UW ROYALTY RESEARCH FUND (RRF) INFO SESSION

Kara Luckey, PhD
Proposal Development Consultant
kara.luckey@gmail.com

1. February 2024
ROADMAP

- RRF objectives and eligibility
- Review process and review criteria
- Preparing the proposal
- Submitting the proposal
- Decisions
- Insider tips for a successful proposal
THE BASICS

Mission

https://www.washington.edu/research/or/royalty-research-fund-rrf/
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Mission

“...to advance new directions in research, particularly:

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“...to advance new directions in research, particularly:

(1) ...in disciplines for which external funding opportunities are minimal

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and/or (2) for faculty who are junior in rank

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“...to advance new directions in research, particularly:

(1) ...in disciplines for which external funding opportunities are minimal

and/or (2) for faculty who are junior in rank

and/or (3) for in cases where funding may increase applicants’ competitiveness for subsequent funding

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THE BASICS

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• Support grad student/postdoc independent research
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• Support ongoing funded research
THE BASICS

**Not intended to...**

- Support grad student/postdoc *independent* research
- Support *ongoing* funded research
- As *matching* funds for another grant
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- Supplement start-up funds
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• Bridge funding for lapses between external funds (Bridge Funding program services this purpose)
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• Support pedagogical innovations with limited impact
  • Must advance knowledge, connect to body of literature
The Basics

Budget
THE BASICS

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• ~$1 million per cycle (UW royalty and licensing fees)*
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• Up to $40,000
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• 1-year (no-cost extension of up to 1-year may be granted)
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Scholar vs. Standard RRF
- **Standard**: Up to 2 months summer salary total
- **Scholar**: One quarter teaching release
THE BASICS

Eligibility
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• Full- or part-time faculty and professional staff with regular or fixed-term appointments
  • Must have PI status as determined by their Dean
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  • Acting, affiliate, visiting NOT eligible
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• May be PI/co-PI on (1) proposal per round;
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• Past recipients eligible 2 years after formal termination of previous award and receipt of final report
THE BASICS

Deadlines

• Solicited twice a year

• Due by 5pm on:
  • The first Monday in March (Monday, March 4, 2024)
  • The last Monday in September (Monday, Sept 30, 2024)

• Awards announced by June/January
The Basics

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• Awards announced by June/January

• **Begin the process early** – optimally 1-2 months in advance
  • Work with Office of Research!
  • Discuss with Dean/Director **well in advance**, particularly if requesting teaching release
  • Aim for completed proposal (3-5) business days in advance
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Proposal components

https://www.washington.edu/research/or/royalty-research-fund-rrf/rrf-for-applicants/instructions-for-preparing-an-rrf-proposal/#research
THE BASICS

Proposal components

• Cover page

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• Resubmissions: Response to previous reviews (1 page)

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• Other research support (even you have none)

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Proposal components

- Cover page
- Resubmissions: **Response to previous reviews** *(1 page)*
- **Description of proposed research** *(6 pages)*
- **Budget** – completed template and justification *(3 pages)*
- **CV(s)**, for each PI(s) *(2 pages each)*
- **Other research support** *(even you have none)*
- **Suggested Reviewer Memo** *(attached as separate document)*

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THE BASICS

Broad Funding Patterns

• Average tri-campus award rate = 25%  [range = 23-28%]

• Tacoma average (last 10 rounds): 35%
REVIEW PROCESS

Step 1: Proposal assigned to one of 4 review committees

Physical Sciences & Engineering
Basic Biological & Biomedical Sciences
Arts & Humanities
Social & Behavioral Sciences

RRF Program Committee Chair
Professor Patricia A. Kramer, UW Anthropology
REVIEW PROCESS

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- Physical Sciences & Engineering
- Basic Biological & Biomedical Sciences
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**REVIEW PROCESS**

