

Interdisciplinary Research Award (IDRA)

Application Guidelines - 2023-2024

Applications Open: Monday, January 8, 2024

Application Deadline: Friday, March 8, 2024, at 5:00 PM. Complete the application in InfoReady at <https://usf.infoready4.com/>

Award Notifications: Approximately one month after deadline

Collaborative Programs maximum award: \$500,000 or 10% of the targeted external grant proposal amount, whichever is less; up to a 24-month grant period.

Infrastructure Investments maximum award: \$500,000; up to a 24-month grant period

Purpose and Overview

Interdisciplinary Research Awards (IDRAs) are intended to promote creation of multi-PI programs, which involve faculty affiliated with different colleges and/or regional campus, enhance competitiveness for large program-project types of grants, and sustain shared state-of-the-art research infrastructure. These awards are designed to incentivize faculty to lead large-scale innovative interdisciplinary efforts that help enhance the excellence of USF research. Consequently, IDRAs should have quantifiable returns on investment in new grant dollars, increase research productivity, enhance degree programs, and promote attainment of other AAU/state metrics. Each IDRA funding request should be commensurate with the area targeted of research and the funding mechanism(s) to be pursued for sustaining the interdisciplinary program.

Types of IDRA (Indicate grant type on cover page)

Collaborative programs: establish or promote development of interdisciplinary research teams that will be competitive for major program projects, center grants, individual investigator-initiated grants and/or major instrumentation grants (e.g., U01, U19, MRI, S10 – and other funding opportunities for research programs in energy, defense, environmental sciences, NASA, etc..).

Infrastructure investment: capital equipment or other infrastructure/facilities enhancements for current or new USF core facilities used by multiple colleges. 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 2 types of infrastructure grants.

Direct purchase of new equipment or replacement of antiquated shared equipment, which can include a single item or multiple items to support a specific purpose. Applications are encouraged to have other funding to subsidize the purchase. This funding category is not intended as matching funds for future equipment grant applications.

Matching funds for limited submission major instrumentation grant applications. Given this type of award may link to program development and longer term strategic institutional investments, these awards may be selected in discussion with the ADRs, USFRI, and RAC.

Eligibility Criteria

- Current ranked USF faculty pursuing research as part of their Faculty Assignment.
- 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.
- If a recipient was 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.
- Faculty may be PI, Co-PI or Co-I with significant commitment (greater than fifteen percent) on only one Internal Award application per academic year unless any previous application was rejected for funding.
- Faculty grants as supporting material may be cited in support of only one type of IDRA per grant cycle and for only one funded IDRA in a 12-month period.
- A faculty may not be a PI, Co-PI or Co-I with significant commitment (greater than fifteen percent) on a new IDRA if they have received an IDRA as PI or Co-I in the previous 4 years and have not yet achieved the goals of the earlier application. For previously funded infrastructure investment grants, this must include purchase of the equipment (or return of funds if the internal award was for matching funds and the grant was not funded), and implementation of the proposed plan for access by USF users. For matching funds infrastructure investments and collaborative programs this must include submission of the targeted grant proposal.

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

- Application involves faculty leads from multiple distinct programs, colleges and/or regional campuses. Program alignment with planned future funding opportunity to be pursued is important, also. Applications with PI's from only one college or campus must justify why internal college funds are not being used.
- The IDRA enhances productivity of current research activities at USF and competitiveness for future grant funding.
- The PI and Co-I's 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.
- The IDRA will enhance predoctoral and postdoctoral training capacity, especially for USF PhD programs included in NRC survey of doctoral research programs, as described in Association of American Universities [AAU] Membership Indicators at <https://www.aau.edu/who-we-are/membership-policy>.
- A clearly defined training component consistent with NOT-OD-20-031 or similar guidelines from other agencies related to federally funded research programs.
- A detailed plan and timeline that leads to an application(s) for extramural funding of a major program project or center grant type of grant-funded program(s).
- PI, Co-PI or Co-I with significant (>15%) commitment of previous IDRA must provide an up-to-date report of the outcomes, return on investment, and other impacts of any of their previous IDRA.

