

Request for Proposals

Invited Scholar and Event Grants

Academic Year 2026-2027

Office of Research and Innovation

University of Nebraska-Lincoln



Application Deadline: Rolling
Proposals must be submitted in [NuRamp](#).

Program Overview

Invited Scholar and Event Grants provide support to bring external scholars to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) and/or host events that will advance research, scholarship, and/or creative endeavors at UNL.

- **Invited Scholar Grants:** Support a single scholar's visit to campus to deliver a lecture and engage with members of the UNL community.
- **Invited Scholars Grants:** Support visits by up to three scholars to speak at and participate in an established event or program (e.g., a colloquium, lecture series, or speaker series) and engage with members of the UNL community.
- **Event Grants:** Provide co-funding to sponsor or host a one-time event at UNL (e.g., a research conference, symposium, or workshop).

The expected outcome for all award types is to strengthen intellectual communities and advance areas of research, scholarship, and creative activity that are relevant to the UNL community. For all award types, any supported visiting scholars must provide at least one lecture that is open, free-of-charge, and advertised to the entire UNL community.

Preference will be given to visiting scholars and/or events contributing most directly to UNL research, scholarship, and/or creative endeavors and to those that appeal to and benefit a broad segment of the university community. Consideration should be given to scheduling visits and events when a maximum number of people are present on campus.

For Invited Scholar and Invited Scholars Grants, funds may only be used to support honoraria, travel, and local expenses (e.g., lodging, ground transportation, and meals) for the invited scholar(s). For Event Grants, funds also may be used to support these expenses for invited scholars in addition to well-justified costs to host the event (e.g., food, facility rental, supplies, etc.).

Award Information

Award amounts: Applicants may request up to \$3,000 for Invited Scholar Grants and up to \$5,000 for Invited Scholars Grants. For Events Grants, applicants may request a maximum of \$10,000 or one-third of the total sponsorship or event cost, whichever amount is less.

Budget requests should reflect the scope and scale of the proposed activity. Applicants are not required to seek the maximum level of funding.

Project duration: The maximum project duration for Invited Scholar Grants is 12 months. Applicants should request a project period beginning 60 to 90 days following proposal submission.

Expected number of awards: The number of awards issued will be determined based on proposal quality (see [Proposal Review Process and Timeline](#) below) and availability of funds.

Eligibility

Applicant eligibility: Individuals holding positions in the following categories are eligible to serve as a principal investigator (PI) and submit a proposal to this competition:

- Tenured and tenure-track assistant, associate, and full professors.
- Research assistant, associate, and full professors.
- Professional staff whose job responsibilities include the expectation to pursue external funding for research, scholarship, creative endeavors, or engagement, provided they obtain approval from the appropriate department, school, or center leadership and the dean of the relevant college or division, or from the vice chancellor overseeing the administrative unit. Approval is indicated by electronic signatures collected during the proposal approval and routing process in NuRamp.

Other personnel: Other essential project personnel (e.g., co-investigators) may participate in the proposed project and may be internal or external to UNL.

Limit on the number of applications: Individual PIs may have only one proposal under review by this program at a time. There is no limit on the number of applications to which an individual may contribute in another role (e.g., as other project personnel).

Limit on the number of awarded grants: UNL faculty may have no more than one active award from the Invited Scholar and Event Grants program as PI (inclusive of all three award types). Invited Scholar and Event Grants do not count toward the limit of two Office of Research and Innovation (R&I) internal grants in any four-year fiscal period.

UNL events and programs can only be supported by one grant from the Invited Scholar and Event Grants program at a time (inclusive of all three award types).

Resubmissions: Declined proposals may be resubmitted following substantive revision in response to reviewers' comments. However, all proposals will be treated as new applications. Resubmissions should not be described as revised applications, and revisions should not be called out in proposal narratives.

Proposal Requirements

Overall instructions and formatting: Importantly, the proposal must be written in lay language understandable to non-specialist reviewers (see [Proposal Review Process and Timeline](#) below) and should include sufficient detail to demonstrate its scientific, scholarly, or creative merit and potential to achieve the stated outcomes. Avoid the use of technical jargon and acronyms to the extent possible.

