

Syracuse University Small Equipment Grant Program 2021 Request for Applications (RFA)

DEADLINE: Friday, June 11, 2021, 5:00 PM

Purpose

Research infrastructure often becomes a limiting factor for routine operations of laboratories and research programs. This is particularly true with relatively small-size equipment because such equipment often is more expensive than is affordable on a research grant, but less expensive than those that can be funded through extramural equipment grant programs. The Small Equipment Grant Program is designed to strengthen research capacity and capability at Syracuse University. Up to \$600,000 per year will be awarded through this mechanism as made possible by the Invest Syracuse Initiative. This document provides guidelines for the Small Equipment Grant Program.

Equipment Eligibility

These awards are intended to bridge the gap between major research equipment as funded through extramural grants (and requests for equipment in individual research project grants) and small items often purchased through faculty research accounts. Requests to purchase significant components for large equipment upgrades are also allowed, as long as the needs are well justified and critical to the function of the equipment. Requests to purchase databases or large datasets required for research are allowed, but such databases/datasets must be thoroughly justified and intended for use by multiple faculty researchers. Use of databases/datasets by multiple researchers should be identified in the application narrative, by the inclusion of Co-PIs, *and as verified by statements from the chair, director, dean or associate dean* of the applicant's school or college in the required letter of commitment.

Small Equipment Grants are intended for acquisition of research equipment only—requests for funding for computers, iPads or other personalized electronics are not allowed. Additionally, no general supplies can be proposed, nor will facilities or ongoing maintenance costs be considered. As necessary, funding for such costs will be the responsibility of the purchasing department and/or school or college, as determined by the chair and associate dean for research of each.

Applicant Eligibility

Full-time faculty of Syracuse University with an expectation for research as part of their formal appointment are eligible to apply as PI or Co-PI. Equipment sharing is strongly encouraged. *Only one application per PI is allowed.* Applicants may serve as Co-PIs on an unlimited number of applications.

Funding

The Small Equipment Grant Program will pay 100% of the first \$25,000 of equipment costs. For equipment costs between \$25,000 to \$50,000, costs will be equally shared between the Grant Program and the department, school or college. This 1:1 cost share for funds between \$25,000 and \$50,000 must

be secured by the applicants with letters of commitment from either the department chair (for departmental funds) or from the dean of the school/college (for school or college funds), or as a combined letter from both the chair and dean.

The minimum amount for an equipment award request is \$5,000. There is no maximum equipment cost; however, the Small Equipment Grant Program is intended to support equipment not obtainable through traditional mid-to-large scale equipment grant programs from extramural funders, so preference will be given to proposals for equipment that fall between \$5,000 to \$100,000. The Small Equipment Grant Program is also not intended to fund the purchase of equipment approved as part of a faculty startup package. The maximum amount of an award from the Office of Research will be \$37,500 for equipment costing \$50,000 or more.

Project Duration

Equipment must be purchased by June 30, 2022. For exceptional cases, the Office of Research retains discretion to grant a one-time only purchase extension period of up to 6 months. Requests for extensions must be made via email to VPR@syr.edu by May 31, 2022, 30 days prior to the end of the project period.

Proposal Contents

Online application form

- 1) Access the application page at <https://syracuse.infoready4.com/#competitionDetail/1841817>
- 2) On the right-hand side, under Application Tools, click “Apply”
- 3) Click the Syracuse University Login button and use your NetID and password to log into the Application Portal
- 4) Complete the **application details screen** (name and email will pre-fill):
 - PI appointment title, tenure status, school/college, department/center/institute, departmental budget administrator name and email
 - Co-PI names, emails, primary appointment title, school/college, department/center/institute
 - Funding request, cost share amount, total equipment budget
 - Unit(s) providing cost share (department, school or college)
 - Proposal title
 - Project abstract of no more than 100 words

Upload Files

- 1) **Proposal Narrative** – Upload a single PDF of the proposal narrative, *up to five pages in length*. The proposal should make a strong case as to why the equipment is needed in the context of the research program. Proposal narratives must be formatted as follows: 11 point or larger font; 1” margins; single-spaced. Required proposal narrative contents include:

