UW ROYALTY RESEARCH FUND (RRF)

Kara Luckey
Research Development Consultant
kluckey@uw.edu

UW Tacoma Office of Research
25. January 2018
ROADMAP

1. Mission of RRF
2. Overview of the RRF, review process, and review criteria
3. Matt Kelley, RRF Committee Member
4. Preparing the proposal
5. Submitting the proposal
6. Decisions
THE BASICS

Mission

https://www.washington.edu/research/or/royalty-research-fund-rrf/
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“...to advance new directions in research, particularly:

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(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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THE BASICS

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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

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

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• Support grad student/postdoc independent research
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- Support ongoing funded research
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- Bridge funding for lapses between external funds
  (Bridge Funding program services this purpose)
THE BASICS

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  • Only “exceptional” proposals funded at upper end
  • Request only what you *really* need
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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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  • Does NOT include lecturers, acting, affiliate, visiting
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• **Past recipients** eligible 2 years after end of previous award
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• RRF Scholars:
  • Must teach at least (4) “standard” courses/year
  • Cannot be paid during sabbatical leave
THE BASICS

Broad Funding Patterns

• Average tri-campus award rate: 26%
  (range=24-28%)
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• January 2018 awards:
REVIEW PROCESS

Step 1: Proposal assigned to one of 3 review committees

- Physical Sciences & Engineering
- Basic Biological & Biomedical Sciences
- Arts, Humanities & Social Science

RRF Program Committee Chair
Kate Stovel, UW Sociology
REVIEW PROCESS

Each staffed with 11-16 UW faculty from relevant disciplines:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical Sciences &amp; Engineering</th>
<th>Basic Biological &amp; Biomedical Sciences</th>
<th>Arts, Humanities &amp; Social Science</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chemistry</td>
<td>Microbiology</td>
<td>Sociology</td>
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<td>Engineering</td>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>Asian Languages/Lit</td>
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<td>Physics</td>
<td>Environmental Health</td>
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<td>Oceanography</td>
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REVIEW PROCESS

Step 2: Committee identifies “lead reviewer” for proposals

• Assigned based on self-selection, expertise/discipline

• Conflicts of interest avoided

• A second committee member reviews proposal, but does not score it (serves as a ‘tie breaker’)
REVIEW PROCESS

Step 3: Lead reviewer recruits (2) additional UW reviewers
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  - At least 1 of these used – think carefully about this!
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• Lead reviewer/committee works to identify other reviewers
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- PI identifies 2-4 possible **UW faculty** reviewers
  - At least 1 of these used – **think carefully about this!**
- Lead reviewer/committee works to identify other reviewers
- Reviewer likely NOT experts
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- Lead reviewer/committee works to identify other reviewers

- Reviewer likely NOT experts

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- Reviewers remain anonymous (PI does not)
REVIEW PROCESS

Step 4: Proposals ranked quantitatively by average score
**REVIEW PROCESS**

**Step 4:** Proposals ranked quantitatively by average score

**Step 5:** Top scored proposals discussed in committee

- Proposals in which quantitative score not consistent with qualitative reviews
- Committee discusses/calibrates reviews
- 2\textsuperscript{nd} committee member may provide feedback here
REVIEW PROCESS

Step 4: Proposals ranked quantitatively by average score

Step 5: Top scored proposals discussed in committee
  - Proposals in which quantitative score not consistent with qualitative reviews
  - Committee discusses/calibrates reviews
  - 2nd committee member may provide feedback here

Step 6: Committee selects proposals and allocates awards
REVIEW CRITERIA

Primary Criterion: Merit

- Scored on (4) criteria – scale of 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent)
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REVIEW CRITERIA

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  • #1: “Research performance competence”
  • #2: “Intrinsic merit of the research”
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  • #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**”
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• Budget not considered as part of the review
REVIEW CRITERIA

#1: Research performance competence
# REVIEW CRITERIA

#1: Research performance competence

• “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)
- Potential for substantial impact on progress in that field
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- 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
- Weighted more heavily for basic research
#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
REVIEW CRITERIA

#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

• Weighted more heavily for applied research
  • But – Criterion #2 (Intrinsic Merit) still front-and-center
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#4: Effect of the research on university infrastructure
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#4: Effect of the research on university infrastructure

- Potential to improve the quality, distribution, or effectiveness of university’s research and education activities
REVIEW CRITERIA

Secondary Criteria:
REVIEW CRITERIA

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  Rank
REVIEW CRITERIA

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  a) “...supports a genuinely new direction
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Secondary Criteria:

Rank

• Among comparable proposals, preference for **junior faculty**
• **Senior faculty** funded only when the proposal...
  a) “...supports a genuinely **new direction**
  b) “...provides a unique opportunity to compete for **subsequent one-time/infrequent funding**
  c) “...originates in disciplines with **minimal funding opportunities**”
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Availability/timeliness for obtaining future funding
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- Timing of subsequent funding deadlines
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Availability/timeliness for obtaining future funding