Proposals should be prepared using an 8.5" x 11" page size with 1" margins and single-spaced 11-point font (Arial, Calibri, Aptos, Georgia, or Times New Roman). The font sizes used in captions, graphics, tables, and detailed budgets may be smaller, but this text must be legible when printed.

Proposal components: Please prepare the following information—in the order described—as a single PDF. The inclusion of appendices or documents in addition to those requested below are not allowed.

1. Coversheet (*one-page maximum*)

- Prepare the coversheet using [this template](#).
- The coversheet requests the proposal title, the award type, a list of invited scholars (if applicable), the total Invited Scholar and Event Grant amount requested, the total sponsorship or event cost (for Event Grants), and requested start and end dates.

2. Proposal Narrative (*two-page maximum*)

A. Proposed Activity

Describe the proposed visit(s) and/or event, including:

- The focus area(s) and goals of the proposed activity.
- The intended audience and the UNL communities expected to benefit.
- The planned date(s) and location(s).
- The major activities to be conducted, including: lectures, workshops, meetings, panels, or other engagements.
- Plans for advertising the lecture(s) and/or event to the UNL community.

Note: Each supported visiting scholar must provide at least one lecture that is free, open, and advertised to the entire UNL community.

B. Invited Scholar(s)

Summarize the qualifications of the invited scholar(s), including:

- How they are recognized for excellence in their field(s).
- How their research, scholarship, and/or creative endeavors are closely related to the interests of UNL faculty and students.
- Their ability to engage the university community and the ways they will interact with faculty, students, postdoctoral scholars, and/or staff beyond the required public lecture.

Note: If an Event Grant does not request support for any visiting scholars, this portion of the proposal narrative is not required.

C. Significance and Expected Outcomes

Explain:

- How the proposed visit and/or event will build, strengthen, or connect intellectual communities.
- The anticipated benefits for participants and the broader university community.
- How the proposed activity will advance research, scholarship, and/or creative endeavors at UNL and support relevant institutional priorities (e.g., [Our Bold Path Forward](#) and/or [Odyssey to Extraordinary](#)).
- Any expected outcomes, new collaborations, or follow-on activities expected to result from the proposed visit(s) and/or event.

3. References Cited (*if applicable; one-page maximum*)

- Provide a list of references cited in the proposal.

4. Detailed Budget (one-page maximum)

- Prepare a detailed budget table using [this template](#).
- If assistance is needed, applicants are encouraged to work with their business center staff to prepare the budget.
- See [Budget Guidelines](#) below for information on allowable and unallowable costs.

5. Budget Justification (one-page maximum)

- Provide a budget justification outlining how the requested funds will be used to carry out the proposed activity.
- **For Invited Scholar and Invited Scholars Grants:** If additional funds are required to cover the cost of the proposed visit(s), provide information in the budget justification about other committed funding sources and/or plans to secure additional funding to cover the balance.
- **For Event Grants:** Co-funding may be requested for 1) event sponsorship or 2) the cost of hosting a one-time event at UNL. From R&I, applicants may request a maximum of \$10,000 or one-third of the total sponsorship or event cost, whichever amount is less. Detailed information about other committed amounts and sources of funding must be provided within the budget justification.
- Proposers may wish to make use of the budget justification samples curated by the Office of Sponsored Programs on its [Proposal Preparation Resources webpage](#).

Proposal Submission Process and Deadline

Applications for internal funding must be submitted via the Internal Competitions module in NuRamp (<https://nuramp.nebraska.edu>). Sign in to [NuRamp](#) using your institutional credentials.

Proposals will be accepted on a rolling basis.

Budget Guidelines

Budget requests must comply with applicable university policies.

Allowable costs

For all award types:

- Travel and local expenses (e.g., lodging, ground transportation, and meals) for invited scholars
- Honoraria for invited scholars. Applicants are encouraged to use good judgment in requests for honorarium funds. Any exceptional honoraria must be strongly justified in the Budget Justification.

For Event Grants only:

- Well-justified costs to sponsor or organize and host the event at UNL (e.g., food, facility rental, supplies, etc.).

