

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA**  
**OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR RESEARCH**

**Excel Funding Program for  
Liberal Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences**

**Request for Proposals**

Announcement Release Date:	September 9, 2022
Application Receipt Date:	November 15, 2022
Estimated Award Announcement Date:	January 15, 2023

Sponsored by the Offices of the President, the Vice President for Research, and the Provost, the Excel Program for Liberal Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences will provide funding to USC Columbia and Palmetto College faculty to support their pursuit of creative and scholarly excellence. The specific purpose of this grant program is to support faculty scholarship in these areas and also encourage future applications for external funding. The anticipated total funding amount for this year is \$600,000.

The Excel Program for Liberal Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences offers two types of grant mechanisms:

- **Track I Individual Grants:** Up to \$15,000 will be awarded to a single faculty member.
- **Track II Collaborative Grants:** Up to \$25,000 will be awarded to 2 or more faculty members from different departments working collaboratively on the same project.

**Eligibility**

Eligible applicants include tenured and tenure-track faculty working at USC Columbia or any of the two-year Palmetto College campuses (Lancaster, Salkehatchie, Sumter, Union and Palmetto College Columbia sites).

**Budget**

**Allowable costs**

- Summer salary for the faculty member(s) working on the project
- Salary and fringe benefits for graduate and undergraduate students working on the project
- Graduate student tuition
- Travel essential to conducting the project
- Project supplies

- Publication and/or dissemination costs
- Travel to professional meetings to present scholarly work resulting from this grant or travel to exhibitions or performances to showcase creative work resulting from this grant
- Consultants and/or contractors
- Course buyout (up to one per semester, with approval of and rate set by applicant's college/school)

### **Unallowable costs**

- Undergraduate student tuition

### **Dissemination Plan**

Faculty members selected for Excel funding may begin their projects at any time after the award date, and should begin work no later than Tuesday, May 16, 2023 for a project period of 12 months. Funded faculty are expected to complete a major scholarly or creative work by the end of the project period. At the conclusion of the project (or the end of the project period, whichever occurs first), grant recipients must share their work with a broad audience through a publication, presentation, exhibition, or performance. The VPR website will have a webpage dedicated to showcasing the scholarly and creative work resulting from this grant program, where each recipient can share their work through articles, images, and videos.

### **Application Procedure**

Proposal requirements and formatting:

1. Project Summary (up to 1 page). Each proposal must contain a summary that includes the purpose of the project, the proposed work, and potential impact.
2. Proposal Narrative (up to 3 pages). This section should describe the work to be undertaken, the methodologies to be employed, the project schedule, and the roles and qualifications of the project participants. The proposal text should be single-spaced with margins not less than one-half inch and using a font size not less than 11 pt.
3. Bibliography (no page limit).
4. Biographical sketches/resumes (up to 2 pages for each faculty member).
5. Current and pending support (no page limit). If applicable, current and pending grant support should be included for the investigator(s).
6. A detailed budget and budget justification are required (up to 1 page).
7. The proposal receipt date is 5:00 on Wednesday, November 15, 2022, and should be submitted via USCeRA by checking yes to "Internal Request," then "VP for Research" and choosing the category type (Excel Program for Liberal Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences) from the USCeRA drop-down menu to ensure proper proposal routing. Failure to check the box will result in your proposal NOT being submitted. **Upload your proposal following the directions in USCERA.**

### **Review Process**

Applications that are complete and responsive will be evaluated by a review panel. The reviewers will prioritize their recommendations based on the quality of the proposals in accordance with the review criteria (see below), and awards will be made based on review scores.

## **Review Criteria**

Reviewers will consider and evaluate each of the criteria listed below in determining scholarly merit.

### **Merit Review Criteria**

- Does the project have the potential to advance knowledge?
- Does the project have the potential to benefit society and contribute to the achievement of specific, desired societal outcomes?
- Is there a way to measure success in meeting the project's stated aims?
- To what extent do the proposed activities suggest and explore creative, original, or potentially transformative concepts?
- Is the plan for carrying out the proposed activities well-reasoned, well-organized, and based on a sound rationale? Is this plan framed in relation to a strong conceptual framework describing inputs, actions, and expected outcomes? Are there clear strategies to monitor and improve the fidelity of planned actions, and to evaluate the achievement of desired outcomes?
- How will the findings/outcomes be reported, especially those that might diverge from the original goals of the project?
- How well qualified is the individual, team, or organization to conduct the proposed activities?
- Is there evidence for strong interdisciplinary collaboration in developing the project?
- Does the project have the necessary support from all relevant stakeholders?
- Are there adequate resources available to the PI (either at the home organization or through collaborations) to carry out the proposed activities?

**For more information:** Please contact Dr. Lumi Bakos, The Office of the Vice President for Research, [bakos@mailbox.sc.edu](mailto:bakos@mailbox.sc.edu), (803) 777-0969