

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 outstanding areas of research and creative activity on the IU Bloomington campus that are novel or established, but in need of support that would establish or increase the stature of the 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 the EAR program by choosing one or a subset of their core projects/directions to repackage as an EAR proposal. Ultimately, the university's vision is to have multiple Emerging Areas and Grand Challenges, all moving forward and making an impact.

What are the review criteria for selecting an Emerging Area of Research?

A: The following criteria will guide evaluation of an emerging area of research (or creative activity). 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 a novel approach requiring the addition of resources will make the area world-class among peers or recognized for identifying and executing a novel approach
- Represents a strong team-based approach to research and/or creative activity, and evaluates the scholarly strength of the team
- Identifies an area of research or creative activity where the campus can become more competitive with the addition of key faculty
- 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 potential to attract the external competitive, philanthropic, corporate, and/or government funding necessary to sustain the area or creative activity. (Proposals in disciplines where commercialization possibility and external funding prospects are not directly relevant or feasible will not be judged on those factors.)

Who is eligible as a PI on an EAR proposal?

A. All tenured and tenure-eligible faculty (including center directors). Proposals including participation by women and members of underrepresented groups as PIs and team members are especially encouraged. Deans and Associate Deans cannot be PIs, due to potential conflicts of interest (since deans and associate deans are asked to write letters of support). Deans and Associate Deans may be team members.

I've heard that some teams from the first round of EAR received "planning grants." What are these grants, and how will they affect the resubmission of a team's proposal?

A. Four modest planning grants were awarded to first-round EAR teams whose proposals generated a great deal of interest in the faculty review committees. These grants were awarded as an indication of the reviewers' high level of enthusiasm for the area of research or creative activity proposed. The planning grants are intended to support further work to improve the proposal for the next round of the EAR program. Planning grants are contingent upon resubmission to the subsequent round of the EAR program; however, proposals resubmitted after use of a planning grant will be evaluated on equal terms with all other submissions by new committees of reviewers.

Is the EAR program intended to fund only projects in the sciences?

A. No. Faculty from across the IU Bloomington campus, in all disciplinary areas, are encouraged to apply. The EAR is intended to support promising areas in the arts and humanities, and the social sciences as well as in basic and applied sciences. The overall goal is to significantly enhance the volume, quality, impact, and reputation of research and/or creative activity at IU Bloomington, regardless of discipline.

In disciplinary areas where external funding is less common, how will proposals be reviewed relative to those proposals in disciplines where external funding is far more frequent?

A. The relevance of potential to attract external funding as a review criterion will be assessed in relation to and as appropriate to the particular discipline. Proposals in disciplines where commercialization possibility and external funding prospects are not directly relevant or feasible will not be judged by these criteria. Reviewers will judge and weight the potential to attract external funds according to the type of funding generally available in the relevant area or discipline. Also, it is important to note that scoring of review criteria is only one piece of the overall review process. Proposals that reach the second stage of the review process will receive additional in-depth discussion from the faculty review panel.

What level of ongoing external funding is expected for an EAR project in the future?

A. The project should have the potential for strong funding commensurate with its field(s). Some proposals will have lower funding (eg. social sciences or humanities); we are not comparing proposals on absolute levels of future external funding.

How much funding will a selected Emerging Area of Research

project receive?

A: The campus anticipates funding up to five additional EAR initiatives over the next four 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, in addition to financing 1-3 faculty lines (as base) per initiative. The base salaries for new faculty lines are not included in the \$3M, but 50% of startup costs for new faculty lines will be funded from the \$3M. Aside from the hiring of new faculty, the \$3 million in cash will finance all other allowable costs listed in the RFP.

Does an EAR proposal have to include new faculty hires?

A. Yes. It's assumed that additional faculty will be needed to create the impact sought by the EAR program. However, the number of faculty (between one and three) can be context-specific. In other words, if the addition of only one new faculty member would bring the emerging area to a new level, then it is fine to specify only one new faculty hire.

How will salaries for new hires be handled?

A. For six years, the Provost's office will share the cost of faculty salaries 50/50 with the unit where the faculty reside. After six years, the Provost's office will transfer its share of the faculty line to the unit, i.e., their operating budget will be increased by the 50% share so the position is "half-price" in perpetuity.

