

2026-27

GUR

GENERAL UNIVERSITY
RESEARCH GRANTS



UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE
RESEARCH OFFICE

GUR (2026-2027)

KEY AWARD INFORMATION

Letter of Intent due	November 16, 2026, 5:00 p.m. ET <i>Only applicants who submit an LOI may submit a full proposal</i>
Full Proposal due	December 17, 2026, 5:00 p.m. ET
Award amount	Up to \$15,000 for full project period
Award period	Up to two years
Questions	researchdev@udel.edu

ABOUT GUR

The goal of the **General University Research (GUR)** award program is to provide full-time UD faculty with seed funding towards research, scholarship, and innovative projects that will accelerate progress toward future extramural sponsorship. The program is open to all professorial ranks; however, preference is given to early career faculty. Interdisciplinary projects are especially encouraged.

These merit-based grants are administered by the Vice President for Research, Scholarship, and Innovation (VPRSI), who is advised by the Faculty Senate Research Committee (FSRC). The FSRC evaluates applications and recommends proposals for funding; the VPRSI makes the final award decisions. The FSRC consists of the VPRSI (or a Research Office designee) and eight faculty members, one of whom serves as chair.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

All full-time faculty members are eligible and encouraged to apply for GUR grants. Preference will be given to faculty who have not received awards previously; however, there is no restriction on the number of awards an individual may receive. Applicants who received a GUR grant starting between June 1, 2024 and June 1, 2026 are ineligible to submit this cycle. Review of proposals from prior GUR awardees will include consideration of performance on their past GUR award(s). Applicants who failed to complete previous GUR final reports will not be considered for a GUR award.

PROPOSAL EVALUATION

Each proposal will be reviewed by one FSRC member and one or two UD faculty disciplinary experts. Given the diversity in backgrounds of GUR reviewers, applicants must prepare applications that are understandable by a broad audience. Proposals failing to follow submission guidelines may be returned without review. Last year, the program had a 22% funding rate.

Reviewers will score each proposal on the 1–9 scale described in the GUR Proposal Review Rubric, where **1 is exceptional and 9 is poor** (lower scores indicate stronger proposals). Each of the merit criteria gets its own score, in whole numbers. Reviewers begin each criterion at **5 (Good: strong, with at least one moderate weakness)** and move up or down based on the number and severity of weaknesses identified. Each score should be supported by specific strengths and weaknesses noted in the written critique.

The final score is a weighted average of the criterion scores, using the weights shown in parentheses, reported to one decimal place.

- **Significance of the Problem (15%):** Does the scholarship clearly address an unmet need of high importance, or is the scholarship extraordinarily novel or a creative innovation?
- **Intellectual Merit of Approach/Adequacy of the Plan for Scholarship (20%):** Are the research plans and methods well developed, and are the activities clearly defined? Is there high alignment of the proposed activities with the identified significance of the problem?
- **Student Involvement (10%):** Does the plan for scholarship include actionable steps for student involvement? Is a well-developed training plan included?
- **PI Qualifications (10%):** Is the proposed research aligned with the PI's background, training, and/or previous work? Is it clear how the proposed research will advance the PI's professional career?
- **Justification of Resources (15%):** Is the budget well defined and justified based on the allowable budget items and research plan? Is the timeline clear and reasonable? Information on other resources (outside of the GUR funds) leveraged in support of the proposed research is welcome.
- **Likelihood of Future Sponsorship (20%):** Does the proposal clearly articulate future resource streams that could sustain the effort beyond the grant period?
- **PI Professional Rank (10%):** Assigned by the Research Office, not by reviewers: Tenure-Track Assistant Professor (1); Tenure-Track Associate Professor (3); Tenure-Track Full Professor (5).

PROPOSAL INFORMATION

PROJECT BUDGET

GUR proposals may request up to **\$15,000** in direct costs. Fringe benefits on PI summer salary may not be charged to GUR funds. Proposals without sufficiently detailed budgets or budget justifications may be returned without review. Matching funds from the PI's department or college are not required but may be included.

All proposals must include a letter of support from the PI's direct supervisor confirming support for the PI's effort on the project and for any matching funds.

BUDGETING GUIDELINES

Personnel: PI faculty summer salary is allowable up to \$5,000 or 1/9th salary, whichever is less. Graduate and undergraduate research assistants (RAs) are encouraged and may be paid hourly or by stipend. Faculty academic-year effort and RA stipends may be included as matching funds and must be confirmed in the supervisor's letter of support.

