



OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND SPONSORED PROJECTS

Call for Proposals: Faculty Seed Grants
University of West Georgia
FY 2026

The University of West Georgia invites proposals for the Faculty Seed Grant (FSG) initiative, aimed at empowering faculty engaged in scholarly or creative activities with significant impact potential and practical relevance. The FSGs (up to \$15,000) aim to kickstart research/creative activities with the anticipation of a major grant submission(s) upon their conclusion. By funding initiatives across UWG's diverse expertise, FSGs support ambitious research and creative activities with the promise to shape the future of our institution. This competitive program prioritizes projects that leverage UWG's strengths and demonstrate feasibility through pilot data collection, targeting significant external funding and propel scholarly/creative activities. This is an opportunity for you to bring innovation to life, explore ideas, and fuel your research and creative aspirations.

Primary Goals of UWG Faculty Seed Grants

- Generate projects with high potential for securing significant external funding from federal, state, private, or philanthropic sources. This aligns with the emphasis on fostering scholarly/creative activity and securing long-term funding.
- Prioritize funding faculty projects that will establish a strong foundation for future grant applications.
- Encourage collaborative/interdisciplinary teams across diverse areas of expertise within UWG.
- Facilitate internal and external partnerships, enriching and increasing student experiences, and increasing potential impact.

Funding and Eligibility Requirements

This cycle of FSGs will be funded in FY26, which runs from July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026. Proposals can be up to \$15,000. No matching funds are required to apply. All funds must be committed/encumbered by January 31, 2026 and spent by June 30, 2026. Any expenses exceeding the approved funding amount will not be covered by the Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPAA) unless prior approval is granted. In such cases, the applicant(s) will be responsible for covering the additional costs.

Collaborative teams are encouraged, including both undergraduate and graduate students. Each applicant (PIs and Co-PIs) can only apply for one award per year. Preference will be given to projects that directly align with UWG and college/school scholarly agendas (ex. QEP, departmental research initiatives, etc.). All faculty across all disciplines are invited to apply, regardless of one's field of expertise. Interdisciplinary collaborations and partnerships, both within and beyond UWG are encouraged.

If the PI's/Co-PI's faculty appointment includes 0% scholarly effort, a statement of support is required from the department chair or appropriate supervisor. This statement must explain how the applicant's current appointment will be modified to accommodate the proposed percent of

scholarly activity. Examples of appointments may include non-tenure-track faculty members with 100% teaching and service-related appointments and tenure-track faculty members with 100% administrative appointments.

Submission and Award Timeline

All submissions are due by 5:00pm on March 21, 2025. Part 1(Cover Page) must be a separate PDF and emailed to preaward@westga.edu. Parts 2-5 must be integrated into another single PDF and emailed to preaward@westga.edu. Name your PDF file "Keyword_FSG2025.pdf". The "keyword" portion of the title refers to an identifying keyword for the project proposal. For anonymity, do not include personal information that could identify individuals in the proposal.

Funds will be allocated on a competitive basis from the VPAA's Office. The Faculty Development Standing Committee of the Faculty Senate, along with previous FSG awardees, will review the proposals and provide recommendations to the VPAA and AVP of Innovation & Research for allocation of funds. To avoid any conflicts of interest, please do not contact current members of the Faculty Development Committee about FSG grants. Doing so will result in the denial of the application.

Reviewers will use the criteria detailed below to evaluate each application and the accompanying rubric. A summary of the reviewer comments will be sent to all applicants at the time the notice of awards is sent. Appeals are not allowed for these applications, nor are applicants allowed to contest reviewers' comments. Applicants are invited to seek clarification if any of the reviewers' comments or concerns are unclear to them and/or address reviewers' concerns in a resubmitted proposal in future FSG cycles. FSG awards are subject to the grant-related policies and procedures of UWG.

Faculty Development Committee members who wish to apply for the FY26 FSG cycle must recuse themselves from the review process and assist in securing a proxy for the college/school.

- 1.VPAA's Office will send out call for proposals by January 20, 2025.
2. Proposals are due by March 21, 2025 at 5:00 PM.
3. ORSP will forward proposals to Faculty Development Committee for review.
4. Faculty Development Committee members will score proposals during and determine grant allocation at their April meeting.
5. The Chair of the Faculty Development Committee will make recommendations to the VPAA's Office of decisions regarding applications. The VPAA will make final decisions. ORSP will notify all applicants.
6. Applicants will be notified on April 28, 2025 of the decision regarding the project proposal.

Application

If the application is a collaborative effort, the PI must submit the proposal. The PI will serve as the main correspondent and will be responsible for all deliverables and management of the budget.

The application package includes five parts: a cover page (part one) and four substantive components, as detailed below. All final documents should be single-spaced, using a standard 11-point font; have 1-inch margins; and pages should be numbered and not exceed page limits

indicated for each section. Applicants should review the accompanying evaluation rubric before completing the application.