- *Description of the PI's research program:* This section should include a description of the research area, major technology or techniques used in the research, long-term research goals, research productivity, funding history, competitiveness of the research program, and the strategic direction of the research program. In case of applications with identified Co-PIs, brief (2-3 sentence) descriptions of the additional research programs of all those who will use the equipment should be included.
- *Need for the proposed equipment:* This section should explain how the equipment (or database/dataset) will enhance the PI's and any Co-PI's research programs and allow the applicant(s) to become more competitive for future extramural funding.
- *Benefit to multiple researchers:* This section should address if and how access will be provided to other researchers (location, scheduling and sharing of equipment). If additional potential users have not been identified as Co-PIs, please include a specific statement indicating if the PI and purchasing department and school or college will allow access of the equipment to multiple researchers, including those outside of the purchasing unit. The benefit to multiple researchers is not an absolute requirement for the Small Equipment Grant program but will be considered as part of the review criteria, as noted below.
- *Budget Justification:* In the budget justification, please detail the total cost of equipment, the requested funding, the cost share to be provided (when relevant) and the source(s) of cost share. Up to \$25,000 in acquisition costs may be requested without an expectation of cost share. If the total cost is greater than \$25,000, a 1:1 cost share is required for the amount above \$25,000. For example, if the proposed equipment will cost \$50,000, the award will equal \$37,500 (\$25,000 + \$25,000 x 50%) and will require a \$12,500 cost share from the department, school or college. To maximize the institutional impact of the Small Equipment Grant Program, applicants are expected to make reasonable efforts to reduce purchasing costs. Evidence of effective negotiations will be reviewed favorably.

- 2) **Equipment Quote** – Include a single PDF of a quote from a vendor for the equipment. No page limit.
- 3) **Curriculum Vitae of PI and Co-PIs** – Provide a single PDF file of all CVs, *up to five pages in length for each CV*, detailing the items below. CVs from any extramural agency format (e.g. NIH, NSF, DOD) may also be used. The CVs should be limited to a presentation of academic and research credentials (do not include meetings attended, seminars given, or personal data), including the following elements:
 - Education history (degrees)
 - Relevant employment history
 - Awards and Honors
 - Brief summary of teaching, scholarship and research expertise
 - Brief summary of investigator's qualifications to work with the proposed equipment
 - Peer-reviewed publications, books, patent, juried exhibitions, performances, competitions, and other scholarly and creative research output.
- 4) **Letter of Commitment** – Include a letter of commitment, up to two pages in length, from the purchasing unit (department, center or institute, school or college) and signed by the chair, director or dean. If the proposal includes cost share, please also state which unit(s) will be providing the cost share, including amounts, and provide additional signatures from all heads (chair, director or dean) providing cost share, if different from the purchasing unit.

For proposals requesting funding for databases or large datasets, the letter of commitment must also include a statement attesting to the intent for use by multiple researchers by the chair, director, associate dean for research or the dean of the applicant's school or college.

Proposal Submission

- **DEADLINE: Friday, June 11, 2021, 5:00 p.m.** Early submission is highly encouraged.
- Submit electronically at <https://syracuse.infoready4.com/#competitionDetail/1841817>
- An email acknowledgment of receipt will be sent once the application is received.
- For the 2021 Small Equipment Grant Program, routing approvals *are not required*. The letter of commitment as signed by the purchasing unit and heads of cost-share contributing units will indicate administrative approvals. College budget directors will receive lists of all applications submitted from their units after the proposals are compiled and reviewed for compliance.

Review and Evaluation

Proposals will be evaluated by a review panel to be selected by the Office of Research, composed of associate deans for research and select faculty. Each reviewer will be asked to score the proposal based on the following criteria:

- The merit of the research program and qualifications of the researcher(s) (40%)
- The need for the equipment (40%)
- Potential benefit to multiple users (20%)

Applicants should keep in mind that members of the review panel represent a variety of disciplines from across the university. Therefore, applicants must write their proposals without excessive jargon and in a style that is clear to reviewers who are not experts in the specified area.

Award Announcement and Requirements for Release of Funds

Awards are anticipated to be in early July 2021. Awards announcements will be sent to the PI and copied to their chair or director, associate dean for research, dean and their college and departmental budget administrators. For applications with multiple PIs, the announcement will be made only to the lead PI.

To request reimbursement purchasing departments must submit a general ledger report to the Office of Research with the actual expenditure shown. The purchasing department will be reimbursed by the Office of Research for the amount stated in the award letter, unless the purchasing price is less than proposed, in which case the award amount will be adjusted appropriately. Specific request details will be contained in award letters.

Questions

For questions about your Small Equipment Grant proposal, please contact Christina Leigh Docteur cdocteur@syr.edu. For questions regarding use of the Syracuse University Application Portal, please contact Jeff Falchi jtfalchi@syr.edu.