Each staffed with 6-16 UW faculty from relevant disciplines *as of Sept 2023*:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical Sciences &amp; Engineering</th>
<th>Basic Biological &amp; Biomedical Sciences</th>
<th>Arts &amp; Humanities</th>
<th>Social &amp; Behavioral Sciences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chemical Engineering</td>
<td>Biochemistry</td>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemistry</td>
<td>Bioengineering</td>
<td>Studies*</td>
<td>Anthropology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil &amp; Environmental Engineering</td>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>Architecture</td>
<td>Child, Family &amp; Population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering &amp; Mathematics**</td>
<td>Emergency Medicine</td>
<td>Cinema &amp; Media</td>
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<tr>
<td>Environmental &amp; Forest Sciences</td>
<td>Gerontology</td>
<td>Studies</td>
<td>Health Nursing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mechanical Engineering</td>
<td>Global Health</td>
<td>Communication</td>
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<tr>
<td>Physical Sciences**</td>
<td>Immunology</td>
<td>and Media**</td>
<td>Geography</td>
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<tr>
<td>Physics</td>
<td>Laboratory Medicine</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>History</td>
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<td>Statistics</td>
<td>Medicinal Chemistry</td>
<td>Scandinavian</td>
<td>International Studies</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Metabolism, Endocrinology &amp; Nutrition</td>
<td>Studies</td>
<td>Political Science</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Microbiology</td>
<td>Gender, Women &amp;</td>
<td>Special Education</td>
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<td>Pharmacy</td>
<td>Sexuality Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Psychiatry &amp; Behavioral Sciences</td>
<td></td>
<td>Urban Design &amp; Planning</td>
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<td>Speech &amp; Hearing</td>
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*UW Tacoma Member
**UW Bothell Member
REVIEW PROCESS

**Step 2:** Committee identifies one member as “lead reviewer” for each proposal
REVIEW PROCESS

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• Assigned based on self-selection, expertise/discipline

• Conflicts of interest avoided

• Important figure – can champion, mediate outlier reviewers

• Likely to come from different field, lens – plan accordingly
PREPARING THE PROPOSAL

RRF Website: Past RRF Committee Members

Arts and Humanities
- Olivia N. Gunn
  Scandinavian Studies
- Susan Harewood
  Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences – Bothell
- Louisa M. Iarocci
  Architecture / Gender, Women, and Sexuality Studies
- Danica Miller
  American Indian Studies / Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences – Tacoma
- Suhanthie Motha
  English
- LeiLani Nishime
  Communication / Cinema and Media Studies / Gender, Women, and Sexuality Studies

Social and Behavioral Sciences
- Kathleen Artman Meeker
  Special Education
- Radhika Govindrajah
  Anthropology / International Studies

https://www.washington.edu/research/or/royalty-research-fund-rrf/rrf-committee-members/
Step 3: Lead committee member/reviewer recruits (2) additional UW reviewers
**REVIEW PROCESS**

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- PI identifies 2-4 possible **UW faculty** reviewers
  - At least 1 of these probably used – **think strategically!**
**REVIEW PROCESS**

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- Lead reviewer/committee works to identify other reviewers – **may (not) come from your field**
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- Resubmissions **may (not) go to original reviewers**
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- A second committee member reviews, but does not score (serves as a ‘tie breaker’)
**REVIEW PROCESS**

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- Reviewers remain anonymous (PI does not)
Step 4: Proposals ranked quantitatively by average score
REVIEW PROCESS

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Step 5: Top scored proposals (and possibly a few others) discussed in committee
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Step 6: Committee selects proposals and allocates awards
REVIEW CRITERIA

Primary Criterion: Merit

• Scored on (4) criteria – scale of 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent)
  
  • #1: “Research performance competence”
  • #2: “Intrinsic merit of the research”
  • #3: “Utility or relevance of the research”
  • #4: “Effect of the research on the university infrastructure”
REVIEW CRITERIA

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  • #1: “Research performance competence”
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  • #4: “Effect of the research on the university infrastructure”

• Budget not considered as part of the review
REVIEW CRITERIA

#1: Research performance competence
REVIEW CRITERIA

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• “Capability” of investigator(s)

• “Technical soundness” of the approach

• Adequacy of institutional resources available
REVIEW CRITERIA

#2: Intrinsic merit of the research
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- Likelihood that the research will lead to new discoveries or fundamental advances in the field(s)
# REVIEW CRITERIA

#2: Intrinsic merit of the research

- Likelihood that the research will lead to new discoveries or **fundamental advances** in the field(s)
- Potential for substantial **impact on progress** in that field
#3: Utility or relevance of the research

- Likelihood that the research will contribute to achieving a goal that is extrinsic or in addition to that of the field
  - e.g. supporting new technology or solutions to societal problems, enhance teaching
#3: Utility or relevance of the research

- Likelihood that the research will contribute to achieving a **goal that is extrinsic or in addition to** that of the field
  - e.g. supporting new technology or solutions to societal problems, enhance teaching

- Potential for **broader impacts** such as:
  - Increasing diversity and inclusion in the field
  - Supporting and mentoring BIPOC students, post-docs, and/or early career colleagues
  - Conducting research that benefits underrepresented or underserved communities
REVIEW CRITERIA

