. There are no limitations on the number of UR II awards that an individual can win during their career at UAHuntsville.

4.0 AWARDS

A total of \$285,000 is available for award, and there are no limits on the number of awards that can be made. Proposals of all sizes are encouraged, up to a maximum funding request of \$100,000. In addition, the proposal with the highest quality Future Funding and Development Plan, as determined by the quantitative score on Proposal Evaluation Criterion B.8 (see Appendix B) shall be recognized with an additional award of \$2,500, to be used at the full discretion of the proposal P.I. In the case of a tie score on Criterion B.8, the proposal to be recognized with this award shall be selected by the Vice President for Research.

Because these UR II awards are intended to be opportunity-driven, they must be spent within a one-year period. The period of performance begins no later than May 14, 2012, and unless otherwise requested in the proposal, and indicated on the cover sheet, the period of performance ends on May 13, 2013. The grant funds must be utilized on research-related expenditures. Eligible expenditures include research-related equipment; faculty salary (limited to salary support above the salary allocated for research in the department budget, with the exception of summer salary for faculty with nine-month appointment, which is allowed); salary for graduate research assistants (though not graduate student tuition); research staff salary; research-related travel costs; research-related materials and supplies; publication costs; subcontracts to external partners; equipment/facility rental/user fees; and facility alterations or renovations, if sufficiently justified. Other expenditures not explicitly allowed should be approved by the Office of Sponsored Programs prior to proposal submission.

In the event of a URII Principal Investigator leaving employment of the university, the remaining funds shall be recovered by the Office of Vice President for Research as a matter of policy. Co-Investigators employed by the university may petition the OVPR for continuation of the URII project; such a petition should include a statement explaining how the execution of the project will be adjusted to account for the departure of the original Principal Investigator, and should explicitly suggest who would be named the new Principal Investigator of the project. A CV for the proposed new PI should be attached to the petition for continuation.

5.0 REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Within 15 business days after the notification of award, all URII Grant awardees are required to submit a plan of work to the OVPR, and to their College Dean if they are tenured or tenure-tracked members of the faculty. All awardees must also submit a mid-year progress report on November 7, 2012 to the OVPR, and to their College Dean if they are members of the faculty. Failure to submit these reports in a timely manner may result in a review of the grant for advisability of continuation.

Grant awardees must notify their College Dean and the OVPR in writing when a proposal has been submitted for extramural funding opportunities as a result of a URII grant award. Failure to make this notification may result in ineligibility for future URII grants. The grant awardees should also notify their College Dean and the OVPR of any funding decisions made by the extramural sponsor. These data are utilized by the OVPR to measure the effectiveness of this investment.

Awardees are also strongly encouraged to communicate their URII efforts to their technical community through the submission of a scholarly paper to a quality peer-reviewed journal or through conference presentations.

6.0 REVIEW OF PROPOSALS

It is intended that the URII Review Committee will meet the week of April 23, 2012, to review proposals. Awards are made by the Office of Vice President for Research, based on the review and recommendations by the URII Review Committee. The proposal evaluation criteria (see Section 8.0) are used to establish the recommendations.

The URII Review Committee consists of the Vice President for Research (or his designee), one senior faculty member appointed by the Dean of each College/School, i.e., Business Administration, Engineering, Liberal Arts, Nursing, Science, and Graduate Studies, and two Research Center Directors appointed by the Vice President for Research. The Vice President for Research (or his designee) serves as the Chairperson of the Review Committee. The Review Committee will evaluate and score each proposal, recommend proposals that are worthy of support, and the level of support that should be provided.

Please note, to ensure an objective review and to maximize the benefits of the URII investments for the faculty, staff, and students of UAHuntsville, the OVPR promises anonymity to the members of the Review Committee.

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Based on the recommendation of the Review Committee, the OVPR intends to make award notification during the week of April 30, 2012. The proposers not selected for award will also be notified by the OVPR, and feedback from the proposal reviews will be provided.