IDRA 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., RAC, ADRs, RF).
- Applications certified as meeting the award criteria will 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 completed once all applications are reviewed in each funding cycle.
- 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” since some reviewers will be faculty outside your immediate discipline.
- Key personnel, related academic programs, and the role of each for the success of the proposed IDRA project.
- Targeted external grant (1 page or less). This section must briefly discuss how funding of the IDRA proposal will enhance the likelihood of success of the targeted external grant proposal.
 - For Collaborative Program grant applications, this section must identify a specific external multi-PI funding opportunity to which the team will apply for funding. The application window targeted must be within 18 months of award of proposed internal funding. The application must specify the funding agency, name of the targeted grant, application window, and targeted funding amount. This information is required for the application to be considered.
 - 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. It must also list any specific requirements for matching funds imposed by the targeted external funding agency.
 - For Infrastructure Matching grants, this section must identify the external equipment grant opportunity for which the proposed funds will serve as a match. The application must specify the funding agency, name of the targeted grant, application deadline, expected funding date, and targeted funding amount. It must also list any specific requirements for matching funds imposed by the targeted external funding agency.
- Program management plan (1 page or less).
 - How will the program or infrastructure be managed to provide broad access and support for research to the USF community (if infrastructure is to be purchased with grant funds)?
 - Identify benefits to existing programs and/or core/shared equipment facilities in terms of increased productivity, cost savings, eligibility for new types of funding, etc.

- Alignment with USF Strategic Plan and USF programs (≤1 page).
 - Additionally identify any USF degree programs (existing or new) that will benefit from this new Collaborative Program.
- Research plan (≤3 pages):
 - Collaborative Programs:
 - Provide an explanation of how the expertise of the interdisciplinary team provides synergy and promotes new opportunities for interdisciplinary research and training, especially for emerging transdisciplinary technologies or research areas.
 - Infrastructure investments:
 - Why is this infrastructure investment needed?
 - Does this enhance current or develop a new USF core facility used by multiple colleges?
 - How does this investment maintain competitiveness for funding of current programs and strengthen competitiveness in areas of research that build upon existing strengths?
- Expected Outcomes:
 - How will the project build research capacity and provide immediate benefits to current research projects/programs and graduate student/post doc training?
 - 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 (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 Guidelines

- 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.
- Funding should be for on-campus investments only. Funding for outside partners, travel, and other nonresident activities should come from other funding sources.
- Core labs and other shared facilities must adopt the use of iLab for tracking expenses and links to funded research, and outcomes.

Allowable Costs

- Funding is for a period up to 24 months. Any remaining balance on the grant will not be available to the recipient unless a Budget Extension form is submitted and approved prior to the end date.
- Equipment, software and supplies as required for the project.
- Operating expenses and service contracts related specifically to the project.
- Travel only if justified in the application. Examples include advanced training in operation and maintenance of new equipment and other types of training to provide research support services.
- Personnel: staff, including student stipends, for operation of new infrastructure and/or to provide research support to utilize new infrastructure.
- Infrastructure Investment funds may not be applied towards ancillary projects merely employing the instrument; they must be limited towards purchase of the instrument, operating or service costs, and personnel costs required to actually install, operate, or train users of the instrument. Personnel costs requested on Infrastructure Investment funds should be particularly well justified.

Unallowable Costs

- Funding from this grant cannot be used to supplement regular salary over 100%.
- Extra compensation is not allowed.

Other eligibility requirements

- The PIs are responsible to have all Research Integrity & Compliance requirements (e.g., IRB, IACUC, biosafety) approved prior to funding 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 as specified.
- The components of a complete application package should be in the order as they appear and submitted electronically in InfoReady, with any uploads named “Last Name, First Name, IDRA <name of upload>.”
- Submit the completed application in InfoReady by the deadline.

Progress Report and Final Report

A Progress Report is required at the end of the first twelve months of funding (if the funding period extends beyond twelve months). This should report on the progress of the project relative to the originally proposed timeline. These reports must describe any new research achievements and successes enabled by the internal grant and explain how the internal funding enabled these successes.

For the Collaborative Program, typically 24 months, the submitted external grant targeted in the original proposal must be provided in full when the grant proposal is submitted. An update is required upon fund disposition of the external grant. A fillable form will be provided for the Progress Report.

Final Reports are due within three months of project completion, submitted via InfoReady. All eligible funding should be spent by that time, and remaining funds will be swept when the final report is submitted.

Both the Progress and Final Report must include outcomes proposed in the original application and may include a brief in-person presentation on the project's achievements to the USF Research Council. Prior success with IDRA funding will be a determinant of PI's eligibility for future funding.