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

A. The EAR one-page abstracts are not pre-proposals; they will be used to gauge the number and scope of full proposals planned. The one-page abstracts also will help to inform the composition of the review panel for the full proposals. The abstracts will be made public on the OVPR website. One-page abstracts are required and should include the title of the proposal, lead investigator(s) contact information, and a description of the emerging area of research or creative activity that will be proposed.

For the one-page abstracts, should the short description be a statement of the general area, or a more specific statement of the specific research questions expected to be addressed in the final proposal?

A. A broad description of the general issues of the planned EAR proposal is fine, and if available, a brief outline of the research questions. These questions will not be used to make any pre-judgment of the proposal, but rather to inform the review process and to give OVPR an estimate of the scope, breadth, and number of proposals anticipated. In other words, for the full proposal, you will not be held to addressing exactly the research questions as sketched in the abstract.

Will any feedback be provided on the one-page abstracts? Is there going to be an early vetting process? For example, if an idea is unlikely to have a chance, will faculty get some feedback to that effect?

A. The purpose of the one-page abstracts is to get an idea of how many possible EAR initiatives are being planned and a sense of their types, range, and scope. There will

not be any "first cut" after the abstracts' submission. Staff from the Office of the Vice Provost for Research are happy to meet with any of the Emerging Areas of Research teams to discuss their abstract upon request, but feedback will not be systematically provided for all groups as a step in the procedure.

Why are no pre-proposals required in the EAR process?

A. We want to encourage a breadth of ideas and possibilities; therefore, we are asking for one-page abstracts that outline preliminary ideas but are not requiring a more in-depth pre-proposal. That said, EAR applicants are **strongly encouraged** to discuss their ideas with the chairs and deans in their respective departments and schools **before** submitting. **Alignment with existing goals of the applicant's school or college is important.**

Will OVPR provide assistance for applicants that need to negotiate with more than one dean?

A. Yes, OVPR staff and Vice Provost for Research Rick Van Kooten will be happy to assist. Contact them through earprogram@indiana.edu.

As PI, am I required to include a letter of support from my department chair as well as the department chair where a proposed new faculty hire will reside?

A. Yes, you are required to include two letters of support in this case, one from your own department chair and one from the chair of the department chair where the new faculty hire will reside.

How will proposals be reviewed?

A: The EAR proposal review process will be conducted in two stages. In the first stage, each proposal will be reviewed by one discipline-specific review panel, either STEM or non-STEM. One primary and one secondary reviewer will be assigned to each proposal and will provide written reviews. Panels will meet to discuss each proposal and rank order them. Emphasis will be given to how well the proposal meets the review criteria listed in the EAR RFP. In the second stage, a multidisciplinary review panel will consider each proposal that advances from the first round of review. One primary and one secondary reviewer will be assigned for each proposal and will provide written reviews. The panel will weigh a proposal's responsiveness to the program goals outlined in the EAR RFP. PIs from the top selected proposals will be invited to give a presentation of ~30 minutes to the second review panel. Finally, reviews of all shortlist proposals will be provided to the Provost and to the Vice Provost for Research, who will make the final funding decision.

Following the award decision, OVPR will provide each PI with a summary of their proposal's strengths and weaknesses. All proposals not selected for EAR in the first round may be revised and resubmitted in the future. In addition, depending on the assessments of the review panel, the respective deans, and the score of a proposal, some proposals may be considered for other types of institutional funding competitions. For example, 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. OVPR will make every effort to identify other sources of funding (including corporate, philanthropic, external, and state sources) for proposals that are not selected for EAR but are nonetheless competitive to attract further funding and support.

How will OVPR decide which review committee (STEM or non-STEM) should consider a proposal in the first round of review?

A. If there is a question about what area the proposal falls into, we will ask the PI/team which committee they prefer to review their proposal.

I notice that the EAR RFP has added a requirement for PIs to submit suggestions of three external reviewer names by September 1. Can you explain this additional requirement?

A. Yes, the requirements for Letters of Support have changed for 2017. By September 1, each PI/team must submit a list of three external experts capable of assessing the significance of the proposed EAR initiative and the likelihood of its success. OVPR will solicit one letter from the provided list of experts and up to two additional letters from external reviewers not included on the list.

How will OVPR select reviewers whose names are not provided on the PI's list?