Fringe Benefits: Fringe benefit costs are required for all personnel categories other than PI summer salary.

Direct Research Expenses: Expense categories such as equipment, participant support costs, and other direct research costs are permitted. Domestic travel for proposed scholarship may be supported if it is well justified within the scope of the project.

Unallowable Expenses: Facilities and administrative (F&A) costs, fringe benefits on PI summer salary, graduate tuition, and international travel may not be charged to GUR awards. If a graduate RA receives a stipend from the award, the budget justification must explain how required tuition will be covered.

One-page **Budget Justification** is required. The committee will consider a wide range of budget requests when items are well justified and may award a different amount than requested. See the [GUR Proposal Template](#).

Prepare the proposal budget knowing that Research Office approval is required before moving more than 25% of the total award between budget categories or moving funds into a category not in the approved budget. Unapproved charges will be moved to the PI's departmental account, and the award may be terminated with remaining funds returned to the Research Office. See the GUR Post-Award section for more information.

NOTE: For tax purposes, stipends for principal investigators on GUR grants are fellowships rather than wages and are therefore exempt from FICA, but no fellowship is exempt from Federal and State payroll taxes. It is assumed that a faculty member receiving fellowship funds will not have any qualified educational expenses, and appropriate payroll taxes will be subject to withholding at the time of disbursement.

PROJECT DURATION

GUR grants are awarded for up to two years with **periods of performance commencing June 1**. No-cost extensions may be granted up to two times only when circumstances warrant. No-cost extension instructions are in the GUR Post-Award section.

PROPOSAL COMPONENTS & FORMATTING

Submit the GUR proposal using the [GUR Proposal Template](#). All components should be single-spaced using 11-pt Arial font with one-inch margins.

- A. Executive Summary** (one page): The executive summary has three parts:
 - 1. **Overview:** The scope of the proposed activity.
 - 2. **Significance of the problem:** how the scholarship addresses an unmet need of high importance or is an extraordinarily novel or creative innovation.
 - 3. **Intellectual Merit** of the approach/plan: a concise summary of the plan, methods and activities and how they align with the significance of the problem.
- B. Project Description** (three pages): The Project Description should fully describe the plan for scholarship, with clear, achievable goals, and the significance of the problem. Please write for a reviewer with advanced training in an allied discipline who may not be an expert in your field. Figures and tables may be included. The Project Description must also address:
 - 1. **Student involvement:** the roles the student(s) will play and the research training opportunities the project will provide, appropriate to the project's scope.
 - 2. **PI qualifications and career development:** how the work builds on the PI's background and will strengthen the PI's competitiveness for future extramural funding and other opportunities.
 - 3. **Resources:** how GUR funds and any other resources will be used strategically to support the work.
 - 4. **Future sponsorship:** a clear plan for seeking extramural funding, naming the specific federal agencies, foundations, or other sponsors the PI will target and the timeline for submission.
- C. Timeline** (one-half page): A narrative, chart, or infographic showing a clear, reasonable timeline for the proposed activities, with dates, tasks, milestones, and dependencies as applicable.
- D. References** (two pages maximum)
- E. Budget Justification** (one page maximum)
- F. Biographical Sketch** for the PI and any Co-PIs, using the federal Common Form generated in SciENCv (NSF or NIH version)
- G. Current and Pending (Other) Support** for the PI and any Co-PIs, using the federal Common Form generated in SciENCv (NSF or NIH version)
- H. Letter of Support** from the PI's direct supervisor

Combine the preceding documents (A-H) with the completed proposal template and submit them as a single PDF. Incomplete applications will be returned without review.

PROCEDURES FOR SUBMITTING A GUR PROPOSAL

1. **Letter of Intent (LOI):** to submit a full proposal a LOI must be submitted by the deadline noted above [using this online application](#) form. Letters of Intent include: the PI's full name, department affiliation, and email address; a proposed title; and a short (<250 word) abstract of the proposed work. **Only PIs who submit a LOI may submit a full proposal.**
2. **Full Proposal Instructions:** PIs who submit a LOI will receive instructions for submitting a full proposal.
3. **Proposal Format:** Use the [GUR Proposal Template](#) and submit the complete proposal as a single PDF; include all components listed in the Proposal Components section above. **Deadline:** Submit full proposals through the online application system by 5:00 PM on the deadline above.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

FOR UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE GENERAL UNIVERSITY RESEARCH AWARDS

GUR grants are made with the following understood commitments from the PI.

