Emerging Areas of Research Funding Program FAQs

What is the Emerging Areas of Research program, and how did it come about?
A. The Indiana University Bloomington Strategic Plan calls for the campus to invest significant resources to support research and creative activity. These investments include the Emerging Areas of Research Funding Program (EAR) at IU Bloomington. The Emerging Areas of Research Funding Program seeks to support key areas of research strength on the IU Bloomington campus that are novel or established, but in need of support that would establish or increase the stature of the research area.

What’s the difference between the Emerging Areas of Research program and the Grand Challenges program?
A. The IU Bloomington EAR Program is separate, unique, and distinct from the Grand Challenges Program, which is a university-wide initiative. Not all research proposals will fit in the scale of the Grand Challenges program. Faculty who have not been involved in a Grand Challenge team are encouraged to submit to the EAR Program. Also, teams not selected in a Grand Challenge competition can repurpose or downsize their proposal for submission to the EAR program.

What are the criteria for selecting an Emerging Area of Research?
A: The following criteria will guide evaluation of an emerging area of research. A successful EAR initiative:
• Represents a complex, novel, and significant investigation (which may be either discipline-specific or multidisciplinary)
• Strategically addresses an existing strength at IU Bloomington for which the addition of resources will make the area of research world-class among peers or recognized for identifying and executing a novel approach to research
• Identifies an area of research where the campus can become more competitive with the addition of key faculty and that serves the broader goals of the schools/College
• Outlines well-defined, achievable goals that can be measured quantitatively and qualitatively
• Strategically leverages IU Bloomington’s existing resources and potentially resources outside of the IU community
• Has the clear potential to attract the external competitive, philanthropic, corporate, and/or government funding necessary to sustain the area of research.

How much funding will a selected Emerging Area of Research project receive?
A: The campus anticipates funding up to six EAR initiatives over the next five years. Typically, EAR will be an annual competition with a goal of supporting one to two initiatives per round. For each EAR award, funding will be distributed over four consecutive years. For each four-year EAR award, the campus anticipates investing approximately $3 million in cash, which might, for example, help to support four
postdocs, 10 graduate students, over four years. The funding will also finance between one to three faculty lines, as base, per EAR initiative.

**Why are one-page abstracts required in advance of the proposals?**

A. The EAR one-page abstracts are not pre-proposals; they will simply be used to gauge the number and scope of full proposals under development. OVPR, deans, and chairs will see a list of the abstracts submitted. The one-page abstract is required and should include the title of the proposal, lead investigator(s) contact information, and a paragraph describing the emerging area of research that will be proposed.

**How will proposals be reviewed?**

A: The EAR proposal review process will be conducted by a panel of faculty from the IU Bloomington campus. The first stage of the process consists of an online review in which each proposal will be reviewed by an equal number of reviewers primarily from the disciplines covered by the proposed work. The reviewers will assign a numerical score to the proposal’s success in addressing each of the goals of the program. The faculty review panel will then meet to discuss each proposal, weigh its responsiveness to the review criteria, and evaluate its relative strength compared to other proposals. A shortlist of finalist proposals will be selected by the faculty review panel for additional review by the respective academic dean of the originating school or center.

Reviews of all proposals will be provided to the Provost and to the Vice Provost for Research, who will make the final funding decision. Following award decisions, OVPR will provide to each PI a summary of their proposal’s strengths and weaknesses. Depending on the review panel’s assessment and score of a proposal, some proposals not selected for EAR in the first round may be revised and resubmitted in the future or considered for other types of institutional funding competitions. Proposals that have a strategic relationship to a Grand Challenge initiative already identified for funding could potentially be evaluated and funded under a future Grand Challenge Initiative.

**How will decisions be made about new faculty hires and other investments related to Emerging Areas of Research proposals?**

A: Total EAR budgets must include half the estimated cost of start-ups for new faculty hires, as well as all other expenses. The remaining cost of faculty start-ups must be covered by the unit or units supporting the project. It is expected that not all new hires will be at a senior level.

**How long will the funding for the selected Emerging Areas of Research initiatives last?**

A: Four (4) years.

**How will progress be judged? Are there reporting requirements?**

A: Successful applicants will be required to submit an annual report every year after the start of the award. Requested data will include:

- Percentage of initiative completed
- Progress towards metrics and deliverables stated in the proposal
- Resulting hires
• Resulting publications, performances, conferences, exhibits—titles, dates, venues, bibliographic info, new research methodologies
• Impact of EAR award on applying for external funding—titles, agencies, date submitted (past and future), amounts requested, status, awarded amount
• Recognition—awards, honors, prizes, reviews
• New annual budget

Successful applicants will be required to submit a full progress report no later than one (1) year after the end of the award. Requested data will include:
• Summary of results during the course of the initiative and how they addressed the initial EAR goals
• Success towards metrics and deliverables stated in the proposal
• Hiring goals and implementation
• Budget report outlining funds utilization and details on any expenditure(s) outside of the approved budget
• Resulting publications, performances, conferences, exhibits—titles, dates, venues, bibliographic info, new research methodologies
• Progress in applying for external funding - titles, agencies, date submitted (past and future), amounts requested, status, awarded amount
• Recognition: awards, honors, prizes, reviews
• Additional follow-up information may be requested outside of the progress report, to determine the ongoing efficacy of the EAR.

Awardees will be required to present the outcomes of the EAR initiative at a special symposium planned by OVPR and held no more than one year after the end of the award.

**How does the Emerging Areas of Research program affect other internal research funding initiatives at IU Bloomington?**
A: Although IU Bloomington is directing considerable funding and effort toward the Emerging Areas of Research Funding Program, the EAR is by no means the only initiative arising from the Bicentennial Strategic Plan nor the only effort IU Bloomington is making to foster excellence in research and teaching. Schools and campuses will continue with existing plans regarding faculty hires and investments in research infrastructure, as well as other initiatives.

**Where is the money for funding Emerging Areas of Research coming from?**
A: Primary sources of funding are coming from the IU Bloomington Office of the Provost and the IU Bloomington Office of the Vice Provost for Research.

**How do I get more information?**
A. Contact earprogram@indiana.edu or visit the OVPR website at http://ovpr.indiana.edu/ear.