University of South Florida
Research & Innovation

Interdisciplinary Center Preparation Grants (ICPGs)

Guidelines & Application Checklist 2024-2025

Application Deadlines are annual: Pre-proposal (required) due **January 15th, 2025, by 5:00PM**. Full proposal (invitation only) due **April 4th, 2025, by 5:00 PM**.
Submission: Application submitted via InfoReady.
Award Notifications: ~1 month post submission – ALL FUNDING DECISIONS ARE FINAL.
Progress Reports: Mandatory reports are due at 12 months after notice of award and 6 months after the conclusion of the project.

Purpose and Overview.

The Interdisciplinary Center Preparation Grants (ICPGs) are designed to incentivize and accelerate nucleation and success of large-scale program-project or center types of grants, as defined in the stated disciplinary area (typically corresponding to grants involving multiple PIs and involving funding amounts that considerably exceed that of a typical single-investigator grant). These grants are designed to incentivize faculty to lead large-scale innovative interdisciplinary efforts that help enhance the excellence of USF research and include faculty from distinct programs/departments. Consequently, ICPGs must target a specific program project or center type funding type opportunity (as defined in relevant research field) and should have quantifiable returns on investment in new grant dollars, increase research productivity, enhance degree programs, and promote attainment of other AAU/state metrics.

Eligibility Criteria:

- PIs must be current regular or research USF faculty pursuing research as part of their Faculty Assignment.
- The lead PI of this Internal Award should be eligible and appropriate to serve as the PI for federal large program-project or center type of grant.
- Have submitted final reports for all previous USF Internal Awards.
- If a recipient as PI or Co-PI on a previous Internal Award in the past 5 years, the applicant must have provided service to the Research Council as an ad hoc reviewer for another Internal Award application at least once if requested.
- A faculty may not be lead PI on more than one active ICPG application.
- If PI on previous ICPG, to be eligible PI must have demonstrated submission of federal large program-project or center type of grant.
- A faculty may not be lead PI on a new ICPG if they have received an ICPG as PI in the previous 3 years.

Prioritized selection criteria for ICPG applications (as communicated to the reviewers):

- How likely is funding of this proposal to lead to USF obtaining a new program-project or center-scale grant that would not otherwise have been obtained.

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a. The PI and Co-Is have: (i) a record of sustained extramural research grant funding, including programs that are multidisciplinary, multi-institutional; and (ii) have a strong record in student mentoring, including students awarded PhDs at USF.

b. Do the PIs have access (or plan to access) sufficient infrastructure to support a successful center proposal.

- To what extent is this the most appropriate funding source to seed this effort? Are other more appropriate funding sources (exe. college-level seed funds) available.

    a. Application involves faculty from multiple distinct programs. Program alignment with planned future funding opportunities to be pursued is important.

- To what extent would successful acquisition of the targeted center grant enhance USF's national and international reputation as a leading research institution?

ICPG selection procedures:

- Award selection will be carried out by the USF Research Council and may be coordinated with other USF research advisory or supervisory groups (e.g., ADRs, RF).
- Applications certified as meeting the award criteria may be reviewed in-person by the USF Research Council. This review will require a short presentation summarizing the application and its benefits followed by a Q&A period.
- Funding decisions will be made once all applications are reviewed in each funding cycle.
- ALL FUNDING DECISIONS ARE FINAL.

Requirements for ICPG pre-proposal:

- Identify the lead PI, Co-PI and team members. Include a brief (1-2 sentences) description of each contributor's role.
- Identify and include the link to the large-scale funding opportunity that is being targeted.
- Provide an overview of the project. (0.5 page)
- Describe current resources/infrastructure available for the project. (0.5 page)
- Define why this team would be competitive for this funding opportunity. (0.5 pages)
- Explain how the ICPG will increase the competitiveness of the team (0.5 pages)

Required sections of the ICPG full proposal:

- Project Summary/Abstract (250 words). Write with detail that can be understood by an "intelligent non-expert" as reviewers may be faculty outside your immediate discipline.
- Key personnel, related academic programs, and the role of each for the success of the proposed ICPG project. (1 page)
- Funding Strategy (1 page). Describe the strategy for how this effort will realize large-scale external funding. This must include:
  (a) identification of the target large-scale funding opportunity and a timeline for application.
  (b) identification of other external funding opportunities and a timeline for applying, and
  (c) description of how these proposed seed funds and seed funding period will enable successful acquisition of these funds.
  The Funding Strategy should be developed in collaboration with the USF Research Development Institute (RDI). The application must specify the funding agency, name of the targeted extramural funding opportunity, application window, and targeted funding amount. This information is required for the application to be considered.
- Overview of Large-Scale Funding Submission (≤2 pages):
  o Describe the overall scope of the project.

