Guidelines for 2021 Research and Creative Activity Awards (RCAA) Competition

Applications available online at: https://facultysenate.ecu.edu/research-creative-activities-committee/

The Research/Creative Activities Committee (RCAC) solicits proposals for meritorious research or creative activities from eligible East Carolina University faculty members. The committee has access to a $25,000 pool of funds from which it will fund at least 4 proposals. The committee strongly recommends a cap of $6,250 per a proposal. Please note that the committee will consider both the quality of the proposal and the budget as part of its deliberations. Also note that funds will not be available before July 1, 2021 due to COVID-19 budgetary limitations. All dispensed funds will need to be spent by June 30, 2022. Given the current total pool of funds, the committee reserves the right to exclude from consideration those proposals which it deems would be better served by another internal grant proposal.

As stated above, the allocated funds will not be available before July 1, 2021. However, the Committee recognizes that some proposals may need early funding due to the design of the research. In case an awardee needs funding to start before July 1, 2021, the proposal must include specific justification for such a request. The Committee will try to accommodate it by advocating for additional sources of funding which would need to come from other budgetary priorities at ECU.

Proposals are due to be emailed to facultysenate@ecu.edu by 12:00 noon on Thursday, March 18, 2021.

Eligibility:
Applicants must be ECU faculty members who do not serve on the Research/Creative Activities Committee. While there have been college and/or department restrictions in previous competitions sponsored by this committee, there are no such restrictions for this competition.

Recipients of awards from the following University sources may not apply for new funding under this competition if the award is still active during the 2020-21 academic year:
- Research and Creative Activity Awards
- Faculty Senate Teaching Grants
- Research Development Award Program
- University Startup Funds Program
- East-West Collaborative Program

The Research/Creative Activities Committee funds the following expenses:

Stipends for Research/Creative Activity
Faculty stipends will only be available for 9-month faculty. Keep in mind that the stipend amounts must be in line with the aforementioned budget guidelines and that the committee strongly urges faculty to cap proposal requests at $6,250. Applicants cannot teach during the Summer Session in which he/she receives a stipend.
Project Expenses
These funds are for expenses related to the proposed project. Project expense funds should be expended or encumbered by June 30, 2022. Guidelines for budget preparation and the justification for requested funds are included in the application packet.

Stipend for Research/Creative Activity and Project Expenses (dual)
Applicants who are eligible may apply with proposals that will award money for a stipend plus project expenses. Project expense funds should be expended or encumbered by June 30, 2022. Guidelines for budget preparation are included in the application packet.

Evaluation Criteria:
▪ That the research/creative activity has the probability of leading to significant contributions in the field, including publication, presentation, performance, exhibition, and to the individual's professional enrichment and growth as well as leading to furtherance of the University's mission.
▪ That the research/creative activity is based on knowledge in the field, and the proposal clearly shows how the proposed effort extends, expands, and/or explores new directions, techniques or processes.
▪ That the research/creative activity possesses evidence of scholarly importance, consists of more than mere data collection or confirmation of easily anticipated results.
▪ That the research/creative activity is methodologically sound and within the competency of the applicant.

Proposals will be evaluated by the diverse group of faculty that make up the committee. It is to the applicant’s advantage to prepare abstracts and proposals in language that can be understood by individuals who are outside the applicant's discipline. Feedback will be provided to applicants who are not funded.

PLEASE NOTE: ALL DECISIONS BY THE COMMITTEE ARE FINAL.

Award Requirements:
Awardees are required to submit to the Research/Creative Activities Committee a final report detailing the results of the funded work. Final reports are due no later than September 15, 2022. Reports should be emailed to the Faculty Senate to facultysenate@ecu.edu. Report forms are available on the committee’s website at https://facultysenate.ecu.edu/research-creative-activities-committee/.

