

**University of Central Florida
Research Council Meeting Minutes
[For November 4, 2024]**

Chair: Dr. Linda Walters; Vice-Chair: Dr. Steve Duranceau

- 1) Call to Order [4:00 P.M.]
- 2) Attendees [Per Zoom Participation] The following persons were in virtual attendance.

Name [Voting Member]	College
Brisset, Julie	FSI
Duranceau, Steven	CECS
French, Scot	CAH
Garibay, Ivan	IEMS
Ge, Yue (Gurt)	CCIE
Gesquiere, Andre	NTC
Guldi, Melanie	CBA
Huang, Helen*Alternate*	CECS
Johnson, Emily	CAH
Jurca, Titel	COS
Lopez Castillo, Humberto	CHPS
Miller, Ann	COS
Neal, Darlin	CAH
Norris, Sarah	LIB
Ram, Daniel	COM
Welch, Greg	CON
Walters, Linda	COS
Weremchuk, George	CAH
Yalim, Asli	CHPS
Coffee, Lane	COM
Name [Non-Voting]	
Harrington, Joseph	Ex Officio
Bochenek, Grace	Guest
Colwell, Joshua	Guest
Kapucu, Naim	Guest
Gajentan, Kara	Guest
Listengarten, Julia	Guest
Roney, Joshua	Guest

- 3) Minutes from the October 21, 2024 meeting were approved.
- 4) Old Business.
 - a. With the input of the research council regarding the program, the UCF Office of Research (OR) is sponsoring the fourth round of a university-wide Seed Funding Program for UCF faculty that is directed at promoting competitiveness in attracting external funding and enhancing visibility and recognition.
 - o Dr. Winston Schoenfeld announces UCF’s 2024-25 Seed Funding Program by email today; \$500,000 is available for internal funding.
- 5) New Business.

Josh Rooney summarized the last equipment rfp results. There was \$218K available. There were 13 applications and 8 awards. The smallest award was \$36K and the largest was \$99K. The

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average was \$50-60K. The main criteria for this previous award was that the UCF money was to be used as match for an NSF MRI application or other similar agency equipment grant rfp (NIH, DOD, I4 Corridor, American Heart Association, etc.).

The primary focus of today's meeting was to brainstorm suggestions for the second component of UCF's Seed Grant Program for equipment-related funding rfp where \$500,000 will be available through the Office of Research. The following list highlights the topics covering in the discussion. The two items that garnered the most discussion were focused on "match" issues (have/have-not colleges), and concerns from many Colleges/Programs that this rfp include non-STEM research. Faculty stated that they did not want to waste time writing a proposal that is not Space/Engineering/Technology or has the potential for large ROI if that was the true focus of this rfp. Clarity is needed on this in the rfp.

Questions/Comments posed throughout meeting:

Question: If this new piece of equipment could be procured from an NSF MRI application (or other funding agency), why is that not being pursued? Justify their UCF application.

Question: If current piece of equipment, then how should applicant document how it has been used to date (pubs.? past ROI) and future expected ROI.

Question: Is this for new research only? Or continuing research?

Make sure faculty know they can apply for both SEED and equipment grant. Question: Can they submit the same proposal to both? What if both rank high?

Comment: In requiring multiple users of equipment piece, we need to be careful to avoid faculty members (especially pre-tenure faculty) being turned into technicians while running the piece of equipment for all their colleagues.

Question: Will OR still help with a separate pot of funds if equipment breaks for funded project and emergency repairs needed?

Topics discussed in meeting (separated by topics):

1. Topics

- a. Procured equipment
 - i. Purchase single piece of equipment only?
 - ii. Purchase scalable sets of equipment (e.g., multiple wearables) allowed?
 - iii. What about computers?
- b. Faculty developed equipment, use funds to buy pieces/parts to then build on campus?
- c. Refurbishment of older equipment? What if close to the end of life? When is it better to replace than repair?
- d. Should money be divided up ahead of time – some for new equipment and some for repairs?

2. Types

- a. Maintenance/Upgrade (potential of aggregated maintenance) – should maintenance contracts be allowed to be funded in this rfp?
- b. Emerging Research Areas – priority?

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- c. Shared Resources – required? Only for Tier 2 (larger awards)? What if one faculty member plans to use the equipment item 24/7?
- d. What about if space is needed to hold equipment out in open or in storage – how does that need to be spelled out in rfp? Can space be used as in-kind match if the equipment is new?
- 3. Award timeframe – up to 18 months suggested
 - a. Concern about long lead items to purchase or repair equipment versus quick purchase items
- 4. ROI
 - a. Alignment to strategy growth areas for research & teaching
 - b. Creates additional interdisciplinary collaboration opportunities
 - c. Projected use/utility, duty cycle (criterion)
 - d. Consumables required into the future, including post equipment award? How will these continue to be purchased?
 - e. What staff are required to run equipment? What happens post-award?
- 5. Funding levels
 - a. Size of funding doesn't equate to impact.
 - b. Dollar allocations potentially aligned to # collaborators.
 - c. Suggested to have 2 tiers (similar to SEED rfp), see suggestions below after the end of minutes.
- 6. Match
 - a. Must be clear that it doesn't negatively impact departments that may are not resource "rich", lots of inequity discussion. Focus of selected proposals should be merit rather than ability to obtain match.
 - b. "I don't think a \$5,000 award needs a match, but at \$50,000, it might be helpful."
 - c. What if new faculty members have start-up funds? Can they use them as match? Should they be allowed to compete in rfp if they already have funds available?

The Council requested that ORC provide clarity on the specific intent of the funding to help resolve some of the issues discussed so that the Council can better respond to ORC and provide constructive feedback on this second Seed Program.

- 6) Other Business. None noted. Next meeting in 2 weeks will focus on raising the minimum GRA stipends across campus.
- 7) Adjournment at 5:01 p.m.

Summary of some content plus suggestions from L. Walters, Chair of Research Council. Note that this is not part of the minutes, but to assist OR in writing the initial draft of rfp.

Tier 1: up to \$12K, single or multi-investigator, match allowed but not used in evaluation, show ROI but allowed to be proportional to award amount.

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Tier 2: \$12K - \$60K, multi-investigator only, match required at 25% from internal or external sources but not vendor discounts or faculty salary. ROI should be substantial.