



University
of Vermont

Water Resources
Institute

Faculty Collaborative Grant-writing Funds

Background:

The Water Resources Institute (WRI) is a newly established entity at UVM, approved by the university's Board of Trustees in May 2024. The institute builds on a long record of success in water research at UVM. The WRI has established four key goals:

1. Enhance the flow of information and ideas by establishing a hub of water research at the nexus of natural and social sciences, human health, design, engineering, and governance.
2. Educate the next generation of problem solvers on water issues and water justice.
3. Coordinate and develop new water-related programs, facilities, and services on campus.
4. Build bridges with external academic, nonprofit, state, federal, and international partners that accelerate the translation of research to practice.

The WRI **Faculty Collaborative Grant-writing Fund** will provide resources to faculty to support their time in pursuing funding opportunities that would build capacity around at least one of the WRI's four key goals. The aim is that this fund will provide resources to support faculty teams on developing and applying for new, large funding initiatives, and build partnerships among UVM colleagues to advance impactful projects related to discovery and water resources management, conservation, and innovation.

Eligibility:

This RFP is open to all faculty members at the University of Vermont who are engaged in or planning to undertake research or advance graduate traineeships related to water resources. Proposals must involve two or more faculty members and identify a federal agency, industry, or foundation funding opportunity of at least \$500,000 in total award that they wish to pursue. Priority will be given to proposals that involve an interdisciplinary team that builds capacity for water resources in one or more of the four key WRI goals listed above.

Funding:

The fund will provide resources to faculty teams in the form of salary support via summer funding or academic year course releases negotiated with a chair or appropriate administrator). Funds may also be used for student or post-doctoral associate support that advances proposal writing or relieves the faculty member of obligations that free up time for grant-writing activity. Salary support requests should include [fringe benefits for FY25](#). Faculty salaries requested as course releases should be budgeted according to the faculty member's unit workload policies and will be directed to the college or school of the faculty member(s) requesting these funds to offset needs for a teaching replacement. The grant awards will not include any indirect expenses. The WRI expects to make 2-3 funding awards in amounts not to exceed \$50,000 per award.

Timeline:

Funding is available to be utilized in Spring and Summer 2025, with the potential for future rounds of funding in AY2025-26 and Summer 2026. Funding announcements will be made by mid-October. Applications to support teams pursuing a grant opportunity with a deadline on or before September 2025 will be prioritized.

Expectations:

Teams must commit to regular meetings, appropriate to the complexity and timeline of the funding opportunity, with staff from the [Research Development Office](#), who will facilitate grant preparation and accommodate faculty teaching schedules. At the conclusion of the award period, the project team will have a reasonably solid draft of the proposal formed.

Proposal Preparation and Submission Instructions:

The following four elements are required for a complete application:

1. **Need** (1 page limit, single-spaced, 1" margins, font size 11 point or larger): Describe the overarching challenge the team seeks to address. What is the intellectual merit of the team's engagement in this area of need? What broader impacts would come from a collaborative research, educational, or outreach initiative addressing this need?
2. **Request narrative** (3-page limit, formatted to match the guidelines in the **Need** section above) with responses to the following:
 - a. **Who are the faculty members of the grant-writing team?** *What areas of expertise do they bring to the effort? What aspects of intellectual, career-stage, identity, or other aspects of diversity do they bring to the proposed project? Do members of the team have experience working together or a commitment to common goals? Do any of the team members have a record of requesting or securing external funding? Please provide a link to the UVM faculty profile page for each team member where reviewers will find a short bio and CV.*
 - b. **What is your target grant opportunity?** *Answers to this question should identify an agency or grant call, award size or limit, duration of awards, due date for submission (or indicate rolling deadlines apply), major elements that will need to be developed for the proposal, and a link to the funding call. Staff with UVM's Research Development team are available to assist faculty in identifying funders and funding calls.*
 - c. **What is your timeframe and time constraints?** *Do you seek support for spring or summer 2025? How will the team work individually and together to advance the grant-writing work collaboratively? Does the team have an identified lead or co-leaders? What blocks of time will you have available for joint work? Note: for summer requests, team members should be available to work individually or together during the month of June, prior to the end of FY25.*
 - d. **What is the potential for impact?** *If your team's grant to an external sponsor were funded, how would it contribute to the reputational strength of UVM in the area of water resources? Are there opportunities associated with a potential award that would position the team and UVM to engage with broader networks or partnerships?*
3. **Proposed Budget and Justification** (not to exceed 2 pages) detailing how you will use funds to advance the work proposed in the narrative above.
4. **Letters or emails of support:** a statement of support from the Department Chair or administrator responsible for workload negotiations for each member of the team, indicating support for the proposed effort.

Proposals shall be submitted through [InfoReady](#) by 11:59PM EDT on Sunday, September 29th, 2024. A second competition may be run in the late fall for Summer 2025 funds.

Review Criteria:

Proposals will be reviewed by: WRI staff, members of the Research Development team, and the Associate VP for Research, using the following criteria:

- **Relevance and Significance:** Alignment with the goals of the WRI and potential to leverage UVM expertise in water resources.
- **Quality of the Proposal Plan:** Identified funding target; clarity and feasibility of the roles and timeline to developing the grant proposal.
- **Budget Justification:** Appropriateness of the proposed budget to support engagement in a collaborative grant-writing effort.
- **Experience and potential:** Qualifications and track record of members of the team; potential to advance new and diverse research teams; alignment of the grant-writing support request with the identified funding source(s). Note: for evaluators to assess, faculty members should ensure their faculty profile pages are up to date with a narrative bio and CV.
- **Support:** evidence that members of the team have the support of their unit administrator responsible for workload negotiations.

Acknowledgements:

PIs and Co-PIs supported under this initiative agree to provide annual updates to the WRI on grant seeking activities and research outcomes for up to three years following the end of the funding provided through this initiative. Faculty members receiving support also acknowledge their responsibility in updating workload forms (including workload form B for summer salary support) in their units, in negotiation with their Chair and Dean's office. Awardees supported by this first-year initiative may be asked to serve as reviewers on future funding cycles for similar awards.

Questions:

Questions about this funding opportunity may be directed to the WRI Faculty Director Dr. Beverley Wemple: Beverley.Wemple@uvm.edu or Joshua Beneš, WRI Associate Director of Research Facilities and Networks Joshua.Benes@uvm.edu or 802-656-7716.

Interested applicants are invited to attend an **informational session** on **Friday, September 13** from 3:30-4:30pm on MS Teams (join the meeting [here](#) or request the meeting link from Joshua Beneš at the address above). This session will be recorded and made available by request the week of September 16.