Other Restrictions:
▪ The final reports from any previous awards must be on file in the Faculty Senate office before a new application will be considered.
▪ The publication of the results of projects supported by an award from the Research/Creative Activities Committee should carry a printed acknowledgment of financial assistance from the Committee.
▪ There can be no co-project directors or co-principal investigators listed on the cover page although collaborations with other faculty are acceptable. RCAA applicants are eligible to receive support from only one University funding source in any single year. Persons receiving funding from other such sources (e.g. Teaching Award, Research Development Award) must inform the RCA Committee of the award and will need to decline other awards in order to receive their award.
▪ Individuals may not submit more than one proposal per funding period.
Any changes to funded projects must be submitted in writing to the Chair of the Research/Creative Activities Committee for possible further consideration by the Committee for approval.

Applicants for projects involving research on human subjects or animals must be prepared to file the appropriate forms with the University and/or Medical Center Institutional Review Board or the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee upon notification of the award. Funding is contingent upon receipt of approval from the appropriate Institutional Review Committee (human or animal) at the time of award activation.

Failure to adhere to the formatting requirements for proposal may result in the elimination of a proposal from consideration.

Following the evaluation and awarding of awards, the Committee will handle all appeals internally and their decision is final.

Application Process:
Each award proposal MUST include the attached application form signed by the applicant and the chairperson (or dean, as appropriate) of any unit involved by **12:00 noon on Thursday, March 18, 2021**. The applicant must send an electronic version of the proposal in PDF format to the Faculty Senate office (**facultysenate@ecu.edu**) by the deadline. No proposals will be accepted after this deadline.

Applicants have the opportunity to attend any information sessions given by the committee to verify that their proposals are appropriate for consideration. Applicants should also consult funded proposals from the past three years that can be accessed at [https://facultysenate.ecu.edu/research-creative-activities-committee/](https://facultysenate.ecu.edu/research-creative-activities-committee/).

Completing Application Cover Pages:
All items 1-11 on the cover sheet must be completed and submitted together with the narrative.

**Items 1 through 5:** Complete as requested. Please note for item #3: check one of items a, b or c; and if b or c, list the amount of money requested in d. The amount of salary money to be paid will be determined by the office of the Chief Research Officer. The Research/Creative Activities Committee reserves the right to change the category of proposals, as appropriate.

**Item 6:** Acknowledge that IRB and Animal Care approval will be sought, if appropriate. Approval of the research by the IRB must be demonstrated before funds are made available to the awardee.

**Item 7:** Acknowledge and sign Application Cover Page.

**Item 8:** Signature of Unit Head.

**Item 9:** List of all previous awards received from this Committee, indicating if the final report was submitted for each. Describe the publications, presentations, performances, external funding proposals, or related activities, including citations or publications directly resulting from each award. Applicants should provide the committee with some indication of the ranking/prestige of specific journals, shows, or performances in which these funded works were published, performed, or displayed.

**Item 10:** List current grant/contract support and pending applications. Include project title, sponsor, your role in the project (PI, Co-PI, etc.), project period, award status (current or pending), and total
funding level. If previous proposals not funded by this committee received support from another University program, indicate the nature of that support, including the program that provided the funding, the amount of the award, and the period covered by the award.

Completing Narrative:
Give a brief description of the project. Each part of this narrative must be included in the order listed and will be used to evaluate your proposal. The narrative is subject to format requirements listed in the next section.

All of the information listed below should be included and specific guidelines followed. Failure to adhere to the restrictions for the following items or the required formats may result in the proposal’s rejection.

Please place the items in the order listed below after the cover page.

A. Abstract: The abstract should not exceed 250 words.

B. Proposal Description: Conciseness is encouraged. Because faculty from different disciplines will review your proposal, it should be clearly written and free of specialized jargon. The Proposal Description should include:
   ▪ Problem/Purpose statement: Develop a clear and sound basis for the project that includes supporting references that establish the context of the research or creative activity.
   ▪ Specific aims: Present clear and attainable objectives and clearly describe potential results and benefits. [for university]
   ▪ Methodology: Describe how the project will be carried out, how the results will be analyzed or evaluated, and the proposed schedule of activities. For those proposals where this approach is not possible, this section should then present a clear set of specific tasks and activities that will produce the specific results expected.
   ▪ Expected outcomes and benefits: How your work will contribute to the advancement of your field and furtherance of the University missions; please be specific about expected outcomes such as securing funding or scholarly products such as publications, etc.

