2021 FACULTY OPPORTUNITY AWARDS
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

ELIGIBILITY

Q: Is a full-time, non-tenure-track faculty member (e.g., Research Professor) eligible to apply?
A: *No. Only full-time junior (tenure-track) faculty who meet the requirements for [Principal Investigator (PI) eligibility](#) may apply. No exceptions for PI Eligibility will be granted.*

Q: Can a tenured faculty apply?
A: *No. Only full-time junior (tenure-track) faculty who meet the requirements for [Principal Investigator (PI) eligibility](#) may apply. No exceptions for PI Eligibility will be granted.*

Q: Can a full-time Lecturer or a person on a full-time LOB (letter of appointment with benefits) apply for a Faculty Opportunity Award?
A: *No. Only full-time junior (tenure-track) faculty who meet the requirements for [Principal Investigator (PI) eligibility](#) may apply. No exceptions for PI Eligibility will be granted.*

Q: Can I apply for another Faculty Opportunity Award if I have been previously awarded one?
A: *No. Faculty who have previously received a FOA are not eligible.*

Q: If I am currently a lead PI on another source of funding can I apply?
A: No. F*aculty who currently have funding from any source as lead PI are not eligible.*

PROCESS

Q: What criteria will be used to evaluate the proposals?

Proposals will be evaluated on the following criteria:
- *The overall quality of the proposal and its relevance to the award program's goals, including the likelihood that the proposed research, scholarly activity, or creative activity will be successful in garnering subsequent external support.*
- *The clarity of the project's goals and deliverables and the reasonableness of the proposed timeline.*
- *A cost-effective and well-justified budget that clearly and directly supports the project.*
- *The proposal's conformity to the stipulated requirements on formatting, budget, and deadlines.*

Q: Who will evaluate the proposals?
Proposals will be evaluated by confidential peer-review panels appointed by the Vice President for Research and Economic Development and comprised of UNLV faculty representing a variety of academic disciplines, faculty ranks, ethnicities, and gender. The panel's confidential comments and recommendations will be reviewed by the Vice President for Research and Economic Development, the Associate Vice President for Research, the Associate Vice President for Economic Development, the Chairperson of the UNLV Research Foundation, and the chairperson of the UNLV Foundation. Based on all feedback, the Vice President for Research and Economic Development will make final approval.

Q: When will awardees be announced and funding available?
A: *Announcements of the awardees will occur on or before May 3. All funds will start on July 1, 2021.*

Q: If granted an award, how long will I have to spend the money?
A: *The award period of performance is for twelve months starting July 1, 2021 and ending June 30, 2022. Extensions will not be granted after the period of performance.*

Q: What amounts will be awarded?
A: *The maximum allowable budget ranges from $10,000 to $20,000 per project, depending on the type of award. Funding is non-renewable. The selection committee has the prerogative to recommend a lesser amount for an individual project to make more total awards with the available funding.*

Q: What conditions will successful awardees have to meet?
A: *Principal Investigators of successful FOAs are required to submit a final report within 30 days after the project end date. Within 12 months of the project end date, all research PIs are required to submit at least one proposal to a peer-reviewed, competitive grant program. Documentation of the success or failure of the proposal(s) must be noted in a post-final report. All scholarly activity or creative activity PIs are required to produce at least one book publications, creative performances/showings, evaluation of creative activities, or other. The format and delivery of these reports will be provided to the PI in the Notice of Award letter. A yearly follow-up survey will be sent each year for up to three years.*

Q: What feedback will unsuccessful applicants receive after the 2021 awards are announced?
A: *Because the deliberations of the peer review panels are confidential, the Vice President for Research and Economic Development (VPRED) will provide summarized feedback in writing to unsuccessful applicants. This feedback will be provided in a constructive form based upon general observations from the panel's review of the proposals. If an individual investigator wishes to receive more specific feedback, he/she may request it privately from the VPRED.*