Please note that the Review Committee consists of faculty members and research staff from various fields of study. *Therefore, the PI should endeavor to write her/his proposal such that it is understandable by a colleague who is not a specialist in a directly-relevant discipline.* Technical terminology should be explained, and variables should be defined. A Proposal that is not well understood by Review Committee members risks the loss of many points during the review process.

7.0 PROPOSAL PREPARATION AND FORMAT

Including the cover page, the proposal length should not exceed 16 pages, excluding the required Scholarly References (Subsection IX in Appendix A), Vita (Subsection X in Appendix A), and the Current and Pending Sponsored Research List (Subsection XI in Appendix A).

Proposal pages are to be double-spaced unless indicated (budget, vita, and table/figure content may be single-spaced). All pages are to be standard 8 ½ X 11” size with one inch (1”) margins all around (top, bottom, side). Font size is 12 point Times New Roman, Courier, or Arial. Font size in tables and figures should be no smaller than 10 point.

All proposals must follow the content and format given below (see Appendix A for a detailed description):

- I. Cover Page
- II. Proposal Title
- III. Summary
- IV. Background
- V. Technical Objectives and Approach
- VI. Budget
- VII. Justification and Benefits
- VIII. Future Funding and Development Plan
- IX. Scholarly References
- X. Vita
- XI. Current and Pending

8.0 EVALUATION CRITERIA

The principal criteria considered during the evaluation of proposals will be the scholarly merit of the proposed activities; the likelihood of this proposed investment generating extramural funding from sources such as (though not limited to) the NSF, NIH, the DOE National Labs, NASA’s ROSES Opportunities, DARPA, AFOSR, ONR, and the Army Research Office; and how the proposed activities build on the academic and research strengths of our university. Note that the inclusion of interdisciplinary cooperation in the evaluation criteria is intended to reflect the recognition of the interdisciplinary nature of solutions that are increasingly being sought by external funding sponsors.

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It is not expected that the details of a future competitive proposal for extramural funding would be mature at this point in the proposal project. This is reflected in the evaluation criteria given below, in terms of a lower weighting of factors that may indeed be much more heavily weighted in any final competitive proposal for extramural funding.

The specific evaluation criteria, and their weighting, for each URII Grant proposal are:

Intellectual/Scholarly Merit	20 Points
Increased Opportunities for Students	5 Points
Alignment with University Strengths	20 Points
Interdisciplinary Cooperation	5 Points
Budget Realism	5 Points
Clarity of Research Plan	5 Points
Qualifications of PI/Team to Perform Research	5 Points
Likelihood of Winning External Funding	20 Points
Broader Impact of Future Extramural Opportunity	15 Points

More details regarding the evaluation criteria are given in Appendix B.

9.0 TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Since a URII grant is made for the activities as proposed, and reviewed by the URII Review Committee, any significant changes in scope or direction should be cleared through the Office of the Vice President for Research.

Upon award of the URII grant, an account will be established within the awardee's department or research center and funds will be transferred from the Office of the Vice President for Research to this account. It is then the responsibility of the awardees to assure that the funds are spent in accordance with the proposal. **Submission of a proposal warrants that all over-runs on any URII account are the responsibility of the grantee and his/her Department/College/Research Center.**

Funds remaining at the end of the award period will be recovered by the OVPR as a matter of policy. No cost extensions will be considered with a strong written justification under only the most unusual circumstances.

At least one competitive proposal must be submitted to an appropriate external funding sponsor within one year of the completion of an awarded URII grant. Grant awardees must notify their College Dean and the Office of Vice President for Research in writing when a proposal has been submitted for extramural funding opportunities as a result of a URII grant award. Failure to make this notification may result in ineligibility for future URII grants.

10.0 SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Ten copies of the URII grant proposal package will be submitted to the OVPR by the office of Sponsored Programs (OSP). The original signed proposal must be received in OSP by the close-of-business (5:00p.m.) on April 6, 2012. Those proposals received by 5:00 p.m. will be

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considered on-time, and those proposals received after 5:00 p.m. will be considered late and will not be reviewed, to ensure fairness to all faculty and research staff.