C. Literature Cited: Items referenced in the narrative or abstract. Use a citation format that is appropriate for your discipline.

D. Appendices: Supporting documentation such as contracts from publishers, letters of invitation, award notices, letters of support from school principals or medical centers involved in the project. Please provide English translations of foreign documents. It is inappropriate to include in the appendices any information critical to the description of the project, such as that pertaining to the methodology to be used. Proposals will be excluded from consideration if applicants appear to be attempting to circumvent the proposal page limit by including such material in the appendices.

When applicable, please attach any additional documentation and explanation of why there is a significant benefit of obtaining funding prior to July 1, 2021. Early funding is neither available nor guaranteed but if properly rationalized then the Committee may advocate for potential additional funds.

E. Project Expenses: Itemize expenses on the Budget for Project Expenses form.
F. **Justification for Support**: Briefly justify each item from the *Budget for Project Expenses* form.

G. **Vita or Biosketch**: Submit a one or two page vita or biosketch. Include degrees earned, institutions and dates, and academic employment history. Include a list of representative publications and/or creative activities. Do NOT submit copies of publications, reports, endorsements, or brochures.

H. **Checklist**.

**Format Requirements (strictly enforced):**
- All pages paginated;
- Font: minimum 12 pt Arial or Helvetica for all pages;
- 1 inch margins left/right and top/bottom for all pages;
- The abstract and proposal description altogether may not exceed five (5) single-spaced pages in length;
- Any figures or tables included in the proposal description must fit within the five-page limit;
- A references cited section should follow the proposal description; citation format and spacing is at the discretion of the author;
- The appendices may not exceed four (4) pages in length;
- The budget and accompanying justification may not exceed two (2) pages in length;
- The vita or biosketch may not exceed two (2) pages in length.

**Multimedia Content:**
Multimedia content can be submitted on CD, DVD, send electronically or posted online. Examples of acceptable multimedia content include high-resolution photographs of sculpture, musical recordings, and animations of a vibrating object. The multimedia CD/DVD cannot include traditional graphs, tables, photos, or illustrations that should appear in the body of the proposal. If multimedia files are included in the proposal, those files must be submitted with the original proposal. Also, each multimedia file must be described in the body of the proposal. The multimedia files will be reviewed by people from diverse backgrounds using different computer platforms and should be platform- and specialized application-independent. The CD/DVD should contain file types that can be viewed on a standard Web browser with normal plugins installed. An HTML navigation page for the multimedia files on the CD/DVD is encouraged but not required.

Examples of these file types include the following:
Still Graphics: JPEG, PNG, GIF, PDF
Animated Graphics: Flash, Animated GIF, Quicktime movie, MPEG movie
Sound: WAV, AIFF, MP3, non-streaming Real Audio

The committee does encourage applicants to put these materials on the web and applicants may provide web links in the proposal instead of providing copies of a CD/DVD. However, if the material has copyright, format, or other issues that may preclude it from being made available or properly viewable online then submissions should be in CD/DVD format only.

**Budget and Budget Justification:**
Faculty must attach a complete budget justification and are strongly encouraged to limit requested funds to no more than $6,250. Stipends are available at the rate of 16.67% of the applicant’s salary, up to a cap equal to the prevailing cap on full-time teaching in one summer session. We anticipate that the proposed cap falls below some faculty members’ compensation for other summer session activities and suggest that those faculty members ask only for a portion of their summer session to be
covered. The committee also recognizes that some faculty will be forced to choose between using the funds for salary buyout and purchasing materials for the project. We ask that applicants consider all aspects of the proposal carefully and only apply for an award if the research or creative activity can be completed within the budget constraints. Applicants must use the ECU Business Manual (copies are available in all departments) in preparing the budget to determine which budget line is appropriate for requested funds and what current rates are allowable.

Budgets should be carefully and reasonably constructed. The need for each item should be clearly established, with sources indicated where appropriate. Budget excesses or budgets lacking essential details and justification will be considered negatively in evaluating the proposal. Every proposal (including stipend-only proposals) MUST have a completed Budget for Project Expenses form (see page 9) to be considered for funding.