- Timing of subsequent funding deadlines
- Preference for junior in disciplines that compete for federal funding
Matthew Kelley
Associate Professor, Urban Studies

RRF Committee Member:
Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences
PREPARING THE PROPOSAL

Deadlines

• Solicited twice a year

• Due by 5pm on:
  • The first Monday in March (March 5, 2018)
  • The last Monday in September (Sept 24, 2018)

• Awards announced by January/June
PREPARING THE PROPOSAL

Proposal documents

- Cover page
- Resubmissions: Summary of responses to previous reviews (1 page)
- Description of proposed research (6 pages)
- Budget – completed template and justification (3 pages)
- CV for each PI(s) (2 pages each)
- Other research support (even if you have none)
- References (2 pages)
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Description of proposed research *(6 pages)*

- Introduction and Rationale
- Objectives
- Procedure
- Time Schedule
- Need for RRF
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• These sections MUST appear verbatim, in order
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• Objectives
• Procedure
• Time Schedule
• Need for RRF

• These sections MUST appear verbatim, in order
• Do not include anything else
PREPARING THE PROPOSAL

Conceptualizing your project
PREPARING THE PROPOSAL

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• Scope: 1-year
PREPARING THE PROPOSAL

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• Discrete project...
  • ...but clear connection to long-term research agenda
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  • ...but clear connection to long-term research agenda

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

Think of the proposal’s narrative arc...

- Exposition
- Complication
- Climax
- Resolution
- Denouement
Introduction/Rationale:

- Theoretical background/justification
- Significance
- Potential Impact
Introduction/Rationale:

- Critical literature review
- Identify the fundamental “problem”
- Preliminary findings, if any
- Segue to research questions/objectives
Objectives:

- How do you propose to solve the “problem”?
- 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?

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?
  - If junior: how will the award set you up for success?
  - If senior: how will the award support you in pursuing new directions?
- How will award increase competitiveness for subsequent funding?
- Briefly: Anticipated contribution to the field and practice/society
- Document teaching load (if requesting release)
“The Foolproof Research Proposal Template”

LARGE GENERAL TOPIC OF WIDE INTEREST
(Global Warming, Immigration, Cancer, Etc.)

Brief Ref. to Literature I  Brief Ref. to Literature II

“HOWEVER, scholars in these fields have not yet adequately addressed XXX...”

GAP IN KNOWLEDGE
1. Urgency: This gap is bad!!!
2. HERO Narrative: I will fill this gap!!!

YOUR RESEARCH QUESTION
“I am applying to XXX to support my research on XXX”

SPECIFICS OF YOUR PROJECT
(background info, location, history, context, limitations, etc.)

LITERATURE REVIEW (Multi-page, thorough, accurate, relevant)

METHODOLOGY (Discipline specific)

TIMELINE (Month by month plan)

BUDGET (Realistic and legitimate expenses)

STRONG CONCLUSION!!!
(“I expect this research to contribute to debates on xxxxxx”)

Source: https://theprofessorisin.com/2011/07/05/dr-karens-foolproof-grant-template/
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

Past RRF Committee Members and Awardees on RRF website:

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 postdoctorates.)

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.

RRF FOR Awardees

- List of Past RRF Awardees
- Guidelines for RRF Grants
- Scholar Replacement Salary Budget Instructions
- Sample Scholar Replacement Salary Budget and Workday Implementation Instructions

RRF FOR COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- Committee Member Lists
- Application Review Process (*restricted)
TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL PROPOSAL

Per the RRF office, most important to...
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Per the RRF office, most important to...

• Emphasize **significance**
  • Particularly important in “niche” fields with limited reviewer expertise
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Per the RRF office, most important to...

• Emphasize **significance**
  • Particularly important in “niche” fields with limited reviewer expertise

• Well thought-out and clearly communicated **plan of action**
  • Demonstrate that you have thought through details and are able to execute
  • Aims are specific and measurable
  • Careful with scope: 1 year
TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL PROPOSAL

(More) from the RRF office:
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• Very clear operationalization of key concepts/variables
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  • What you have found → How proposed work will build on preliminary work
  • Aims should NOT incorporate completed work
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• Specific detail about future funding opportunities
  • Not just “I will apply for NSF funding”...
  • ...but a specific program (“Geography”), solicitation (“CAREER grant”) and timeline (“in August 2019”).
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• Explicit about how the project fits within long-term research agenda
TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL PROPOSAL

Framing applied, engaged work:
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• RRF committee “enthusiastic” about community-engaged element...
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• RRF committee “enthusiastic” about community-engaged element...
  • ...but cautious about it as “front-and-center”
  • Particularly careful with “direct service” and/or ongoing programs
TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL PROPOSAL

Framing applied, engaged work:

• RRF committee “enthusiastic” about community-engaged element...
  • ...but cautious about it as “front-and-center”
  • Particularly careful with “direct service” and/or ongoing programs

• Very important to emphasize...
  • Clarity of procedures and operationalization
  • Theoretical contributions beyond particular site(s)
  • How partnerships will set you up for future work/funding
TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL PROPOSAL