URII Grant proposals must follow the OSP proposal submission process. Proposers will work with the OSP Grants and Contracts Coordinator or Contract Administrator for their department, college or research center as with any other proposal effort. The submission guidelines can be found on the OSP website:

<http://resadmin.uah.edu/osptest/proposal%20procedures.pdf> .

11.0 ADHERENCE TO GUIDELINES AND FORMAT

All proposals will be processed through the Office of Sponsored Programs, in accordance with established proposal procedures. Proposals which do not adhere to the guidelines in this call for proposals, or the proposal format given in Section 7.0, may be rejected without review, in which case the proposal will be returned to the Principal Investigator with an explanation for rejection.

APPENDIX A: PROPOSAL FORMAT

Proposal pages are to be double-spaced unless indicated (budget, vita, and table/figure content may be single-spaced). All pages are to be standard 8 ½ X 11” size with one inch (1”) margins all around (top, bottom, side). All proposals must be prepared in a 12-point font, (Times New Roman, Courier, or Arial). Tables and graphics may be single-spaced with a font size no smaller than 10 point. Additionally, proposal sections must follow the format given below:

I. Cover Page

The cover page is provided at the end of this Call for Proposals.

II. Proposal Title

III. Summary – one page

Please provide a summary, not to exceed one double-spaced page, which summarizes your proposed activity and its key objectives to a lay person. Include a concise statement of the methods/techniques proposed to accomplish the stated objectives. *Include a statement of the perceived significance of the proposed activity to a potential external funding sponsor. Also include a statement of the perceived significance of the extramural funding opportunity to the university.*

IV. Background – two pages

Please provide a discussion, not to exceed two double-spaced pages, of the technical problem/issues that motivate the proposed effort. Be careful to write this section to be comprehensible to a generalist.

V. Technical Objectives and Approach – six pages

Please provide a statement of the overall objectives and justification of the proposed activity. Relate the proposed work to the present state of knowledge or state-of-the-art in the field.

Provide a plan of work that includes a description of the methods and procedures to be used. *This should include a schedule of the work to be performed and key milestones to be reached.* If a proposal includes multiple investigators, be sure to identify the work to be performed by each investigator.

Also address the qualifications of the PI/Team to conduct the proposed activity.

Note that this section of the proposal should be prepared in a manner that addresses the URII Grant Program evaluation criteria (see both Section 8.0 and Appendix B), and should not exceed six double-spaced pages.

VI. Budget – two pages

The appropriateness of the budget will be one of the proposal evaluation factors. To be helpful, some guidelines for constructing the budget are given below. Please

provide an appropriate level of detail to allow for an informed evaluation of your proposed budget. This budget section should not exceed two pages, and may be single spaced.

1. Salaries, Wages, and Fringe Benefits

Funds may be used to pay salary for faculty members or research staff (if faculty, salary support from this grant opportunity during their academic appointment is limited to that above the salary allocated for research in the department budget). Faculty with a nine-month appointment may use these funds for summer salary. Funds may also be used to support salaries for individuals other than the faculty member or staff member. Typical examples include graduate and undergraduate student salary support (*excluding tuition*).

List all of the personnel who would participate in the proposed activity, the amount of time to be covered, and their rates of pay. Fringe benefits should also be included. Individual salary information will be deducted from proposals prior to their transmission to the Review Committee.

2. Equipment/Instrumentation Costs

Please provide the total amount of funding requested for equipment and instrumentation. List each requested item separately, and explain the need for any individual item costing more than \$5,000. The purchase of general equipment, including desktop and laptop computers, is generally not supported, but will be considered based on a justification of its key role in the success of the proposed activity.

2. Operating Expenses

Please break down the total operating expenses necessary to complete the proposed activities into the three categories below. No further details are required.

- a. Materials & Supplies
- b. Duplication/Reproduction
- c. Software

3. Travel

Travel funds will be provided when it is necessary to complete the proposed activities, or in support of the pursuit of extramural funding opportunities. Funds are not intended to be provided for routine attendance at professional meetings.

4. Publication Costs

Publications in well-respected scholarly journals are encouraged, and the associated publication costs may be included in the budget.