- How does your approach addresses specifics of targeted call? (Applicants may include a table/figure in the Appendix.)
  - What is the vision for the proposed interdisciplinary Center?
  - What distinguishes the proposed interdisciplinary Center from existing centers?
  - How does the expertise of the interdisciplinary team provide synergy and promote new opportunities for research, especially for emerging transdisciplinary technologies or research areas?
- Seed Fund Action Plan (≤3 pages):
  - Describe the plan to employ seed funds and the seed funding period to establish initial results, collaborations, etc. to enable a successful large-scale funding submission.
- Expected Outcomes (1 page or less):
  - How will this ICPG funding enhance the competitiveness of the team to be successful in obtaining the target external grant.
  - How will the project support collaboration across the university, sustain existing programs and develop new innovative interdisciplinary research programs?
  - How will the project enhance competitiveness for types of major extramural funding, such as program project grants and center grants (identify specific funding mechanisms)?
- Biographical sketches of lead PI and MPI/Co-I. Use agency-specific forms according to potential future funding agency (abbreviate to ≤3 pages)
- Letter of support (1 page or less) from Deans of all participating colleges.
  - Must include tuition waivers for all students supported on the project.
  - May describe other commitments of matching support (i.e. space) and how the subject area is a priority for the college(s), etc.
- Budget and Budget Narrative for proposed seed funds.
  - Use agency-specific forms according to potential future funding agency.
  - Indicate any USF matching funds committed to the project.
  - Indicate any specific project costs supported by non-USF sources.

Budget maximum = $300,000 or 10% of the targeted external grant proposal amount, whichever is less.
- Requested funding for each award should be commensurate with the area of research and the targeted funding mechanism to be pursued.
- The budget should be supported with a timeline, milestones, deliverables and return on investment. A detailed Gantt chart is recommended.

Allowable Costs
- Funds must be used up to a 24-month grant period. Any remaining balance on the grant will not be available to the recipient unless a "no-cost extension" is granted.
- Equipment, software and supplies as required for the project. A maximum of 20 percent of the budget requested may be allocated to equipment.
- Personnel: Staff, including student stipends, to provide research support.

Unallowable Costs:
- Extra compensation is not allowed. Funding from this grant cannot be used to supplement regular salary over 100 percent.
- Funding may not be subcontracted to outside collaborators.
- Student tuition and related fees are not allowed.

Other eligibility requirements.
- The PIs are responsible to have <u>all</u> USF Research Integrity and Compliance requirements (e.g., IRB, IACUC, biosafety) approved prior to acceptance of the award.

Format Guidelines.
- It is the responsibility of the applicant that all parts of the application are legible and easily understood by experts in the field of research as well as other potential reviewers from unrelated fields of research.
- Applications should have all required signatures on the face page.
- The application file size should be <10MB, images and fonts should be Windows and Mac compatible, recommended font is Arial ≥11pt, and have a minimum of 0.5-inch margins.
- The components of a complete application package should be in the order as they appear in the checklist and submitted electronically as a single PDF document.
- Submit application via InfoReady by the deadline.

Performance Reports.
For all projects, a progress report is required at the end of the first 12 months of funding. This should report on the progress of the project relative to the originally proposed timeline.

Upon completion of funding, funded PIs must submit a provisional final report within 6 months. These reports must describe any new research achievements and successes enabled by the internal grant and explain how the internal funding enabled theses success.

The submitted external center scale or program project grant must be submitted in full, along with evidence of submission as soon as it is submitted to external funding agency. Receipt of both the provisional final report and submitted external grant, together, constitute the final report for this project.

A template will be provided for the written report. The review of ICPG project may include a brief in-person presentation on the project's achievements to the USF Research Council. Prior success with ICPG funding will be a determinant of PI's eligibility for future funding.