

Multi-User Research Capital Investment Award (MuRCIA)

Guidelines & Application Checklist 2024-2025

Application Deadlines are annual: Second Monday, **February 10, 2025, at 5:00 PM**

Submission: Application submitted via [InfoReady](#)

Award Notifications: ~2 months post submission – ALL FUNDING DECISIONS ARE FINAL.

Progress Reports: Mandatory reports are due one (1) month after purchase is complete or twelve (12) months after funding is allocated.

Purpose and Overview

Multi-User Research Capital Investment Award (MuRCIA) are intended to enhance research activities and increase competitiveness for external grants. Enhancement can be in the form of small equipment or purchase of software or other items that can be utilized to enhance research productivity. Applicants should demonstrate that there will be multiple users from different colleges and/or regional campuses. The intent of this opportunity is to support equipment purchases that enable collaborative groups of faculty, rather than to provide general core facilities support, for which other funding opportunities are available. These awards are designed to help faculty obtain new external funding. Consequently, RCIA's should have quantifiable returns on investment in new grant dollars, increase research productivity, enhance degree programs, and promote attainment of other AAU/state metrics.

Productivity investment: Capital equipment or other enhancements can be purchased for teams of collaborating faculty. These awards are intended to maintain competitiveness for funding of current programs and strengthen competitiveness in areas of research that build upon existing strengths. There are two (2) types of MuRCIA grants.

Direct purchase of new equipment or for the **replacement** of antiquated shared equipment, which can include a single item or multiple items to support a specific purpose. All applications are encouraged to have other funding to subsidize the purchase.

MuRCIA funding is not intended as matching funds for future equipment grant applications.

- For previously funded equipment grants, this must include equipment purchase and implementation of the proposed plan for access by USF users.
- If previously awarded to provide matching funds for a grant was not funded, must include returned seed funds. For matching funds infrastructure investments, this must include submission of the targeted grant proposal.

Eligibility Criteria:

- Be current ranked USF faculty pursuing research as part of their Faculty Assignment.
- Be employed by USF in their current capacity during the entire term of the Internal Award.
- Have submitted final reports for all previous USF Internal Awards.

- Cannot be a purchase by an institutional core facility.
- If a recipient as PI, Co-PI or Co-I 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.

Prioritized selection criteria for MuRCIA applications (as conveyed to the reviewers):

- Application involves faculty leads from multiple distinct programs, colleges and/or regional campuses. Program aligns with planned future funding opportunity to be pursued.
- Applications with PI's from only one department or college must justify why internal college funds are not being used.
- The MuRCIA enhances productivity of current research activities and competitiveness for future grant funding, especially multi-PI funding.
- How effective is the plan to provide shared access to a user group beyond a single faculty? How appropriate is the user group? Is there an effective plan to dynamically expand the user group over time?
- Describe what other mechanisms of funding support have been attempted or considered, and explain why this is currently the most appropriate source of funds for this investment.
- The MuRCIA will enhance predoctoral and postdoctoral training capacity, especially for PhD programs included in the NRC [survey of doctoral research programs](#), as described in AAU Membership Indicators at <https://www.aau.edu/who-we-are/membership-policy>.

MuRCIA 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.
- Award decisions will be made once all applications are reviewed in each funding cycle.
- Must be a shared equipment, specify user group and how will access be provided and how will membership of group evolve over time
- If the total equipment cost is greater than asking amount, identify other sources of funds to be used to purchase equipment.
- ALL FUNDING DECISIONS ARE FINAL.

Required sections of each application:

- Project Summary/Abstract (250 words).
 - Write with detail that can be understood by an “intelligent non-expert” as reviewers will be faculty outside your immediate discipline.
- Key personnel, related academic programs, and the role of each for the success of the proposed MuRCIA project.
 - For Infrastructure Direct grants, this section must identify the currently funded external grants and any pending grants that will be supported.
 - The application must specify the USF affiliated faculty and role on the grant, funding agency, name of the targeted grant, application deadline, expected funding date, and targeted funding amount, including indirect funding.

- The application must list any specific requirements for matching funds imposed by the targeted external funding agency.
- In each case, this section must briefly discuss how funding of internal proposal will enhance the likelihood of success of the targeted external grant proposal.

- Research plan (≤3 pages):
 - Provide an explanation of how the expertise of the interdisciplinary team provides synergy and will be enhanced by the proposed purchase. Will this purchase result in new opportunities for interdisciplinary research and training, especially for emerging transdisciplinary technologies or research areas.
- Expected Outcomes:
 - How will the project build research capacity and provide immediate benefits to current research projects/programs and graduate student/post doc training?
- Biographical sketches of lead PI and MPI/Co-I. Use agency-specific forms according to potential future funding agency (e.g. NIH or NSF format). Do not include a full CV.
- Project timeline of the scientific plan and budget expenditures.
- Budget and Budget Narrative. Use agency-specific forms according to potential future funding agency. Indicate any USF matching funds and/or specific project costs supported by non-USF sources.

Budget maximum = \$150,000

- Requested funding for each award should be commensurate with the area of research and the targeted funding mechanism to be pursued.
- Quotes for equipment are required.
- Funding should be for on-campus investments only.

Allowable Costs:

- Funds must be used up to a 12-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.

Unallowable Costs:

- No personnel support is allowed on this award.

Other eligibility requirements.

- The PIs are responsible to have all USF Research Integrity & Compliance requirements (e.g., IRB, IACUC, chemical and 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.
- 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 one month after purchase is complete or 12 months after funding is allocated. This should report on the progress of the project relative to the originally proposed timeline.

Performance reports must describe any new research achievements and successes enabled by the internal grant and explain how the internal funding enabled these success.

A follow-up update is required upon disposition of the submitted external grant. A template will be provided for the written report.

The report must include the proposed outcomes included in the original application. The review of the project may include a brief in-person presentation on the project's achievements to the USF Research Council. Prior success with funding will be a determinant of PI's eligibility for future funding.