1. **Employment:** Accepting the award signifies the PI's intent to remain employed at the University for the duration of the award period.
2. **University Policies:** Research conducted under the GUR award is subject to the [University Research, Sponsored Programs, Technology Transfer and Intellectual Property Policies](#) including its patent, copyright and publication provisions.
3. **Regulatory approvals:** Research involving human subjects or private identifiable data must be approved by the [Institutional Review Board \(IRB\)](#), research involving vertebrate animals by the [Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee \(IACUC\)](#), and research involving recombinant DNA or biohazardous materials by the Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC), before any GUR funds are spent. If a required approval is not granted, the award will be withdrawn.
4. **Reviewer Service:** Award recipients are expected to serve as reviewers in future GUR competitions.
5. **Objectives and Final Report:** The University does not direct the details of the research but requires adherence to the project's original objectives. A final report is due to the Research Office within 90 days of the award end date, submitted through the [UD Internal Seed Grant Request form](#).
6. **Acknowledgement:** Publications and other scholarly works directly resulting from a GUR grant must include an acknowledgment that the research was carried out with the support of the University of Delaware General University Research grant program. Each grantee is required to furnish one copy of any resulting papers, books, or other publications to the University Library through the Research Office (researchdev@udel.edu).
7. **Income:** Unless the approved proposal provides otherwise, income derived from the project will be returned to the University, up to the amount of the award. This provision does not override University policies on patents, copyrights, and publications.
8. **Fiscal management.** Manage award funds according to the approved budget and University financial policies, and spend them by the award end date, including any approved no-cost extension. Obtain Research Office approval before moving more than 25% of the total award between budget categories or moving funds into a category not in the approved budget. Unapproved charges will be moved to the PI's departmental account, and the award may be terminated with remaining funds returned to the Research Office. Funds not spent by the award end date revert to the Research Office.

GUR POST AWARD

AWARD SELECTION

General University Research awards are based on eligibility and merit. Proposals are reviewed for eligibility by the Research Office and evaluations of merit and award recommendations are made by the Faculty Senate Research Committee. The Vice President for Research, Scholarship, and Innovation makes the final award decision.

POST AWARD ADMINISTRATION

Each funded proposal will be assigned an award number and a purpose code for expenditures. After the award is made, the PI's post-award grants analyst enters it into PeopleSoft for tracking and reporting (see the Appendix for instructions). Include the award number and purpose code in all correspondence and reports. If an award is funded at a different amount than requested, the PI must submit a revised budget before the purpose code is established.

[Use the D Internal Seed Grant Request form](#) to request rebudgeting or a no-cost extension and to submit the final report.

Rebudgeting: Obtain Research Office approval before moving more than 25% of the total award between budget categories or moving funds into a category not in the approved budget. Unapproved charges will be moved to the PI's departmental account, and the award may be terminated with remaining funds returned to the Research Office. Submit rebudgeting requests through the [UD Internal Seed Grant Request form](#).

No-cost Extensions: Submit NCE requests between 90 and 30 days before the award end date. Each request must state the reason for the extension and its length. Each extension may be up to one year, with no more than two extensions per award.

Final Reports: A final report is due to the Research Office within 90 days after the award end date.

APPENDIX

A. GUR PROPOSAL REVIEW RUBRIC

Reviewers score each of the merit criteria on a 1–9 scale, where **1 is exceptional and 9 is poor** (lower scores are stronger). Every criterion starts at **5 (Good:** strong, but with at least one moderate weakness). Reviewers then move the score up or down based on the number and seriousness of the weaknesses they find:

Score	Rating	Meaning
1–3	High	Exceptional to excellent; no more than minor weaknesses
4–6	Medium	Very good to satisfactory; minor to moderate weaknesses (5 is the starting point)
7–9	Low	Fair to poor; one or more major weaknesses

A **minor** weakness is easily addressed, a **moderate** weakness lessens impact, and a **major** weakness severely limits impact. A proposal earns a score better than 5 only when reviewers find few or no weaknesses. Reviewers must justify each score in their written critique.

