



**2009**  
**UAHUNTSVILLE RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE**  
**INVESTMENT GRANT PROGRAM**

**SPONSORED BY**

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

**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

*“Within the University, I value the concept of the faculty member as a scholar-educator: scholarship and teaching are two sides of the same coin. They are equally important and equally necessary.”*

UAHuntsville President David B. Williams Ph.D., Sc.D.

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.

**2.0 OVERVIEW**

To stimulate innovative new research efforts at The University of Alabama in Huntsville, the Office of Vice President for Research (OVPR) announces the availability of \$165,000 in intramural grant support to lead to the development of extramural scholarly research funding. This 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 in the evaluation process.

This URII 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 this 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 URII grant. Awardees are also encouraged to communicate their efforts under this program to the broader scientific community through the submission of a paper to a peer-reviewed journal or a conference presentation.

### **3.0 ELIGIBILITY**

At UAHuntsville, faculty and 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 URII Grant Program is open to all UAHuntsville faculty and research staff who 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 awards that an individual can win during their career at UAHuntsville.

### **4.0 AWARDS**

A total of \$165,000 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 \$80,000.

Because these 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 25, 2009, and unless otherwise requested in the proposal, and indicated on the cover sheet, the period of performance ends on May 24, 2010. The grant funds must be utilized on research-related expenditures. Eligible expenditures include equipment; faculty salary (limited to salary support above the 20% salary allocated for research in the department budget, with the exception of summer salary for faculty with nine-month appointments); 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.

### **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 members of the faculty. All awardees must also submit mid-year progress report on November 23 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 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 will 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.

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 conference presentations.

## **6.0 REVIEW OF PROPOSALS**

It is intended that the URII Awards Committee will meet the week of April 20, 2009, to review proposals. Awards are made by the Office of Vice President for Research, based on the review and recommendations by the URII Awards Committee. The proposal evaluation criteria (See Section 8.0) are used to establish the recommendations.

The URII Awards Committee consists of the Vice President for Research (or his designee), one senior faculty member appointed by the Dean of each of the Colleges/Schools, i.e., Administrative Science, Liberal Arts, Engineering, Science, Nursing 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 Awards Committee. The Awards Committee will evaluate and score each proposal, recommend which proposals will be supported, and the level of support that should be provided.

Based on the recommendation of the Awards Committee, it is intended that the selected proposers will be notified of awards by the Office of the Vice President for Research the week of May 2, 2009. 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 Awards 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.

## **7.0 PROPOSAL FORMAT**

*Including the cover page, the proposal length should not exceed nine single-spaced pages, or 15 double-spaced pages, excluding the required Vita (Subsection IX in Appendix A) and the Sponsored Research List (Subsection X in Appendix A).*

In order to ensure a level playing field across the entire university, all proposals must follow the format given below (the detailed format for proposals is given in Appendix A):

- 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. Vita
- X. Sponsored Research

## 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.

It is not expected that the details of a future competitive proposal for extramural funding would be mature at this point in the 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 for the URII Grant proposal are:

Intellectual/Scholarly Merit	20 Points
Student Involvement in Follow-On Activities	5 Points
Alignment with University Strengths	20 Points
Interdisciplinary Cooperation	5 Points
Budget Realism and Clarity of Research Plan	10 Points
Qualifications of PI/Team to Perform Research	5 Points
Likelihood of Winning External Funding	20 Points
Potential Impact of Proposed Activity	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 Awards 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.**

Since the award is a grant, any funds remaining at the end of the award period will stay in the account and can be used at the discretion of the grantee, upon approval by the appropriate Department Chair, College Dean, or Research Center Director.

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 will result in ineligibility for future URII grants.

## **10.0 SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS**

Ten copies of the URII grant proposal package must be received in the Office of Vice President for Research by the close-of-business (5 pm) on March 30, 2009. Those proposals received by 5:00 pm will be considered on-time, and those proposals received after 5:00 pm will be considered late and will not be reviewed, to ensure fairness to all faculty and research staff.

## **11.0 ADHERENCE TO GUIDELINES AND FORMAT**

Proposals which do not adhere to the guidelines in this call for proposals, or the proposal format given in Section 6.0, may be rejected without review, in which case the proposal will be returned to the Principal Investigator with an explanation for rejection. All proposals will be processed through the Office of Sponsored Programs, in accordance with established proposal procedures.

## **APPENDIX A: PROPOSAL FORMAT**

In order to ensure a level playing field across the entire university, all proposals will be prepared in a 12-point font, (Times Roman, Courier, or similar) with one-inch margins all around; and 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**

Please provide a summary, not to exceed one-half single-spaced page or 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 the funding sponsor. Also include a statement of the perceived significance of the extramural funding opportunity to the university.

### **IV. Background**

Please provide a summary, not to exceed one single-spaced page, or two double-spaced pages, of the technical problem/issues to be addressed.

### **V. Technical Objectives and Approach**

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 Section 8.0 and Appendix B), and should not exceed three single-spaced pages or six double-spaced pages.

### **VI. Budget**

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.

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 20% 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 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.

2. Equipment/Instrumentation Costs

Please provide the total amount of funding requested for equipment and instrumentation. List each requested item separately, explaining 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 20% salary provided to faculty for research is a valid source of cost-sharing. Cost-sharing is not required; however, if requesting salary support, faculty must first use the 20% research salary line allocated in the department budget, burdened with fringe benefits, as cost-share.

## **VII. Justification and Benefits**

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.

This section should not exceed one single-spaced page, or two double-spaced pages.

## **VIII. Future Funding and Development Plan**

Please put your proposal in the context of being able to compete with your peers for extramural funding opportunities. Please identify what our niche at UAH would be. Assess our current competitive position in this technical area. Describe how your proposed effort will improve our 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.

This section should not exceed one single-spaced page, or two double-spaced pages.

**IX. Vita**

A two-page maximum vita on the principal investigator, and a one-page vita for each co-investigator, should also be attached to each proposal.

**X. Sponsored Research**

Attach a list of the titles, amounts, and periods of performance for any current extramural sponsored research of the PI and each Co-I.

## **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 URII 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 Student Involvement in Extramural Opportunity (5 Points)**

If the extramural research opportunity were successfully secured, how well does the activity promote teaching, training, and learning? How well would the extramural activity broaden the participation of 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 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 and Clarity of Research Plan (10 Points)**

How appropriate and reasonable are the requested resources for the proposed activity? How well conceived and organized is the proposed activity? Are the proposed methods/approaches optimal for achieving the technical objectives of 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	9-10 Points
Good	7-8 Points
Fair	5-6 Points
Poor	1-4 Points
Missing	0 Points

**B.6 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.7 Likelihood of Winning External Funding (20 Points)**

Is the pursuit strategy for each extramural opportunity 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.8 Potential Impact of the Extramural Opportunity (15 Points)**

How will the results of the proposed activity be broadly disseminated? How would the extramural opportunity enhance scientific or technological understanding? To what extent would the 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 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 extramural opportunity?

Excellent	14-15 Points
Good	10-13 Points

Fair	8-9 Points
Poor	1-7 Points
Missing	0 Points

### **B.9 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  
2009 UAHUNTSVILLE RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT  
GRANT PROGRAM**

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed Period of Performance: \_\_\_\_\_

Requested Funding Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

Principal Investigator: \_\_\_\_\_

Principal Investigator's Signature/Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Department or Research Center: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

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

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Approval**

Dept. Chair: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Center Director: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Dean: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

OSP: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_