A. OVPR will make use of IU's subscription to the Academic Analytics database, which includes information on hundreds of thousands of faculty members associated with more than 9,000 Ph.D. programs and 10,000 departments at nearly 400 universities in the United States and abroad. We will also consult with colleagues. Note that additional reviewers may be drawn from outside of academia (private companies, 501c3 organizations, etc.).

How will OVPR handle potential conflicts of interest or a proposal's proprietary information when selecting outside reviewers?

A. OVPR will contact the PI to check on conflicts of interest and/or vet its reviewer selection.

Should a dean's letter of support rank proposals from his or her school/College, if there is more than one EAR proposal involved?

A. OVPR will solicit letters from the dean(s). Support letters from deans will be solicited for the top-half ranked proposals only. Ranking is helpful, but it is up to the dean.

Do references count within the 15-page limit for the research plan?

A: No, references are not counted in the 15-page limit for the research plan.

Can a standard 5-page NIH-style biosketch be used?

A. Yes, you may use 5-page biosketches, but only for those participants who have only a current NIH 5-page biosketch on hand. Biosketches are limited to 3 pages each, but the summary of current and past external funding may be added for a total of 5 pages.

How will decisions be made about new faculty hires and other

investments related to Emerging Areas of Research proposals? How will start-up funding work?

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.

What is the expected start date for funding and potential faculty searches if a proposal is accepted?

A. Advertising for faculty positions would be expected to start the first Summer/Fall 'hiring season' following the award.

What expenses are allowable as "start-up costs" for new faculty lines (moving expenses? office computer & other office equipment? personal research account funds? etc.)?

A. All of these are allowable expenses. However, when a faculty member is hired, there will be a negotiation of his or her start-up package, i.e., what is given in the proposal is only notional and meant to be a rough estimate of the scale/scope of a potential start-up. Given this, smaller items in a typical start-up would very much be within the uncertainties of the final size of start-up costs.

Can costs associated with a research scientist be included in the budget costs? For example, can we include 50% FTE of a research scientist position? Or a couple of research scientists that together total more than 100% FTE (2 research scientists at 75% FTE each)?

A. Under "Costs Not Allowed", the full-year salary for any academic appointee (including sabbatical leave) refers only to faculty members, either new ones or current faculty at IU Bloomington. Under "Allowable Costs", postdocs/research scientists and graduate students are allowed with appropriate justification. These are academic appointments that can be included in the budget at any % FTE level.

In addressing new faculty hires under "Application Components/ Research Plan/New positions proposed," is it necessary to include specific names of faculty and the institutions from where the faculty may be recruited?

A: No, please do **not** include specific names or institution affiliation in your proposal where you are addressing the impact of new faculty hires. Instead, you may describe the target area of the hire and how a faculty member with expertise and experience in that area would make the campus more competitive in attracting external funding and/or enhance the reputation of IU Bloomington. Even if you have a specific potential hire in mind, please do **not** give a name because the EAR proposals will be made public.

Under "Costs Not Allowed", it says that collaborators are allowed from other IU campuses or institutions, but they may not receive any support from EAR funds. Does paying for a collaborator's travel to IU Bloomington and hotel/hospitality expenses in Bloomington count as

"support"?

A. In this case, no, this would not count as "support". By "support" we mean salary support.

What is the duration of salary support?

A. Salary for new faculty does **not** come from the \$3M cash funding since salary lines would go into base funding, with such costs covered by the Provost and relevant school/College, with the sharing negotiated. The bottom line is: the salary for new faculty should not show up in the budget; 50% of start-up costs are included (since they are one-time funding outlays).

How long will the funding for a selected Emerging Areas of Research initiative last?

A: Four (4) years.

Are there reporting requirements?

A: Yes. Successful applicants will be required to submit an annual progress report by January 1 of every year following the start of EAR funding. This report must include a new budget for the upcoming fiscal year (July 1-June 30). Additional data for the report 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
- Budget report outlining funds utilization
- New fiscal year budget (July 1-June 30)

Successful applicants will be required to submit a full report no later than six months 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 funding program.

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 programs 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 program arising from the Bicentennial Strategic Plan nor the only effort IU Bloomington is making to foster excellence in research. Schools and the campus will continue with existing plans regarding faculty hires and investments in research infrastructure, as well as other strategic research 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>.