#4: Effect of the research on university infrastructure
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- Potential to improve the quality, distribution, or effectiveness of university’s research and education activities
- Somewhat secondary: Not intended to ‘make or break’ a proposal
REVIEW CRITERIA

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  Rank
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- Among comparable proposals, preference for junior faculty
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  c) “...originates in disciplines with minimal funding opportunities”
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Availability/timeliness for obtaining future funding
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- Other research support (even you have none)

- Suggested Reviewer Memo (attached as separate document)

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PREPARING THE PROPOSAL

Description of proposed research (6 pages)

A. Introduction and Rationale
B. Broader Impacts
C. Objectives
D. Procedure
E. Time Schedule
F. Need for RRF

Section headings MUST appear exactly as above, in order; Do not include any other heading

https://www.washington.edu/research/or/royalty-research-fund-rrf/rrf-for-applicants/instructions-for-preparing-an-rrf-proposal/#research
PREPARING THE PROPOSAL

Conceptualizing your project
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• Scope: 1-year
Conceptualizing your project

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- Discrete project...
  - ...but clearly connected to long-term research agenda
PREPARING THE PROPOSAL

Conceptualizing your project

• Scope: 1-year

• Discrete project...
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• Focused on increasing competitiveness for future funding
  • ...and/or your development as a scholar
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PREPARING THE PROPOSAL

Think of the proposal’s narrative arc...

exposition
complication
climax
resolution
denouement
A. Introduction/Rationale:

- Describe the **fundamental “problem”**
- Theoretical **background/justification**
- **Significance** & Potential **impact**
A. Introduction/Rationale:

- Critical literature review
- Preliminary work, if any, including publications
- Identify a critical gap in knowledge / practice
B. Broader Impacts

How does the project demonstrate engagement with broader impacts such as:

- Activities aimed at increasing diversity and inclusion in the field
- Supporting and/or mentoring BIPOC members of UW community – students, post-docs, and/or early career colleagues
- Benefitting underrepresented and/or underserved communities
Objectives:

- How do you propose to address The Critical Gap and achieve Broader Impacts?
- What objectives will the project accomplish towards that end?
- Specific, measurable aims
Procedure:

- What is your plan for achieving the objectives?
- What methods/tools will be used?
- What capacities do you have to successfully execute?
- If access to a particular location/lab is required, indicate whether permission is secured
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- What is your **plan** for achieving the objectives?
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**Time Schedule:**

- How will proposed work be **completed within 1-year**?
- Consider including a table outlining key milestones
Need for RRF:

• How will the award *advance your overall research agenda* and career trajectory?
• How will award *increase competitiveness* for subsequent funding?
• Briefly: *Anticipated contribution* to the field and practice/society
• Document *teaching load* (if requesting release, i.e. submitting as “RRF Scholar”)

Need for RRF:

If senior faculty – Describe **in detail** how the project meets at least one of the following criteria:

a) **Supports a genuinely new direction** in your research and/or career

b) **Constitutes a unique, time-sensitive opportunity**, e.g. generating preliminary findings for infrequently-offered external funding, time-critical/time-limited work

c) **Originates in a discipline for which external funding opportunities are minimal**
PREPARING THE PROPOSAL

Your target audience:
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- Scientifically-literate, but **likely NOT specialist** in your field
  → “major features should be accessible to non-specialists”
  → Ask non-specialist colleagues to review
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  → Be explicit and clear – connect the dots for them
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  → Past committee members listed on RRF website
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• Request awarded proposals to **understand “sweet spot”**
PREPARING THE PROPOSAL

RRF Website: Past RRF Awardees

January 2024 Awardees

- Abbasabadi, Narjes (Architecture)
  A195099
  CityEnerTwin: A Digital Twin Platform for Urban Building Energy Modeling to Support Decarbonization of the Built Environment – A Case Study of the University of Washington Campus
  $39,722

- Bender Ignacio, Rachel (Medicine – Allergy and Infectious Diseases)
  Co-PI Eastment, McKenna (Medicine – Allergy and Infectious Diseases)
  A195312
  Determinants, barriers, and facilitators to address completeness of cancer staging in Population Based Cancer Registries in low- and middle-income countries
  $40,000

- Brown, Crystal (Medicine – Pulmonary, Critical Care, and Sleep Medicine)
  A195334
  Supporting medical learners in discussing concerns about racism in healthcare settings
  $40,000

