

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
JAMES H. ZUMBERGE FACULTY RESEARCH & INNOVATION FUND
ZUMBERGE INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH AWARD



APPLICATION DEADLINE: 5 pm, Monday, January 8, 2018

PURPOSE

The primary purpose of the Zumberge Individual Research Award program is to help our junior colleagues and new faculty launch their scholarly research careers. It does so by providing grants that assist faculty in developing sustained research programs or serve as a stepping stone to external funding agencies for faculty who do not already have significant sponsored research programs.

The second purpose of the individual awards program is to support faculty who work in fields where external funding opportunities are limited. These awards support faculty in undertaking research that would not otherwise be carried out due to a lack of non-USC grant sources in the investigator's area of scholarship.

To achieve these goals, the Zumberge Individual Research Award provides up to **\$30,000** in research support. The award includes a second component: Assistant Professors may, at their option, add a formal mentoring element to their project. Senior faculty who serve as research mentors and carry out a set of activities in support of the awardee's project, outlined in the proposal, will receive **\$2,000** in funding for their own research accounts.

Funding provided under this solicitation will not be available until **July, 2018**.

ELIGIBILITY

There are two types of Zumberge Individual Research awards. Applicants may designate their proposal under either category for which it fits the criteria, or under both categories, if eligible to do so.

Category One: *Assistant Professors or New Faculty.* To be eligible, faculty must be of the rank of Assistant Professor of any type (excluding visiting faculty) where research is a job expectation or a new faculty member of any rank or type (excluding visiting faculty), where research is a job expectation.

Category Two: *Limited External Funding Opportunities.* Faculty of any rank may apply (excluding visiting faculty), where research is a job expectation. To be eligible, faculty must clearly demonstrate that the proposed research is in areas where sponsored research from extramural government and philanthropic sources are minimal or do not exist.

OTHER ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Faculty Rank: Applicants must be permanent, full-time faculty at USC at the start of the award period. Applicants who are not currently permanent faculty, but expect to have a permanent appointment at the start of the award period, should include a brief letter from their department chair or dean indicating the pending appointment. Research faculty are eligible. Tenure track and non-tenure track faculty, with a research profile, are eligible. Individuals who are visiting faculty **are not** eligible to apply.

Current Research Support Limits: Faculty who already have a significant funded research program **are not** eligible. Faculty who have received significant internal support – in the form of faculty research start-up packages, ongoing laboratory support, or other research awards – or have secured major external sponsorship **do not** qualify for the Zumberge Individual Award competition.

Specifically, faculty who **currently** hold start-up, research or gift accounts with a **combined total in excess of \$150,000 in unexpended funds at time of application** are ineligible to apply for funding. Non-tenured (research) faculty who have secured externally-funded grants to cover their salary **are** eligible to apply.

Among eligible faculty, prior funding and potential for future external funding is an important consideration in making awards, with priority given to awards that make an appreciable difference in faculty research potential.

Previous Provost's Research Grant Award Recipient. Faculty who have previously received a Rose Hills Award, a SC-CTSI Pilot Award or a Zumberge Individual Research Award **are not** eligible to apply.

TOPICS ELIGIBLE FOR FUNDING

The program will not fund the same work that is being funded under other Provost programs.

The Zumberge Individual Research Award gives priority to supporting research in the Social and Behavioral Sciences, Humanities and Arts. Topics eligible for funding from the [Southern California Clinical and Translational Science Institute](#) (e.g., clinical research projects) or the [Ming Hsieh Institute](#) (e.g., nano-medicine or immunotherapy for cancer) are not eligible for Zumberge Individual Awards. **Applications proposing such topics will be rejected without review.**

FACULTY MENTOR CRITERIA AND ACTIVITIES

Applicants under Category One are encouraged to include a faculty research mentoring component in their proposal. A well-considered and substantive research mentoring plan that promises to strengthen the applicant's project will be considered in the evaluation of the proposal by the Zumberge Fund. Any full-time USC faculty member at the rank of Associate Professor or above of any type may serve as a mentor. Faculty mentors may support the applicant's research through activities including:

- Identifying prior and current scholarship and research related to the project;
- Assistance in preparing the research design and executing the research activities;
- Arranging forums for the presentation, dissemination, and/or critique of the applicant's research;
- Identifying potential publication sources and assisting in the preparation and submission of articles and manuscripts;
- Establishing linkages between applicant and other investigators at USC and at other institutions who are conducting research on the same or similar topics;
- Identifying potential funding sources and assisting in the preparation of grant proposals to external funding agencies.

TYPES OF ASSISTANCE

- Research materials, small equipment and supplies that are necessary to carry out the proposed research, including computers, software, texts, digital records and data, lab materials, arts supplies, cameras, and recording devices, etc.;
- Research expenses related to data acquisition, such as the use of core or shared resource facilities;
- Salary support for post-docs, graduate student RAs and other student wages;
- Travel funds related to the proposal, including conferences and registration, and foreign travel, to complete research that promises to lead to publication, performance, or exhibition;
- Collection and purchase of archival materials and subscriptions to databases;
- Assistance with publication, including manuscript preparation and permission fees, where grants will not cover page and plate charges;
- Salary for applicant (during the summer, up to \$5,000), plus fringe benefits.

GRANT CONDITIONS

- The Zumberge Individual Research Award *is not* intended to supplement currently funded efforts or to provide interim bridge funding.
- Awardees have discretion in the budgeting and re-budgeting of funds to meet their research needs within the guidelines of the fund and the terms of the proposal. However, funds *may not* be transferred to another project or to other researchers or institutions;
- Permanent equipment required for the conduct of a research project, and purchased with James H. Zumberge funds, becomes the property of the University.
- Awards will include fringe benefits, but awards *are not* assessed Facilities & Administration Costs (formerly known as Indirect Costs).
- Recipients have *12 months* from the date funds are received to complete projects. Funds not expended by that time are returned to support other Zumberge grants;
- Recipients must be faculty of USC during the award period.
- Awards *do not* fund student tuition and other student fees (such as health insurance);
- All USC rules, with respect to conflict of interest, human subject research, animal research, etc., apply to projects funded under this program. Funding will not be provided until all pertinent reviews are complete.

Please contact the Office of Research at yprsch@usc.edu should you have additional questions regarding allowable expenses.

RESEARCH PROPOSAL EVALUATIONS

Research proposals submitted to the James H. Zumberge Research & Innovation Fund are evaluated by interdisciplinary faculty panels. Typically, the reviewers will be USC faculty members; however, when the necessary expertise does not reside on campus, external reviewers may be used. The panels advise the Vice President of Research on which proposals merit funding and at what dollar amount. Because of limited resources and intense competition, not all proposals can be funded and some will be funded for less than the requested amount.

In reviewing research grant requests, the faculty panel will consider:

- a) The significance of the proposed scientific research or artistic product;
- b) The originality of the proposed scientific research or artistic product;

- c) Evidence that the project can be completed within the proposed timeline;
- d) The impact of funding on investigator's ability to initiate scholarly research;
- e) The likelihood that the project will lead to external funding (as applicable);
- f) The likelihood that the project will lead to a sustained program of scholarly research (whether externally funded or not);
- g) Appropriateness of budget for proposed research, scholarly activity or artistic production.

NOTIFICATION AND TERM OF AWARD

In the event of a favorable panel recommendation, and approval by the Vice President of Research, applicants will be notified of the amount and conditions of the award by the end of **May, 2018**. Copies of the notification of the award will be sent to department chairs and deans.

Funds will not be available for expenditure before the fiscal year beginning **July 1, 2018**, and will expire as of **June 30, 2019**. Funds that are not expended at the end of a fiscal year will be returned to the Office of the Provost. No-cost extensions *may* be granted, under *exceptional* circumstances and at the discretion of the Office of Research, and must be requested in writing, justifying the need for the extension.

If review committee approval (e.g., IRB) is required for the applicant's project, approval must be received prior to funding.

REPORTING AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF SUPPORT

Awardees are asked to submit a brief report by **September 17, 2019** (including an accounting of expenditures and any external support received). A formal request for a final report will be sent to awardees at the close of the grant period, indicating required information. These reports will be reviewed and portions of the report may be reprinted to build support for the fund among the university community and to make decisions about how best to use the fund to promote productivity in the future.

Any publication or creative endeavor arising from work supported by the fund must acknowledge the **James H. Zumberge Faculty Research and Innovation Fund at the University of Southern California**. Copies of publications should be submitted to the Office of Research. The Office of Research should also be informed of any grant submissions/awards for which Zumberge funds were used.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND PROGRAM CONTACT INFORMATION

Questions about the Zumberge Individual Research Award or the application submission process can be directed to Melody Tang at vprsch@usc.edu or 213-821-8163.

For submission instructions, see Proposal Guidelines.

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GUIDELINES

PROPOSAL GUIDELINES:

Before preparing a proposal, applicants should read closely the program description, including the sections on eligibility and evaluation criteria.

Proposals must be submitted using the Office of Research online application system (see page 7).

Format: Proposal documents should be written using a standard font (e.g., Arial or Times New Roman), **12 point, single-spaced, with one inch margins**. Documents should be uploaded as PDFs. Apart from use in formulas, preferably do not use “symbol” text format (use “alpha” instead of “ α ”).

PROPOSAL COMPONENTS

Cover page information (*to be filled out on-line*)

- a) Principal Investigator (PI) contact information;
- b) Category: *Type 1 or 2*;
- c) Proposal title;
- d) Keywords: provide up to 5 key words that best describe your research interests;
- e) Budget: total requested;
- f) Is USC Committee approval required? (*Please indicate all that apply*);
- g) Mentor contact information (*as applicable*).

Sections to be uploaded: It is requested that applicants follow instructions carefully and **do not** submit additional materials not requested by this RFP. Information that is uploaded beyond what is requested **will not** be included in the proposal package provided to reviewers.

- a) **Abstract: (not to exceed 30 lines of text)** The project abstract is meant to serve as a succinct and accurate description of the proposed work when separated from the application.
- b) **Project Narrative: (not to exceed 5 pages)** Materials for each item below should be uploaded as a single PDF. It is requested that applicants follow instructions carefully and **do not submit** additional materials not requested by this RFP. Information that is uploaded beyond what is requested **will not** be included in the proposal package provided to reviewers.
 - i. **Research Question or Project Objective**
Specify your research question(s), hypotheses, or aims of your project. Describe the project’s design and placement in the literature of the field. Describe the role of a faculty

mentor, if applicable. Proposals should be addressed to a broad audience of reviewers who may not be from the same discipline. It should be clearly explained why the questions, hypotheses or aims of your project are significant and original, as well as the ways in which your project will provide novel and important insights.

ii. *Research Methods*

Describe the research activities to be carried out under the Zumberge Award. State your research design, and explain how it will allow you to address the questions and hypotheses of interest. Explain what obstacles you might encounter and how you might overcome these.

iii. *Expected Results and Impact on Long-Term Research Program*

Describe the expected outcomes and deliverables from your research. Importantly, explain how the project and its findings are part of, or will help lead to, a *sustained research program* that will generate scholarship *beyond the period of the award*.

iv. *Opportunities for Attracting External Funding*

If appropriate, describe how scholarship supported by the Zumberge Individual grant will help to secure subsequent external funding, and include references to specific funding agencies, foundations, or programs. Describe what research steps or outcomes need to be achieved in order to be competitive for these opportunities.

v. *Timeline*

A clear timeline with *specific milestones* for the completion of the work should be included in the application. Work is not required to be completed within one year, although financial support is limited to one year. If work extends beyond one year, there must be a clear deliverable prior to the end of the first year.

- c) **Budget Justification: (not to exceed one page)** Clarify the role of individuals for whom salary support is requested. Justify any request for salary support in terms of the objectives of the project. Explain how travel funds will be used to conduct the research. List major equipment and materials purchases, and describe how they are necessary to carry out the proposed research. No specific format is required so long as the budget and explanation contain the relevant information.
- d) **Current Funding: (up to two pages)** List *all* other sources of internal and external support awarded during the past three years, current or pending, **including start-up funding, both as PI or co-PI**. For each, give the title, period, award amount (if co-PI or collaborator on a grant, indicate amount received), sponsor, and describe the relationship of each to the current proposal. Statements of sources of support will be verified by the Office of Research. ***In cases in which existing funding appears to be similar to the proposed project, take special care to explain the differences. Failure to list sources will be a cause for rejection.***
- e) **Letter(s) of Support:** A Letter of Support is required from your department chair or school dean in support of your proposed research. The letter should indicate support for your use of school resources, facilities or cost-share (as applicable) and should also acknowledge that overdrafts on the researcher's account will be the responsibility of the applicant's School. The letter should also state the research expectation for the applicant. For applicants who are not yet permanent faculty, but expect to have a permanent appointment at the start of the award period, the letter should include a brief statement confirming the pending appointment.
- f) **Mentor Statement: (not to exceed one page)** Faculty mentors must prepare a statement outlining the role they will play and the activities they will undertake on behalf of the applicant (mentors may refer to the activities listed in this application form). The statement should first briefly describe the relationship of the applicant's project to the mentor's own research. It should then

describe specific and concrete actions that the mentor will carry out. Where relevant, the statement should provide an underlying rationale for the mentoring activities (e.g., the mentor's ongoing participation in an interdisciplinary or inter-university scholarly network, or the mentor's previous experience with potential funding sources).

g) **References:** (*not to exceed one page*)

h) **Curriculum vitae:** (*not to exceed 5 pages*) Applicants may use any standardized CV format, or institutional ones (such as the NIH Biosketch, etc.).

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Submit your application proposal utilizing the new Office of Research application submission and reporting portal.

Go to <https://app.wizehive.com/webform/USCgrants> to log in (or create an account for yourself), using your USC email address.

Proposal Deadline: 5 pm, Monday, January 8, 2018

Signatures: By submitting the online application, applicants (and mentors, as applicable) indicate their agreement to comply with the terms and conditions of the Zumberge program as well as all other applicable USC policies.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND PROGRAM CONTACT

For additional information or inquiries about the Zumberge Individual Research Award program or the application submission process, please contact Melody Tang at yprsch@usc.edu or 213-821-8163.