	High (1-3)	Medium (4-6)	Low (7-9)
Significance of the Problem (15%)	The scholarship clearly addresses an unmet need of high importance or is an extraordinarily novel or creative innovation.	The scholarship addresses an issue of some importance.	The scholarship does not address an unmet need or there is no evidence of novelty or innovation.
Intellectual Merit of Approach/Adequacy of the Plan for Scholarship (20%)	The plan or methods are well developed, and activities are clearly defined. There is high alignment of the proposed activities with the identified significance of the problem.	The plan or methods are not fully developed, and activities are less clear. There is some alignment of research activities with the significance of the problem.	The plan or methods are not developed, and activities are unclear. There is little to no alignment of scholarly activities with the significance of the problem.
Student Involvement (10%)	The plan of scholarship includes actionable steps for student involvement. A well-developed training plan is included.	The plan of scholarship lacks actionable steps for student involvement. The training plan is not fully developed.	The plan of scholarship does not include actionable steps for student involvement. The training plan is not developed.
PI Qualifications (10%)	The PI is highly qualified in terms of background, training, and/or previous work to carry out the proposed research. It is clear how the proposed research will advance PI's professorial career.	The PI has demonstrated some qualification in terms of background, training, and previous work to carry out the proposed research. It is less clear how the proposed research will advance their professorial career.	There is no sufficient evidence of background, training, and/or previous work to carry out the proposed research. It does not appear to advance their professorial career.
Justification of Resources (15%)	The budget is well-defined and justified based on the allowable budget items and research plan. The timeline provided is clear and reasonable. (15)	The budget lacks some details and/or includes unallowable budget items. The timeline provided is vague and/or unreasonable. (8)	The budget is undeveloped and not justified. No timeline is provided. (1)
Likelihood of Future Sponsorship (20%)	Specific future support mechanisms and/or opportunities are clearly and specifically stated.	Future support mechanisms and/or opportunities are broadly stated.	Future support mechanisms and/or opportunities are not stated.
PI Professional Rank (10%) <i>Assigned by Research Office</i>	PI is Tenure Track Assistant Professor	PI is Tenure Track Associate Professor	PI is Tenure Track Full Professor

B. PROCEDURES FOR FUNDED PROPOSALS

FACULTY PROCEDURES

1. When notified of an award, contact your post-award grants analyst to start a record in PeopleSoft, UD's grants management system.
2. Give the analyst a single PDF of the full proposal as submitted.
3. Work with the analyst to prepare the detailed budget required for PeopleSoft entry, using the [detailed budget template](#) on the Research Office website. If the award amount differs from the request, this budget serves as the revised budget required under Post-Award Administration.

ADMINISTRATOR PROCEDURES

Guidance on entering GUR awards in PeopleSoft is available in the Research Office's [Grants Management Guide](#). For questions, contact your department's assigned Contract and Grant Analyst.

GUR PEOPLESOFT PROPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS

1. Sponsor ID: 0921 – General University Research
2. Purpose: RSCH7 – University Sponsored Research
3. Budget Considerations:
 - Requested amount up to \$15,000 entered as direct costs
 - Applicable cost-share entered from department and/or College (not required)
 - Faculty Summer Salary: Up to \$5,000 for the Principal Investigator budgeted under account code 120800 and budget category PSTDOC so that fringe benefits are not incurred.
 - Graduate student tuition is prohibited.
 - F&A Pricing Setup: F&A costs are not permissible on GUR awards.
 - Choose "Industrial Research On-Campus" for the rate type; overwrite the F&A rate to zero.
 - Pricing Method should be FIXED
4. Under the Attachments tab, upload a single PDF copy of the full proposal submission using the following naming convention: ProposalID_Other
5. Routing of FIN Proposal Approval Summary (PAS) webform should include PI, Department Chair, College Dean and OSP per standard procedures.

FACULTY S-CONTRACT PROCEDURES

If the PI chooses to receive a stipend from their recently awarded grant, the S-Contract that is processed by their department should identify the payment by using account code 120800 and the earnings code PFF. This account code will identify the stipend as a fellowship, which is not subject to FICA taxes, TIAA pension contributions, or university matching of such contributions. In addition, the account will not be charged fringe benefits on the stipend. The comments section of the S-Contract should include the phrase "Stipend Award from GUR". University policy limits a summer payment such as this to \$5,000 or 1/9th of the PI's regular salary, whichever is less.