Overarching Proposal Requirements

- High potential for securing external funding by aligning with the college/department, [University Strategic Plan](#), and/or [Quality Enhancement Plan](#) showcasing grant application readiness
- Scientific merit, innovative research, or creative focus
- Feasibility and clarity of methodology
- Robust project management/timeline and budget justification
- Potential impact on knowledge generation, society, and student experiential learning

1. Cover Page: Complete the PDF fillable on the ORSP website under Quick Links. Provide information about the project such as title, team member names and related details, budget request, IRB status, and other summary information.

2. Narrative: The narrative should follow the outline below and may not exceed three pages (not including references).

A) Background, Context and Long-term Goals

Describe the long-term goals and potential of the project beyond the initial period of FSG support (include year or dates here). Develop the narrative in reference to or in contrast with established work in the relevant field(s), providing appropriate citations. Describe how realization of the project's long-term goals will make a difference in the immediate field(s) of study, leading to innovation in practice or other impact of broader significance. Conceptualize the project in the context of the background(s) and scholarly agenda(s) of the faculty member(s) involved, making it apparent why the project presents a good opportunity for UWG and the faculty member(s) included in the project. Highlight any unique combination of backgrounds, interdisciplinary approaches, or prior experience and capabilities that are embedded in the project.

Describe any related scholarly/creative activity at UWG, including areas of existing strength and potential future opportunities.

Identify the most critical barrier(s) to moving forward with the project at this point, with emphasis on what will be required to gain support for the merits of the project.

B) Project Plan

Against the background provided in the previous section, describe the work planned during the FSG period and expected outcomes. Describe the method/approach and indicate the specific involvement of each participant (e.g. faculty, staff, students) in the proposed work. Make it clear to reviewers that the individual or team has devised a well-crafted plan making good use of talent, experience, and existing resources. After reading this section, reviewers should appreciate how expected outcomes (if successfully achieved) would address the critical barrier(s) as identified in the previous section. When crafting the narrative, keep in mind that the proposal will be reviewed by a faculty panel with members who may not be familiar with the specific areas of study identified in the proposal. Therefore, it is important that technical terminology be kept to a minimum and that the project be described in a manner easily understood by non-specialists.

3. Timeline: Provide a timeline, not to exceed one page, for completion of the proposed work in a simple, readable form, such as a short paragraph or table. The earliest start date is July 1, 2025, and the proposed work should be completed by June 30, 2026.

4. Plans for Continuation: Describe plans for continuation, not to exceed two pages, with intent to realize the long-term goals described in part (A) of the proposal narrative. Identify potential sources of external support, which should be at least four times the amount of the proposed seed funding. For instance, if the seed funding is \$10,000, the anticipated external funding should surpass \$40,000. For each source, include

- the agency(ies) and/or organization(s) to which you plan to apply, a hyperlink to any specific calls for funding, and any known submission deadlines;
- a description of how the project will be responsive to the funding source's priorities and/or the requirements of the specific program(s);
- a description of how funding through the source(s) would advance the project in accord with your long-term plans;
- a realistic assessment of how the funding will lead to the success with future funding opportunities; and
- a description of what support may be needed after the award period.

5. Budget Template and Justification: Itemize each expenditure in your budget proposal using the FSG budget template located on the ORSP Website under Quick Links. Provide a detailed justification for each item based on their use for the project, not to exceed one page. The proposed budget must be appropriate for the work and must align to project goals. The budget justification should be crafted with an eye toward enabling faculty reviewers from outside any specific field of study to recognize the necessity of each budget item for the completion of the work. Awards are capped at \$15,000.

- Faculty Salary: Monetary stipends are available in July 2025 (Summer Session IV) and/or May/June 2026 (Summer Sessions I or III). The salary will be limited to a maximum of \$3,000 (including fringe benefits) per person. Faculty salaries can only be paid during the summer session as long as the total pay for the summer does not exceed 33 1/3% of a faculty member's summer contract salary. A strong written justification detailing workload (e.g., hours spent writing proposals, analyzing data, collecting research) is required.
- Workload Reduction: Factor in potential part-time instructor costs if requesting academic year workload reduction/course re-assigned time. Gain written approval from the dean, specifying the semester/course, before budgeting for workload reduction.
- Student Employment: Students hires are encouraged to support FSGs. Review [Guidelines for Student Employee Compensation](#) for budget development. Waivers for tuition are not allowable for FSGs.
- Travel: Justify travel by explaining its connection to the project, location choice, and resource access (if applicable). Provide documentation supporting access to unique resources if requested. Funds should not be allocated for professional development or for travel to professional conferences to present work unless there is a specific justification provided in the "Budget Justification" that directly relates to the completion of the project. Funding for conference travel to present results of the project is not a sufficient rationale.
- Materials & Supplies: Specify how each item will be used. Only equipment over \$4,999 should be listed as "equipment." Lower cost items should be listed as "supplies".
- Equipment: Explain why specific equipment is needed and how it will be solely dedicated to the project for its duration. Equipment must be purchased within the first six months of the project (January 1, 2026).

