WeR1: Program for Enhancing Research Capacity (PERC) Spring 2022

Overview

The Office of the Vice President for Research (OVPR), in collaboration with Academic Affairs and ADVANCE at UNM, will be launching the second round of the Program for Enhancing Research Capacity (PERC) in Spring 2022. PERC supports acquisition of shared instrumentation or enhancement of shared facilities that enable major endeavors to advance discovery, creativity and innovation across campus. This program seeks to add or augment research capacity through the acquisition or upgrading of instrumentation for use by multiple investigators. Thus, the proposed equipment must be housed within a space accessible to more than one PI/lab group and must have multiple committed users either within a single department/college, or preferably from multiple departments and colleges. Up to $400,000 will be invested in each funding cycle with this being the second of two funding cycles in the 2021-22 academic year. Future funding will be dependent on availability of funds and program outcomes.

Eligibility

Proposals may be led by any UNM faculty or staff member with a primary appointment on main campus who is eligible to serve as a PI according to UNM policies. In all cases, however, the manager of the facility/lab in which the proposed equipment will be installed and maintained must be either a PI or a Co-PI on the proposal. Faculty from other UNM campuses may serve as Co-PI's if they will have access to the equipment. Individuals other than the lab manager may serve as PI or Co-PI on no more than one proposal in each funding cycle and may not apply for a second award if a required report is outstanding. Proposals from department chairs for equipment that will benefit entire departments are encouraged.

Examples of eligible equipment include single, commercially available instruments, an added feature/component of an integrated system (e.g., adding an additional capability/module to an extant system to accommodate new types of research); digital technologies equipment for creating/processing humanities data (e.g., oral histories); and upgraded equipment for producing creative works (e.g., for applications in design, theater, dance, film, etc.). Standard costs associated with acquisition, repair, or upgrade of laboratory equipment, including purchase price, shipping, installation (including minor necessary renovations), limited training, and integrated computing systems are allowed. Costs to acquire research-enabling information resources or technology, including, but not limited to, software acquisition are also allowable. **Non-allowable costs** include (a) extended maintenance/warranty and training or service contracts on new equipment (not included with the purchase price); (b) costs of consumables; (c) salary support for faculty, staff or students; (d) access to databases, which would represent an ongoing expense; and (d) instructional or office equipment.

Note: Although instrumentation may have educational and outreach applications, the primary use of proposed equipment must be for research and scholarship.

Funding

Awards from this program will range from $25K to $75K. If proposers wish to purchase equipment costing more than $75K, the budget must include a detailed plan for covering the remaining costs of the instrumentation, with firm commitments from stakeholders (e.g., department, college, PIs) in place and demonstrable at the time of proposal. If the actual purchase price is less than budgeted, any surplus funds will revert to the OVPR. Matching funds are not required, but are encouraged, including the use of start-up funds to match PERC resources.

Review Process and Criteria

The Large Equipment Advisory Group (LEAG) will review PERC proposals. This panel will be supplemented by ad hoc reviewers with subject matter expertise as needed, and final decisions lie with the OVPR Executive Committee. Thus, PIs should write proposals that are understandable to an interdisciplinary audience. The following criteria will be considered:

- Evidence of need for the instrumentation/services to initiate or expand research or scholarly activity, especially relative to reduction or removal of critical research barriers to answering important research questions, as well as increasing researchers' competitiveness for external funding and/or enhancing the pace or quality of the research to be supported by the proposed acquisition;
- Feasibility of the total budget, including the practicality of the proposed cost matching if total instrumentation/services costs exceed $75K, and consideration of estimated use projections;
- Plan to operate and maintain the equipment/services; and
- Size and breadth of the affected user group, including the extent of projected use and the availability of similar instrumentation/functions at UNM.

Spring 2022 PERC Timeline

- **January 28, 2022**: Application window opens in InfoReady Review
- **March 11, 2022**: Proposal due date
- **April 15, 2022**: Proposals awarded

Questions pertaining to this RFP may be directed to Hannah Torres or Monica Fishel in the Faculty Research Development Office (frdo@unm.edu)