Where appropriate, indicate any direct contribution from your department or from any other University office or individual that has been made or will be made toward subsidizing your project. Specify the kind and amount of contribution or support on the budget page.

The budget may request money for:

- **Research Assistants/Student Wages:** Compensation for graduate and undergraduate students should be consistent with the standard compensation offered to these students in your department. Proposals for the sole purpose of support for graduate research assistants must be strongly justified.

- **Travel:** Applicants may only request funds for travel that is clearly essential to complete the project, such as data collection/observation that is site-specific. Attempts to obtain international travel funds from other (non-ECU) sources should be indicated. Travel for the purpose of presenting results at meetings will not be funded. Applicants requesting payment for use of a personal car must explain why ECU cars cannot be used. Multiple, short-distance trips must be justified. Travel will be reimbursed at state-approved rates.

- **Research/Creative Activity Supplies:** Itemize all supply requests.

- **Printing:** Activities involving organizing, presenting, and/or publishing or disseminating the results of completed research/creative activities will not be funded.

- **Communications:** Itemize.

- **Equipment:** Requests for equipment or software purchase will not be supported if: a) the needed equipment or software exists elsewhere on campus and is accessible to the applicant; b) the item is to be for general departmental use; or c) the item appears to represent one-time use by one person. Applicants are encouraged to determine the availability of desired equipment in other locations on campus. This is particularly true for computer equipment such as laptops.

- Other documented purposes necessary to the successful completion of the proposed activity and within the general policies of the University should be clearly specified and justified.

**Completing the Checklist:**

Complete the attached checklist and submit it as the last page of your proposal.

*Rev. 08-12-20*
Proposals are due to be emailed to facultysenate@ecu.edu by 12:00 noon on Thursday, March 18, 2021.

#2021- ______

East Carolina University
Faculty Senate
2021/2022 RESEARCH/CREATIVE ACTIVIES COMMITTEE

Application Cover Page for a 2021 Research and Creative Activity Award

1. a. Name: _________________________________________________________________

   b. Department: _____________________________________________________________

   c. Academic Rank: _________________________________________________________

2. Proposal Title: _____________________________________________________________

3. Type of Award (check one)
   a. Stipend of Research/Creative Activity  ______
   b. Project expense only  ______
   c. Stipend and Project Expense  ______
   d. Amount of project expense money requested:  ________________

4. This proposal best fits which of the following categories: (please check only one)
   a. Arts and Humanities  ______
   b. Health Science  ______
c. Natural Sciences

d. Social Sciences

5. Type of Faculty position (check all that apply)
   a. Full time, tenured
   b. Full time, tenure track
   c. Fixed-term
      _____ Full time _____ Part Time
   d. 12-month contract

6. If your project requires human subjects protection (IRB) approval or animal welfare (IAUCU) approval, please check the appropriate item or mark not applicable.
   Project requires approval from _____ IRB, _____ IACUC, _____ Not Applicable

7. I understand and accept the terms and conditions set forth in the Research/Creative Activities Committee guidelines.
   a. I understand that I must file a final report of the results of the project with the Faculty Senate office no later than September 15, of the year in which the award terminates.
   b. I understand that publication, presentation, performance, or exhibit of work resulting from support of this project by ECU must carry a printed acknowledgment of this financial assistance by the University.
   c. I understand that if selected, receipt of funding is contingent upon receiving approval from IRB or Animal Care Committee by June 1 of the award year.

   ____________________________________________  __________________
   Signature of Applicant                          Date

8. The applicant is an ECU faculty member who, I believe, can complete the proposed project.

   ____________________________________________  __________________
   Signature of Unit Head                          Date

9. Dates of previous University grants, final reports filed, publications, presentations, performances, external funding proposals, or related activities, including citations or publications directly resulting from each grant. (section may be expanded in length)

10. List current grant/contract support and pending applications. Include project title, sponsor, your role in the project (PI or co-PI), the project period, award status (pending/current) and total funding level. Include in particular any current or pending funding related to the proposed research. (This section may be expanded in length.)
11. If funded, may the Faculty Senate Office provide copies of your application by email request as a model for prospective ECU applicants? (Your answer will not be a factor in the Committee’s decision to recommend funding for your proposal.)