- Cansunar, Asli (Political Science)
  A195259
  Creating National Economies in the Age of Nation-Building

https://www.washington.edu/research/or/royalty-research-fund-rrf
BUDGET

Budget

• Up to $40,000

• Budget reductions sometimes occur
  • Request only what you *really* need
Allowable budget categories

- Faculty salary
  - 2 months summer ("standard") or release costs for 1 quarter ("scholar")
  - Summer salary and teaching release rare – justify, identify priority
  - Faculty salary may only be requested for PI/co-PI(s)
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• Research assistants
  • Grad students / Undergrads
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• Research assistants
  • Grad students / Undergrads

• Other staff
  • Technicians/Professional Staff: 2 months (if co-PI), by justification if not PI
  • Contractors/Consultants/Collaborators
Allowable budget categories

- **Faculty salary**
  - 2 months summer ("standard") or release costs for 1 quarter ("scholar")
  - Summer salary and teaching release rare – justify, identify priority
  - Faculty salary may only be requested for PI/co-PI(s)

- **Research assistants**
  - Grad students / Undergrads

- **Other staff**
  - Technicians/Professional Staff: 2 months (if co-PI), by justification if not PI
  - Contractors/Consultants/Collaborators

- **Travel (non-conference), supplies/materials, equipment**
Allowable budget categories

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• Travel (non-conference), supplies/materials, equipment

• Retirement and Benefits

• Student aid/tuition, if applicable – Discuss with Lisa
SUBMITTING THE PROPOSAL

Process
SUBMITTING THE PROPOSAL

Process

1) eGC1 created in SAGE [Systems to Administer Grants Electronically]
SUBMITTING THE PROPOSAL

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2) Proposal documents attached to eGC1 as single PDF
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3) Suggested Reviewers Memo attached separately in the Documents to be Submitted to Sponsor section
SUBMITTING THE PROPOSAL

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2) Proposal documents attached to eGC1 as single PDF

3) Suggested Reviewers Memo attached separately in the Documents to be Submitted to Sponsor section

4) **Approvals via SAGE:** Dean/Director → Finance/Administration and UWT Office of Research → Seattle
   - Plan time for approvals!
   - Discuss teaching release with Dean/Director well in advance
SUBMITTING THE PROPOSAL

Identify appropriate “Research Area” in SAGE
SUBMITTING THE PROPOSAL

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SAGE

Additional Information for RRF Application

Research Area

Choose One
- Physical Sciences & Engineering
- Basic Biological & Biomedical Sciences

Application for RRF Scholar?
(one quarter teaching release)

Art of Humanities
Social or Behavioral Sciences
Physical Sciences
Engineering
Basic Biological or Biomedical Sciences
Clinical Biomedical Science

Continue

Arts & Humanities
Social & Behavioral Sciences
Physical Sciences & Engineering
Basic Biological & Biomedical Sciences
SUBMITTING THE PROPOSAL

Identify appropriate “Research Area” in SAGE

Be strategic! Use past committee member list as guide
SUBMITTING THE PROPOSAL

Suggested Reviewer Memo
SUBMITTING THE PROPOSAL

Suggested Reviewer Memo

• Identify 2 to 4 UW faculty (any campus) who can provide a “thorough and objective review”
  • Cannot have written or taught with in past 5 years
  • Cannot be applying to RRF in the same round
  • Can be from your own department(s) as long as above two criteria met
• Include contact details (phone / email)
SUBMITTING THE PROPOSAL

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• Consider carefully: At least 1 (maybe 2) will likely review
  • Particularly important if working in a ‘niche’ field
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  • Particularly important if working in a ‘niche’ field

• Also identify UW faculty who should not review the proposal due to a conflict of interest (e.g. supervisors, previous collaborators)
DECISIONS

Decision letter

• Roughly equal chance of getting funded across committees
Decision letter

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• Scores not released, but decisions letters offer clue:
  • “...competitive...”
    \[\rightarrow\text{In top 25-30\% of unfunded proposals}\]
  • “...would probably require significant revisions”
    \[\rightarrow\text{Not in top 25-30\%}\]
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  • “...competitive...”
    → In top 25-30% of unfunded proposals
  • “…would probably require significant revisions”
    → Not in top 25-30%

• Regardless, resubmit!
  • 60% of successful UWT proposals were resubmissions
INSIDER TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL PROPOSAL
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1) How is what you are proposing different than what you have done before?