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Q: What is the definition of "new" research, scholarly activity or creative activity?
A: *The intent of the Faculty Opportunity Awards Program is to make UNLV faculty more competitive for federal, philanthropic, and industry funding in the year following the FOA award. This includes developing new interdisciplinary approaches to enhancing scholarship and creative activities in any field. If a faculty member wishes to apply for a project that is related to prior research, please make clear in the proposal what is new about the aims and/or hypotheses.*

Q: Do I have to identify a Mentor?
A: *Yes. Each applicant must clearly identify a mentor who will be actively involved in the grant submissions. A formal UNLV Mentor Letter of Support on university letterhead (up to two-pages) must be included in the application packet.*

Q: Can the funding from the Faculty Opportunity Awards be combined with other external funding (e.g., cost-sharing) to support a larger project?
A: *No. If a full-time junior (tenure-track) faculty currently have funding from any source as lead PI they are ineligible to receive a Faculty Opportunity Award.*

Q: If a faculty member has received IRB approval, is it still considered "new" research?
A: *Yes. If the research has not yet been conducted and/or funded elsewhere.*

Q: How do I obtain a public land permit for a UNLV-Sponsored Activity?
A: *Instructions are available here: http://publiclands.unlv.edu/permits*

Q: How do I gain access to laboratory space in SEB?
A: *Instructions are available here: https://www.unlv.edu/seb*

PERSONNEL EXPENSES

Q: Is faculty summer salary and academic buyouts allowable?
A: *No. Summer salary and academic year buyouts for faculty are not allowable.*

Q: Can funding be used to support personnel and students from other universities?
A: *The funding cannot be used to employ personnel and students from other universities. Funds may not be used to pay for faculty from other universities who serve as consultants.*

Q: I want to hire a part-time salaried person on this project, but not include health insurance or retirement benefits. What is the appropriate contract to apply?
This is a professional contract called "Letter of Appointment" (LOA). Be sure that the FTE does not exceed 47.5 % (19 hrs per week). At 0.50 FTE, this contract type becomes an LOB (with benefits) and thus health insurance and retirement are automatically applied, which if not properly calculated and added to the budget plan, can often exhaust the total amount of the

award. Standard fringe benefits need to be budgeted. Consult the Office of Sponsored Projects for current rates.

Q: Do I need to specify whether support will be for a LOA or a student?
A: *Yes. Identify the person (or level) of support you are requesting. This can be adjusted as the project develops.*

Q: What is the difference between hiring a Graduate Assistant and a graduate student on hourly wages?
A: *A Graduate Assistant (GA) is a salaried employee – paid a stipend set at established amounts for masters and doctoral students – and must be hired either for an entire semester or academic year, with job duties totaling no more than 20 hours per week. A GA is processed through the Graduate College, and the student must be entered into the Grad Rebel Gateway in order to be awarded the Assistantship. The GA is subject to additional rules and regulations, such as minimum credit-load requirements, tuition and fringe benefits. **This type of GA support is not allowed on these FOAs.***

*A graduate student on wages is hired as an hourly employee and can be employed for as little as a month with no expectation of paid tuition or fees. When hiring a graduate student on wages, the PI must include fringe benefits in the proposal budget in addition to the hourly rate of pay. **This type of graduate student support (hourly wages) is allowed on these FOAs**. See the question below for information on hourly pay and fringe benefit rates.*

Q: If I'm hiring an undergraduate or graduate student on wages, is there a mandated hourly rate? Must fringe benefits be included?
A: *There is no mandated rate of pay for students paid on hourly wages. A typical rate for undergraduates is $10-13 per hour; a typical rate for graduate students is $13-16 per hour, with the top end reserved for stellar students. Fringe benefits must be added any time a salary is paid; the rate is 2% for hourly wages.*

Q: If a research project requires the use of non-students, will that be acceptable in the proposals?
A: *Only personnel on non-numbered positions (wages and LOAs) can be supported on these awards.*

Q: Can I use existing personnel such as a lab manager or technician to work part-time on this project?
A: *No. Only personnel on non-numbered positions (wages and LOAs) can be supported on these awards.*