Framing UW Tacoma context:

• Committee seems to understand we differ from Seattle...
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• Committee seems to understand we differ from Seattle...
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  • Predominantly undergraduates
  • Diverse student population
    • Over half transfer students
    • Less than 45% Caucasian
    • 20% enrolled through military benefits
    • Anchor for South Sound urban/rural communities
TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL PROPOSAL

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  • Heavy teaching load
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  • Diverse student population
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    • Less than 45% Caucasian
    • 20% enrolled through military benefits
    • Anchor for South Sound urban/rural communities
  • Heavy teaching load
  • Culture of interdisciplinarity and common difficulties getting ID funding
Tips for a Successful Proposal

Framing UW Tacoma context:

• Committee seems to understand we differ from Seattle...
• ...but doesn’t hurt to subtly remind them of our context:
  • Predominantly undergraduates
  • Diverse student population
    • Over half transfer students
    • Less than 45% Caucasian
    • 20% enrolled through military benefits
    • Anchor for South Sound urban/rural communities
  • Heavy teaching load
  • Culture of interdisciplinarity and common difficulties getting ID funding
• Very supportive of undergraduate involvement
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    • *Anchor for South Sound urban/rural communities*
  • Heavy teaching load
  • Culture of interdisciplinarity and common difficulties getting ID funding

• Very supportive of undergraduate involvement
  • ...but RRF is not intended as undergrad support grant
  • Focus remains on the researcher trajectory
BUDGET

Allowable budget categories
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- Faculty salary:
  - 2 months summer (standard) OR release costs for 1 quarter (scholar)
  - Summer salary and teaching release rare – justify, identify priority
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  • Grad students: Up to 50% level, 9 months – Discuss with Lisa
  • Undergrads: Different mechanisms – Discuss with Lisa
  • Postdocs: With compelling argument
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  • Technicians/Professional Staff: 2 months (if co-PI), by justification if not PI
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• Travel, supplies/materials, equipment

• Retirement and Benefits

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

Components
SUBMITTING THE PROPOSAL

Components

1) eGC1 created in SAGE
SUBMITTING THE PROPOSAL

Components

1) eGC1 created in SAGE

2) Proposal documents attached to eGC1 as single PDF
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3) Approvals via SAGE: Dean/Director → Finance/Administration and AVC of Research → Seattle
   • Plan time for approvals!
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3) Approvals via SAGE: Dean/Director → Finance/Administration and AVC of Research → Seattle
   • Plan time for approvals!

4) Suggested Reviewer memo, by email (1 page, max) – REQUIRED
SUBMITTING THE PROPOSAL

Suggested Reviewer Memo
SUBMITTING THE PROPOSAL

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• 2 to 4 UW faculty
SUBMITTING THE PROPOSAL

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• Recommend Tacoma faculty to greatest extent possible
SUBMITTING THE PROPOSAL

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- Recommend Tacoma faculty to greatest extent possible
- Think carefully about this: At least 1 (maybe 2) will review
  - Particularly important if working in a ‘niche’ field
SUBMITTING THE PROPOSAL

Suggested Reviewer Memo

• 2 to 4 UW faculty

• Recommend Tacoma faculty to greatest extent possible

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

• OR working on a list of recommended reviewers
  • Let us know if you’d like to be one!
SUBMITTING THE PROPOSAL

Identify appropriate “Research Area” in SAGE
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- Physical Sciences & Engineering
- Basic Biological & Biomedical Sciences
- Arts, Humanities & Social Science
SUBMITTING THE PROPOSAL

Identify appropriate “Research Area” in SAGE

May not be your discipline; see past committee list for insight
DECISIONS

Decision letter

• Scores not released, but decisions letters offer clue:
DECISIONS

Decision letter

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  • “...competitive...”
    ➔ In top 25-30% of unfunded proposals
Scores not released, but decisions letters offer clue:

- “...competitive...”
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- “...would probably require significant revisions”
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Award allocations

- Pot divided equally among three committees
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Award allocations

• Pot divided equally among three committees
• Budget reductions more common
  • Specific line items may be specified in letter
  • Or, soft cut across all awards
• Can contest if feel there is no way to complete project
WORKING WITH US

We are here to help!
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• Academic editing
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- Academic editing – different levels

Proofreading – spelling, grammar, word choice

Stylistic (line) editing – syntax (sentence) level

Developmental editing – argument level
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• Peer working group? – Email me/sign-in sheet
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• Interested in serving as reviewer? – Email me
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- Academic editing
- **Budget** development
- Peer *working group*? – Email me/sign-in sheet
- Interested in serving as *reviewer*? – Email me
  - Interested in serving on *RRF committee*?
    - History of external funding
    - Associate/Full
We are here to help!

Kara Luckey, Research Development Consultant
kluckey@uw.edu

Lisa Isozaki, Research Administrator
lisozaki@uw.edu

Turan Kayaoglu, Assoc. Vice Chancellor for Research
turan@uw.edu