5. Subcontracts

List all subcontracts that would be required to accomplish the proposed activities and to pursue follow-on funding from extramural research opportunities. Describe the work to be performed for each subcontract, and an estimate of the value for each subcontract.

6. Equipment or Facility Rental/User Fees

Rental/user fees for equipment or facilities must be justified based on their role in performing the proposed activities and in obtaining follow-on funding from an extramural funding opportunity.

7. New Construction, Alterations, and Renovations

It is not anticipated that these limited funds would be used for new construction, facility alterations, or facility renovations. If such needs are urgent or required, then please identify them in the proposal, and justify their request.

8. Cost Sharing

List all sources of cost-sharing from sources other than the OVPR. The state salary provided to faculty for research is a valid source of cost-sharing. Cost-sharing is not required; however, if requesting salary support during the academic year, faculty must first use the state-provided research salary line allocated in the department budget, burdened with fringe benefits, as cost-share.

VII. Justification and Benefits – two pages

Please address how securing the targeted extramural activities will strengthen the research infrastructure at UAHuntsville.

Explicitly discuss the significance of the proposed technical activity as it relates to improving the competitive ability of the PI/Team to generate extramural research funding.

Be certain to explain how your proposed effort ties to the ongoing academic and research activities of our university.

Explicitly state how the proposed activities will actively promote the academic mission of the university. In particular, address the potential involvement of students in the targeted extramural opportunities, and how those efforts can reach out to involve underrepresented groups. *Please note that it is the targeted extramural activities that will be assessed for its impact on students, not the work proposed to be done in this URII proposal.*

This section should not exceed two double-spaced pages.

VIII. Future Funding and Development Plan – two pages

Please put your proposal in the context of being able to compete with your external peers for extramural funding opportunities. Please explicitly identify the niche role that UAHuntsville would fill. Assess UAHuntsville's current competitive position in this technical area. Describe how your proposed effort will improve UAHuntsville's competitive position.

Please describe the path to follow-on extramural research funding as clearly as possible. Explicitly identify any funding opportunities that will be targeted. Briefly describe each targeted opportunity, identify the external sponsor with the funding, and estimate how much funding will be available and when it will be available. Identify the key dates in the competition for this opportunity. Describe your pursuit strategy for each opportunity, and discuss any marketing plans that you may have.

Please note that the proposal with the highest quality Future Funding and Development Plan, as determined by the quantitative score on Proposal Evaluation Criterion B.8 shall be recognized with an additional award of \$2,500, to be used at the full discretion of the proposal PI.

This section should not exceed two double-spaced pages.

IX. Scholarly References

This section is limited to one single-spaced page, and is excluded from the 16-page proposal page limit.

X. Vita

Provide a two-page maximum vita on the principal investigator, and a one-page vita for each co-investigator. Pages may be single-spaced. These pages do not count towards the 16-page limit for the full proposal.

XI. Current and Pending

Attach a list of the titles, amounts, and periods of performance for any current and pending extramural sponsored research of the PI and each Co-I. This information can be provided by the Office of Sponsored Programs, and does not count towards the 16-page limit for full proposal. Also include a list of prior URII awards for the PI, along with a description of their success. This section does not count towards the 16-page limit of the full proposal.

APPENDIX B: PROPOSAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

B.1 Intellectual/Scholarly Merit (20 Points)

How important is the proposed activity to advancing knowledge and understanding within its own field or across different fields? To what extent does the proposed activity suggest and explore creative and original concepts? Is the proposed activity consistent with the objectives of the UR II Grant Program? Does the proposal adhere to the guidelines in the Call for Proposals?

Excellent	17-20 Points
Good	14-16 Points
Fair	10-13 Points
Poor	1-9 Points
Missing	0 Points

B.2 Increased Opportunities for Students (5 Points)

Would the **future** extramural research opportunity result in increased support for PhD students? If the extramural research opportunity were successfully secured, how well would the **future** extramural activity promote teaching, training, and learning at UAHuntsville? How well would the **future** extramural activity broaden the participation of UAHuntsville students belonging to underrepresented groups in cutting-edge scholarly research?