- YES  
- NO

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**East Carolina University**

**Faculty Senate**

**2021/2022 RESEARCH/CREATIVE ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE**

Budget for Project Expenses with a 2021 Research/Creative Activity Award

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Requested Funding</th>
<th>Funds from Other Sources*</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Personnel Costs: Stipend, Research Assistants (University personnel only), Student wages</td>
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<td>Description:</td>
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<td>2) Travel (Mode/Sources, etc.)</td>
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<td>Description:</td>
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<td>3) Research/Creative Activity Supplies</td>
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<td>Description:</td>
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<td>4) Printing</td>
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<td>Description:</td>
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<td>5) Communication</td>
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<td>6) Equipment</td>
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</table>
7) Other (Specify) | $ | $  
|-----------------|---|---
| Description:    |   |   

**Total** | $ | $  

*Identify Other Sources of Funding:

*A BRIEF JUSTIFICATION (ONE PAGE MAXIMUM) IS NEEDED FOR ALL PROJECT EXPENSES.*
East Carolina University
Faculty Senate
2021-2022 RESEARCH/CREATIVE ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE
Checklist for a 2021 Research/Creative Activity Award
This checklist must be submitted with the proposal as the last page.

I. Please check that you qualify for a Research/Creative Activity Award:
☐ faculty member at ECU
☐ not currently a candidate for an advanced degree
☐ completed all previous Final Report forms (Lists of previous awarded grants with reference to completed forms are available here for verification.)

II. Please check that you qualify for a stipend for research/creative activity if requested.
☐ do not hold a 12-month contract

III. Please check the following proposal requirements:
☐ Application Cover Page, including:
  ☐ Applicant’s name, school department, academic rank
  ☐ Proposal title
  ☐ Type of award
  ☐ Amount of project expenses, as applicable
  ☐ Faculty status (tenured, tenure-track, fixed-term, etc.)
  ☐ 9-month or 12-month
  ☐ IRB/animal approval
  ☐ Applicant’s signature and date
  ☐ Applicant’s unit head’s signature and date
  ☐ List of prior research/creative activity awards received
  ☐ List of current/grant contract support and pending applications
  ☐ Narrative formatted along guidelines
  ☐ Abstract
  ☐ Description of proposal (5 single-spaced pages maximum including abstract)
  ☐ Literature cited, if appropriate
  ☐ Appendices (4 pages maximum), if appropriate
  ☐ Budget, if appropriate
  ☐ Justification for support (2 page maximum for budget and justification)
  ☐ Vita or Biosketch (2 pages)
  ☐ Proposal checklist

IV. Please explain briefly any suggestions you have concerning the proposal guidelines and application format.
East Carolina University
Faculty Senate
2021-2022 RESEARCH/CREATIVE ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE

Final (or Progress) Report for a 2021 Research/Creative Activity Award

Due September 15, 2022 (email to facultysenate@ecu.edu)

Future award proposals will not be considered unless Final Reports have been filed on all previous awards.

Name: ______________________________________________________________________

Academic Unit: __________________________________________________________________

Award Number: #2021 - _______          Is this a Progress Report _____ or Final Report ____?

Award Amount: $ ________

Award Title: ______________________________________________________________________

Project Summary: Concisely describe the activities undertaken, addressing the goals and aims presented in your proposal. Include citations of any presentations, publications, performances, external proposals or related activities which have resulted from this project. Indicate any activities of this sort that are planned in the near future. (Use the reverse side if necessary.)

_________________________________________________     _____________
(Signature of Applicant)       (Date)

__________________________________________________  _____________
(Signature of Unit Head)        (Date)
Comments on a 2021 Research/Creative Activity Award

This page will be used by the committee to capture substantive and constructive comments about the award proposal from the reviewers. This page will then be transmitted to the applicant following the awarding process.

Name: ____________________________________________

Academic Unit: ______________________________________

Award Number: #2021 - ______

Award Amount: $ _______

Award Title: _________________________________________

Reviewer Comments: