

University of Massachusetts Dartmouth
Internal Multidisciplinary Research Seed Funding Program
for AY 24-25

The Office of Research and Innovation is pleased to announce the AY24-25 Internal Research Seed Funding Program. The goal of this program is to provide seed funding for research projects that have the potential to attract significant external funding. Proposals that involve collaborations across multiple colleges/schools are strongly encouraged. The seed funding is designed to be a one-time award to facilitate faculty research and encourage interdisciplinary collaborations to improve prospects for success in obtaining external funding to support their research.

There are two specific opportunities for faculty.

- Multidisciplinary research (MultiSEED) project funding.
- Course releases for faculty working on significant proposal (CROPS) submissions during Spring 2025 and Fall 2025.

Please note that these two programs have different deadlines and separate applications. Applications that propose developing technologies that could lead to commercialization or establish significant industry collaborations will receive special consideration.

I. Multidisciplinary Investigator Research Project Funding

Request for Proposals (RFP)

To support and promote the growth of multidisciplinary sponsored research activity at UMass Dartmouth, the Office of Research and Innovation invites faculty to submit proposals detailing their ideas. Successful proposals will have:

- a) an innovative disciplinary/multidisciplinary research thrust
- b) a clear and feasible plan for attracting external funding, and
- c) the involvement of faculty researchers from different academic disciplines and/or colleges/schools, where appropriate.
- d) involvement of industry partners will receive special consideration.

Proposal Submission Deadline

Complete proposals must be submitted electronically to the [Research Development Grant Portal \(https://umassd.infoready4.com/\)](https://umassd.infoready4.com/)

The submission deadline is Friday, November 15, 2024, by 5:00 pm.

Eligibility

All UMass Dartmouth tenured and tenure-track faculty are eligible. The intent of this program is to fund *new* research projects proposed by individuals or to encourage new collaborations. Previous seed award recipients are eligible to apply, provided that they are proposing a distinctly new project or working with a new collaborative team, and have secured external grant support since their last award.

Award Amounts

The total budget request may not exceed \$25,000. Please see the additional budget guidelines below.

Obligations of Award Recipients

Each multidisciplinary team will be expected to:

1. Begin research on or around December 15, 2024 and complete the proposed work by December 31, 2025. Faculty should plan carefully to ensure that the proposed activities can be completed by the deadline. **No-cost extensions will not be approved and any funds remaining unspent at the end of the funding period will be returned to the Office of Research and Innovation.**
2. Electronically submit a Research Progress Report to the Office of Research and Innovation by January 31, 2026. PIs will be asked to provide information about grant proposals and publications in scholarly journals, including those submitted, forthcoming, and in progress on an annual basis for 2 additional years.
3. Make an oral presentation along with other teams in the Spring semester 2026.
4. Acknowledge the support of the Office Research and Innovation when submitting articles for publication as a result of this award. The following statement can be used: *“This research was supported by the Seed Funding program from the Office of Research and Innovation at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, USA.”*
5. Consult with the Chief Research Officer prior to discussing any potential intellectual property arrangements with a company and/or outside entity.

Proposal Format

- 1) **Cover Sheet:** [ORA Proposal Routing Form](#)
- 2) **Abstract: one paragraph**
- 3) **Narrative:** Not to exceed 5 pages and must include the following:
 - a) Problem Statement
 - b) Project Goals and Objectives
 - c) Project Design and Methodology
 - d) Innovativeness and Potential Impact
 - e) Research Team: In the case of multidisciplinary projects, describe how the project will bring together investigators from multiple disciplines, colleges, departments, and/or centers, any additional resources (internal or external) that are available to leverage the requested funding, and clearly identify whether the proposed team is a new group of collaborators or if some (or all) of the members have worked together before.
 - f) Future Funding Sources: Clearly state how the project will help attract new or additional research funding. List the target funding agencies and/or programs and the rationale for choosing these funding mechanisms for the proposed project. Demonstrate that the programs have been thoroughly researched and are good fit for the proposed project. Discussion with relevant agency/program personnel prior to submission is encouraged and any such interactions should be noted in the proposal narrative. Include a justification of why it is appropriate to apply for intramural seed funding rather than to apply directly for extramural support from the target agency/external funding source. Applications that propose developing technologies that could lead to commercialization or establish significant industry collaborations should provide relevant details.
 - g) Research Timeline
 - h) Budget (Tentative budget not to exceed \$25,000): PIs are encouraged to discuss their budgets with relevant chairs and deans. If the department and/or college is pledging financial or in-kind support, please make the nature of that commitment explicit. The hiring of undergraduate or graduate students is highly encouraged. Stipends for faculty at collaborating

institutions and UMass Dartmouth post-doctoral associates will not be supported. Travel for the PI to meet with program officers at external agencies to discuss funding opportunities will be supported by the [TRIPS](#) program. Travel to conferences/workshops is not.

- i) **Budget Justification:** Provide a clear rationale for all expenses and clearly outline each individual team member's role in the project. Requests for equipment, supplies, and services should be outlined in detail. Requests for items over \$500 must include a quote/estimate from the vendor. Seed Funding Program funds are not intended to support large equipment purchases.
 - j) **Grants:** Include a list of current and pending grants including the agency, amount requested, and the project period. If there are no current or pending grant applications, please make that explicit.
- 4) **Curriculum Vitae:** (*Maximum of two pages, does not count toward page limit*). Include a CV for each PI highlighting work and publications relevant to this proposal.
- 5) **Intellectual Property Agreement:** If the proposed project includes collaboration with any institution other than UMass Dartmouth, the project team must consult with the Chief Research Officer to determine if an intellectual property agreement is required. If so, a copy of this agreement should be included in the proposal if feasible. When required, any intellectual property agreement must be in place prior to beginning the project.

Review Criteria

a)

• **Individual Projects: 20 points**

- Does the PI have demonstrated expertise and history of success in the proposed research area?
- Is the proposed work innovative, current and relevant?

• **Multi-disciplinary and Team Qualifications: 20 points**

- Does the research project entail a new collaboration in the context of the Seed Funding Program?
- Does the proposed project have an innovative multidisciplinary thrust, and does it involve faculty researchers from multiple backgrounds, colleges, or institutions?
- Does the team bring relevant, complementary, and integrated expertise to the project?
- Are the investigators well suited to carry out the work?
- If provided, is the industry collaboration or technology commercialization plan achievable?

b) **Problem Description: 10 points**

- Does the study address an important problem?
- If the project goals are achieved, how will scientific knowledge be advanced?

c) **Innovativeness and Potential Impact: 10 points**

- What will be the effect of the study on the concepts, methods and practical applications that drive this field?
- Are the theories, approaches, etc. novel either within or across fields and disciplines?

d) **Project Design and Methodology: 15 points**

- Are the conceptual framework, design, methods, and analyses adequately developed, well integrated, and appropriate to the goals of the project?

e) **Prospect for Success/Environment: 10 points**

- Does the scientific environment in which the work will be done position the proposed

project for success?

- Does the proposed study benefit from unique features of the academic environment, subject populations or other regional resources?

f) Budget Reasonable: 10 points

- Is the budget reasonable? (5 points)
- Does the proposal leverage additional internal or external matching resources? (5 points)

g) Funding Prospect: 25 points

- What is the likelihood that this study will lead to external funding?
- Is there a feasible plan for attracting new research dollars from extramural sources to continue the work?
- Do the applicants adequately justify why it is appropriate to apply for this intramural seed funding rather than apply directly to the target external agency at this time?

For questions about the RFP and preliminary review before submission, please contact Dr. Jennifer Glass (jglass2@umassd.edu) in the Office of Research and Innovation.

II. Course Release Opportunity for Proposal Submission

The Internal Seed Funding Program offers a limited number of course-release grants for the Spring 2025 and Fall 2025 semesters. These grants are designed to support tenured and tenure-track faculty members pursuing substantial sources of external funding to support research activities. Eligible faculty members may be pursuing either one significant source or multiple smaller sources of external funding. Faculty who have received CROPS awards in the past are eligible to apply provided that they are proposing a distinctly new project or working with a new collaborative team, and have secured external grant support since their last award.

Successful applicants will receive a release from teaching one course during the spring semester. The Office of Research and Innovation will provide up to \$5,000 towards instructional replacement costs. Successful applicants will also receive dedicated proposal development support from the Office of Research and Innovation.

Expected output

The expected output from the course-release opportunity is a grant submitted to an external funding agency with the faculty member in the role of the PI. It is expected that the proposal will be submitted within the semester or shortly after, depending on funding agency due dates. This grant may support work on a first submission or a resubmission of a revised proposal.

Evaluation criteria

A committee composed of both faculty and administrators will consider the following when making the recommendation for a course-release:

Likelihood of completion

The committee will assess the likelihood that the applicant will complete the grant

submission. Criteria will include:

- how the project aligns with the applicant's expertise
- any preliminary results of the project
- the feasibility of the applicant's plan for completing the proposal
- the applicant's record of submitting proposals to external agencies

Likelihood of funding

The committee will assess the degree to which the grant submission is likely to result in a successful outcome. Criteria will include:

- comments from the previous submission (if applicable and available)
- the degree to which the grant submission aligns with the priorities of the funding agency
- agency funding rates
- the dollar amount of the potential grant
- the PI's track record of successfully securing external funding to support research activities.

How to apply

Please submit the following to be considered for a course release grant:

- **Project Title**
- **Abstract**
 - The abstract should describe the project clearly and completely in 500 words or less
- **Project Narrative (no more than 3 pages in length)**
 - The narrative should describe the project in clear language explained in terms a non-expert can understand
 - The narrative should also present a compelling argument identifying the merits of the proposed project, including a clear description of the goals and objectives, the significance of the project, and the importance of external funding for successful project completion
 - In addition, the narrative should clearly identify:
 - the external agency or agencies to which funding proposals will be submitted
 - the timeline for proposal submission
 - the funding agencies' priorities and how the proposed project aligns with those priorities
 - the range of available external funding options
 - proposal acceptance rates for each agency (if available)
- **References**
- **Curriculum Vitae:** (*Maximum of two pages, does not count toward page limit*). Include a CV for each PI that highlights work and publications relevant to this proposal.

- **Statement of support from the applicant's chairperson**
 - This statement should address the impact of the course release on the department's ability to deliver its curriculum and the impact of the grant submission on the applicant's career development.
- Applicant must disclose any other reduction in workload that has been provided for the academic year.

Deadline: Please submit the course release proposal to the Research Development Grant Portal, no later than October 11, 2024 for Spring 2025 course releases. To access the portal, go to <https://umassd.infoready4.com/>.

Please note

No faculty member can be released from all teaching responsibilities during the spring when a course release is awarded. Applications from faculty who already receive contractually mandated course reductions will be considered but will receive a lower priority. Faculty with externally funded course releases must use them prior to applying for this opportunity.