  • Clearly distinguish between past and proposed activities
  • How will proposed work build on previous work
  • What outcome will RRF be able to point to as a result of the funding?
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2) Be realistic about your scope with well-thought out plan of action
   - Overly ambitious scope reads as though you don’t know what you’re doing
   - Demonstrating that you can do that you have thought through details signals to reviewers that you are able to execute
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3) Be explicit about how you will achieve your objectives
   - RRF does not fund things that say “trust me”
   - Don’t be in the “great idea, no idea of how they will do them” group
5) Write *(not adapt)* for RRF, show how RRF will launch *(not maintain)*
INSIDER TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL PROPOSAL

5) Write *(not adapt)* for RRF, show how RRF will launch *(not maintain)*

6) Use language carefully, **demonstrate awareness of positionality**
   • Particularly important with new required statement on broader impacts
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7) Anticipate reviewers could have unexpected contextual knowledge
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8) For resubmissions: Demonstrate responsiveness
   • Committee members get to know proposal and may advocate for it
   • And even if reviewers not the same, institutional memory persists
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9) Select reviewers strategically!
   • Can be difficult to recruit – Make your reviewer’s job as easy as possible
   • Recruit a likely champion, not a detractor
(MORE) TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL PROPOSAL

• When possible, **specific** detail about **future funding / products**
  • Not just “I will apply for NSF funding”... or “I will write a book proposal”
  • ...but a specific program (“NSF Geography”), and timeline (“in Nov 2024”), ‘...book proposal to specific publisher, by specific date
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• Use “Need for RRF” to describe the **career trajectory**
  • How administrative/teaching loads have impacted research (as applicable)
  • Good place to emphasize commitment to undergraduate research and/or community-engaged scholarship (as applicable)
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- Explicit about how the project fits within **long-term research agenda**
  - The RRF is investing in YOU, and your long-term contributions to the UW’s intellectual capital
(MORE) TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL PROPOSAL

Community-engaged/“applied” work – Particularly important to:

- Clearly detail procedures and operationalization so that nothing about plan appears “fuzzy”

- Emphasize theoretical contributions beyond particular site(s)

- Describe how partnerships will set you up for future work/funding
FRAME TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL PROPOSAL

Framing UW Tacoma context:

• Remind reviewers/committee (likely in “Need for RRF”) of:
(MORE) TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL PROPOSAL

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  • Remind reviewers/committee (likely in “Need for RRF”) of:
    • Predominantly undergraduates
(MORE) TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL PROPOSAL

Framing UW Tacoma context:

• Remind reviewers/committee (likely in “Need for RRF”) of:
  • Predominantly undergraduates
  • Diverse student population
    Check for current: https://www.tacoma.uw.edu/home/about-university-washington-tacoma
    • Over 50% of undergrads First to College of First to Degree
    • Over 60% of undergrads are students of color
    • 16% military-affiliated students
    • Anchor for South Sound rural communities
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• Emphasize undergraduate involvement (if applicable)
  • ...but realize that RRF is not intended as undergrad support grant
  • Focus remains on the researcher and their long-term trajectory
WORKING WITH US

The Office of Research is here to help!
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• Proposal development and editing
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- Proposal development and editing
- Budget development
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- Interested in serving on RRF committee? – Talk to us!
  - History of external funding
  - Associate/Full preferred
Thank you! Questions?

Kara Luckey, PhD, Proposal Development Consultant
kluckey@uw.edu

Cheryl Greengrove, PhD, Associate Vice Chancellor for Research
cgreen@uw.edu
PREPARING THE PROPOSAL

RRF Website: Past RRF Committee Members and Awardees
https://www.washington.edu/research/or/royalty-research-fund-rrf

Proposals must demonstrate a high probability of generating important new creative activities or scholarly understandings, new scholarly materials or resources, significant data or information, or essential instrumentation resources that are likely to significantly advance the reputation of the university, lead to external funding, or lead to developing a new technology. (Note: RRF proposals must support faculty development; this fund is not intended to support independent research projects undertaken by graduate students and/or post-doctorates.)

Over the past three years, the success rate for RRF proposals has ranged from 24% to 28%, with an average of 26%.

History

This program is funded from royalty and licensing fee income generated by the University's technology transfer program. The RRF has been offered twice a year since the Spring of 1992. In 1994, the Royalty Research Fund Scholar program was initiated to provide one quarter of release time for faculty with full teaching loads to engage in concentrated scholarly activities. The RRF welcomes proposals with budgets up to $40,000.
Introduction/Rationale:

Objectives:

Procedure:

Time Schedule:

Need for RRF