Unallowable costs

- Facilities and administrative (F&A) costs (sometimes known as indirect costs)

Sub-recipients/external contractors: Sub-recipients are not allowed. However, external contractors providing goods or services, not substantive intellectual contributions, are allowed and may invoice UNL for project-related costs (see [federal definitions of subrecipients and contractors](#)).

Compliance Guidelines

Funds cannot be released unless all personnel identified on the project routing form have an approved conflict of interest (COI)/conflict of commitment (COC) disclosure in place. Participating UNL personnel who do not have a currently approved COI/COC disclosure should complete the online COI/COC Annual Disclosure Form in [NuRamp](#) as soon as possible.

Outstanding compliance approvals—such as those required for research involving human subjects, Human Embryonic Stem Cells and/or their derivatives and Human Fetal Tissue and/or their derivatives, animal subjects, transgenic animals, recombinant DNA, biohazards, select agents, radioactive materials, regulated plant materials, and/or the export laws and regulations of the United States—will delay the release of funds following award notification. Contact [Research Compliance, Integrity, and Security](#) for more information.

Proposal Review Process and Timeline

Review process: Proposals will be reviewed by internal R&I staff on a rolling basis. R&I staff may also solicit reviews from senior research administrators in the applicants' academic units, if needed. Applicants should not expect reviewers to be subject matter experts in their fields and should prepare proposals accordingly.

R&I staff will prepare a report summarizing the proposal review process and review outcomes and share it with the Vice Chancellor for Research and Innovation, who will make final funding decisions.

All applicants will receive summarized written feedback on their applications based on the review process when notified about the funding outcome.

Proposal review criteria and rubric: Proposals will be reviewed based on the following scoring rubric (100 points possible):

Proposal Review Criteria – Invited Scholar and Event Grants	Maximum Value
Quality and feasibility of the proposed plan: The extent to which the proposal presents feasible goals for the lecture(s) and/or event and a realistic and appropriate plan for the activity.	30
Qualifications of the visiting scholar(s): The extent to which the invited scholars are well-qualified for their role(s) in the visit. <i>If an Event Grant proposal does not request support for any visiting scholars, 10 additional points will be assigned to “Quality and feasibility of the proposed plan” and “Potential to achieve program-relevant outcomes.”</i>	20
Potential to achieve program-relevant outcomes: The likelihood that the lecture(s) and/or event will advance research, scholarship, and/or creative endeavors at UNL; contribute to institutional priorities; and benefit a broad segment of the university community.	35
Quality of the budget and justification: The extent to which the outlined costs are appropriate, reasonable, and realistic in relation to the scope, duration, and objectives of the project. The strength of the rationale in the budget justification, including information about other committed funding sources and/or plans to secure additional funding, where required.	15

Award timeline: Applicants will be notified of award decisions by no later than 60 days after they have submitted their proposal. Applicants should request up to a one-year grant period starting 60 to 90 days after a proposal is submitted.

Award Conditions and Requirements

Reporting: Recipients must submit a final report to R&I no later than 30 days after the end of the funding period or award termination date. A report template will be sent with the award notification.

Unused funds: Funds must be used by the project end date. Any unused funds at the completion of the grant must be returned. University purchasing and travel reimbursement guidelines and timelines must be followed; thus, applicants are encouraged to spend grant funds in a timely manner to avoid last-minute purchases near the end of the grant term.

Budget reallocation: Minor reallocations of funds among existing, approved budget categories are allowable without approval from R&I if the reallocation does not alter the scope of the project. However, reallocations involving 25 percent or more within an approved budget category or for new, unapproved items or budget categories must be approved by R&I in writing in advance of the reallocation.

Transfer of grant: If a PI leaves the university before the project start date, or during the award period, it is possible funds may be transferred to another UNL faculty member if the personnel can demonstrate that the transfer will not alter the original scope, timing, or quality of the funded work. PIs should contact R&I immediately in the case of a planned departure from the university to discuss the possibility and process for transfer to a new PI.

Failure to meet award conditions or requirements may disqualify PIs from future internal R&I funding.

Additional Information

For questions or to discuss the fit of a project idea with the priorities of the program, contact Matthew Dwyer, senior research development program coordinator in R&I (mdwyer4@unl.edu or 402-472-1661).