These items can be funded:	These items are NOT fundable:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty summer salary up to \$3,000 (including fringe benefits) • Workload reduction in the academic year with supervisor approval • Undergraduate research assistants, or graduate students as student employees • Food as in travel per diem policy • Travel that is required to conduct research • Supplies/materials/equipment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty summer salary in excess of \$3,000 (per person) • Graduate students as graduate assistants, tuition waivers will not be funded • Travel for professional development or to professional conferences to present work unless there is a specific justification provided in the “Budget Justification” that directly relates to the completion of the project • Funding for conference registration/travel to present results of the project is not a sufficient rationale • Prizes that will be used as incentives for completing a survey (e.g. gift cards, t-shirts) • Food that is not part of travel per diem expenses • The purchase of computers, or the purchase of any equipment available for loan from the university

Endorsement from the Dean/Supervisor

All applicants (e.g. PIs and Co-PIs) must include a brief statement of endorsement from the respective dean(s)/supervisor(s) confirming the proposed work is aligned to the scholarly agenda/strategy of the college(s)/school(s), university strategic plan, and/or the Quality Enhancement Plan.

Research Compliance

Studies involving human subjects or animals must demonstrate that they have appropriate approvals in place before funds can be disbursed.

Faculty Seed Grant Rubric

Funding Criteria	Possible Points
<p>Narrative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the proposal complement, challenge, or expand relevant studies in the field(s)? • How well does the proposal clearly and concisely present the question or problem being addressed and why is it important/significant? • Does the proposal provide a compelling argument for the scholarship or the creative activity proposed? • Does the proposal develop or employ novel concepts, 	30

<p>approaches, methodologies, tools, or technologies?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the methods and measures to be used in the project adequate and appropriate for addressing the primary question(s) being asked or addressing the main objective(s) of the project? • Does the proposal explain the expertise of the individual(s) conducting work in the field for the proposed project? • Does the proposal considered opportunities to share research/works with a wider public or audience? • Does the proposal demonstrate faculty expertise and experience in conducting scholarly/creative activity by identifying potential risks and mitigation strategies? 	
<p>Relevance to UWG priorities (Should be included in Narrative)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the proposal align with the university/college/department strategic areas of research? and/or • Does the proposal offer opportunities to strengthen student research experiences and/or mentorship? and/or • Does the proposal explain the benefit of meaningful collaboration within or across disciplines or with external partners? 	10
<p>Project Timeline</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the proposal present a well-defined and realistic plan with clear milestones, timeline, and plan for dissemination? • Are all the proposed activities likely to be completed within the one-year award period? (NOTE: It is acceptable for some non-financial aspects of the project to be completed after the end of the award period.) 	10
<p>Project Continuation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the proposal provide a specific plan for seeking future external funding where proposals will be submitted within two years after the end of the internal grant award? • Does the proposal provide and hyperlink specific funding opportunities to apply for future external funding related to project? • Do those funding opportunities explain how the support of the proposal could be sustained? • Does the proposal align the FSG outcomes to the priorities of the funding source(s)? • Does the proposal provide a general timeline for applying for future funding? • Does the proposal make productive use, or creative new use, of existing resources? 	25

<p>Budget Template and Justification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the budget reasonable and all items allocable for the proposed project? • Does the proposal provide a sound justification with realistic, sufficient, clear and specific budget information? • Does the proposal address access to essential resources, environment (personnel, space, facilities), and budget to support the desired outcomes? 	<p>20</p>
<p>Clarity/Understandability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the proposal well-structured, persuasive, and effectively communicates the intent of the project? • Does the proposal adhere to grant application guidelines and formatting requirements? 	<p>5</p>
<p>TOTAL POINTS</p>	<p>100</p>

Requirements for Funded Proposals

To ensure successful project execution and continued access to FSG funding at UWG, all awardees must fulfill the following requirements:

- Attend a mandatory training session in the Office of Research and Sponsored Projects (ORSP) before accessing awarded funds.
- All funds must be spent within the allocated period of July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026.
- Submit a brief report within a month of the award period's end (May 31, 2026).
- FSG recipients must submit an external grant proposal(s) exceeding four times the requested amount in direct costs within two years of receiving the award. Failure to do so will affect future FSG eligibility.
- Serve as a reviewer for the subsequent FSG cycle. Exceptions are granted for awardees on leave, who will be expected to fulfill this requirement upon their return.

These requirements ensure responsible use of resources and promote excellence in scholarship at UWG. By fulfilling these commitments, awardees not only enhance their own scholarly trajectory but also strengthen the entire academic ecosystem at the University of West Georgia.