Excellent	5 Points
Good	3-4 Points
Fair	2 Points
Poor	1 Point
Missing	0 Points

B.3 Alignment with University Strengths (20 Points)

How is the proposed activity, and its intended benefits, related to the ongoing academic and research programs of our university?

Excellent	17-20 Points
Good	14-16 Points
Fair	10-13 Points
Poor	1-9 Points
Missing	0 Points

B.4 Interdisciplinary Cooperation (5 Points)

Do the proposed activities include meaningful participation from multiple Academic Departments, Colleges, or Research Centers?

Excellent	5 Points
Good	3-4 Points
Fair	2 Points
Poor	1 Point
Missing	0 Points

B.5 Budget Realism (5 Points)

How appropriate and reasonable are the requested resources for the proposed activity? Does the complexity and/or scope of the proposed activity justify the duration of the project? Is the specified work plan practical and achievable for the proposed activity?

Excellent	5 Points
Good	3-4 Points
Fair	2 Points
Poor	1 Point
Missing	0 Points

B.6 Clarity of Research Plan (5 Points)

How well conceived and organized is the proposed activity? Are the proposed methods/approaches optimal for achieving the technical objectives of the proposed activity?

Excellent	5 Points
Good	3-4 Points
Fair	2 Points
Poor	1 Point
Missing	0 Points

B.7 Qualifications of PI/Team to Perform Research (5 Points)

How well qualified is the PI/Team to conduct the proposed activity? How well does this build on their prior work?

Excellent	5 Points
Good	3-4 Points
Fair	2 Points
Poor	1 Point
Missing	0 Points

B.8 Likelihood of Winning External Funding (20 Points)

Is the pursuit strategy for each extramural opportunity well-described and realistic? Does the PI/Team demonstrate sufficient access to resources to be competitive for the extramural opportunity? Has the PI/Team proposed this work to the extramural sponsors in the past, and if so, what was the outcome? If it was rejected, how is this current proposal designed to answer any of the past criticisms?

Excellent	17-20 Points
Good	14-16 Points
Fair	10-13 Points
Poor	1-9 Points
Missing	0 Points

B.9 Broader Impact of the *Future* Extramural Opportunity (15 Points)

Has the PI/Team demonstrated a likelihood of being able to leverage the proposed work to secure a sustainable competitive position for UAHuntsville in the applicable technical discipline? How would the future extramural opportunity enhance scientific or technological understanding? How will the results of the proposed activity be strategically disseminated? To what extent would the future extramural opportunity enhance the infrastructure for research and education at the university, such as facilities, instrumentation, networks, and partnerships? Does the successful securing and performance of the future extramural opportunity have the potential to contribute significantly to highly-cited peer-reviewed publications/journals? What would be the potential benefits to society of the successful securing and performance of the future extramural opportunity?

Excellent	14-15 Points
Good	10-13 Points
Fair	8-9 Points
Poor	1-7 Points
Missing	0 Points

B.10 Overall Recommendation

In addition to a numerical score, each reviewer will be asked to make one of the following broad recommendations:

- Excellent: Outstanding proposal in all aspects; deserves highest priority for support
- Very Good: High quality proposal in nearly all aspects; should be supported if at all possible
- Good: A good quality proposal; worthy of support
- Fair: Proposal lacking in one or more critical aspects; key issues need to be addressed
- Poor: Proposal has serious deficiencies

PROPOSAL COVER PAGE
2012 UAHUNTSVILLE RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT (URI)
GRANT PROGRAM

Title: _____

Proposed Period of Performance: _____

Requested Funding Amount: _____

Principal Investigator: _____

Principal Investigator's Signature/Date: _____

Department or Research Center: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

PI Building/Office Number: _____

Co-Investigators (If any, provide name and Department/Center): _____

Approval

Dept. Chair: _____

Date: _____

Printed Name:

Center Director: _____

Date: _____

Printed Name:

Dean: _____

Date: _____

Printed Name:

OSP: _____

Date: _____

Gloria W. Greene, MA, CRA

March 1, 2012