OTHER ALLOWABLE/NON-ALLOWABLE EXPENSES

Q: Is international travel excluded from allowable costs?
A: *Only domestic travel will be allowed for field work/creative performances. All other travel is not allowed.*

Q: Is an iPad considered a computer and not allowed? What if it is essential to a research project?
A: *If a particular form of technology is essential to the research project, then it should be justified in the Budget Plan section of the proposal.*

Q: Are databases part of allowable expenses?
A: *Yes. As long as the cost of the database is under $5,000 and should be included under "Materials and Supplies".*

Q: Can software be purchased?
A: *Yes. It should be included under "Materials and Supplies" and should be essential to the research project.*

Q: Can service fees for core facilities or fees for external facilities be included in the budget?
A: *Yes. Fees for using core facilities and labs may be included under "Operating Costs" in the budget plan. Please provide justification for use of external facilities.*

FORMATTING THE PROPOSAL

Q: What font and format do I use for my proposal?
A: *Your proposal must be assembled in a single PDF (single-space, 1-inch margins, 12-point Times New Roman font). Use exact section headers, sub headers, etc as indicated in all forms and instructions. Use one centered page footer to read: PI Last Name, page number (e.g. Jones, 1) and no page header.*

Q: Do I submit each section as a separate document?
A: *No. The application packet must be uploaded into the 2021 FOA Portal in one single PDF.*

Q: If I am using an NIH-style biosketch as my curriculum vitae, can I go beyond the two-page maximum since the NIH template is 4 pages?
A: *Yes. If using the CV format for a particular agency or funding source, follow the template normally required of that agency.*

Q: Why do I have to include a one-page project summary?
A: *The intent of the one-page project summary is to assist faculty with the future submission of their eventual grant. It allows the faculty member to succinctly clarify the aims of the project and results in advance preparation of a key component of the proposal to an external granting agency.*

If the PI's proposal is for development of a scholarly/creative work that the PIs believe has no potential for external funding, Section I should nevertheless be included in the proposal and the PI should clearly explain why it is unlikely that any funding agency – including state and local governments, foundations, and NGOs – could be approached to support the project more fully.

Q: For Section V (Pending and Completed Support), if I don't have any other pending or completed funding should I simply omit this section?
A: *No. Include Section V, but simply state "No pending or completed support at this time." If a faculty member has current support as a lead PI they would be ineligible to apply.*

Q: For Section VI (UNLV Mentor Letter of Support), do I have to include a letter from my mentor?
A: *Yes. A formal UNLV Mentor Letter of Support on university letterhead (up to two-pages) must be included in the application packet.*

COVER PAGE FORM

Q: Is IRB approval of my project required on the cover page form <u>before</u> I submit a proposal?
A: *No. IRB requirements must be noted on the cover page form, but the faculty member does not need to secure IRB approvals (if required for the project) unless they are selected to receive a Faculty Opportunity Award. However, the IRB approval letter must be submitted to the Office of Sponsored Projects before an award account will be established.*

Q: Does the faculty members chair and dean need to sign the cover page form?
A: *Yes. It is required the cover page form include signatures from the PI, Chair, and Dean.*

UPLOADING THE APPLICATION PACKAGE

Q: How and where do I submit the application documents?
A: *Submit a fully complete and appropriately formatted application packet in the [2021 FOA Portal](#) by the* **Friday, February 5, 2021, 5:00pm PST** *deadline to be considered. No late submissions will be considered. The Principal Investigator will receive an automatic notification when the application packet has been received.*

FINAL REPORT

Q: What conditions will successful awardees have to meet?
A. *Principal Investigators of successful FOAs are required to submit a final report within 30 days after the project end date. Within 12 months of the project end date, all research PIs are required to submit at least one proposal to a peer-reviewed, competitive grant program. Documentation of the success or failure of the proposal(s) must be noted in a post-final report. All scholarly activity or creative activity PIs are required to produce at least one book publications, creative performances/showings, evaluation of creative activities, or other. The format and delivery of these reports will be provided to the PI in the Notice of Award letter. A yearly follow-up survey will be sent each year for up to three years.*