

UMass Dartmouth COVID-19 Research Accelerator Fund

Program Overview

In response to the unprecedented research challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, the UMass Dartmouth Office of Research Development is launching the COVID-19 Research Accelerator Fund (RAF) which aims to provide rapid-response awards to support research activity on campus, including facilitating both intra- and extramural collaborations.

This call is open to all disciplines performing research on or related to COVID-19. Funds are to be used to support immediate research needs and proof of concept work, and must be expended within 9 months, preferably 6 months.

Strong preference will be given to projects that:

- Present a strong scientific rationale and clearly describe deliverables and associated timelines;
- Explicitly describe the impact of the generated research products (i.e. data sets, protocols, publications, etc.) on the larger COVID-19 research community and response efforts;
- Provide an appropriately justified budget necessary and sufficient to support the proposed work; and
- Provide a clear sustainability plan ideally identifying plans to apply for follow-on extramural funding.

Submission deadline: May 18, 2020

Eligibility Criteria

Applicants must have Principal Investigator (PI) status at UMass Dartmouth (collaborators do not need PI status and may be from outside entities). Funds will only be provided to UMass Dartmouth researchers. External collaborators are welcomed, but should preferably provide confirmation of matching cash or in-kind contributions to the project.

Award Details

Two awards types and levels of funding are available:

- Small awards with budgets up to \$5,000. Funds may be used to support access to certain core facilities, archives, or other research infrastructure, to purchase supplies or other consumables, for payment of analytical service fees, to hire undergraduate research assistants or for other well-defined research expenditures.
- Project awards with budgets up to \$25,000. Funds may be used to support collaborative, interdisciplinary research project activities that will contribute to rapidly generating new insights and understanding of COVID-19 and/or the associated impact of the pandemic. Funding may be requested to support temporary personnel costs such as assignment of research staff, postdoctoral fellows or graduate and undergraduate students, purchases of small pieces of equipment, consumables or other project expenses.

Collaborative efforts with extramural partners are welcomed for both award categories. Extramural partners are expected to make in-kind or cash contribution, clearly described within the proposal narrative and budget.

Faculty salaries and tuition (resident and non-resident) are **not** eligible expenses for either award categories. Temporary salary contributions for postdocs, staff, graduate students and undergraduate students are allowed.

Application Process

Applications for both programs are due **May 18, 2020** and must be submitted online at:

<https://umassd.infoready4.com/#manageCompetitionsDetail/1812420>

Small awards. Applicants should prepare the following materials for submission:

- Title page including project title and names and affiliations for PIs and co-PIs and total amount of funds requested.
- Project narrative, not to exceed 600 words.
- Budget description and justification. Briefly justify budget and tabulate expense categories and amounts requested for each category.
- Biosketches or CVs for PI and all co-PIs. Upload as a single PDF document or provide links to up-to-date online profiles.

Project awards. Applicants should prepare the following materials for submission:

- Title page including project title and names and affiliations for PIs and co-PIs and total amount of funds requested.
- Abstract, not to exceed 150 words.
- Project narrative, not to exceed 1200 words.
- Budget description and justification. Briefly justify budget and tabulate expense categories and amounts requested for each category.
- Biosketches or CVs for PI and all co-PIs. Upload as a single PDF document or provide links to up-to-date online profiles.

Review and Selection Process

Small award proposals will undergo a short review for feasibility and impact.

Project award proposals will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- Scientific/Scholarly merit. There is a clear and strong scientific or scholarly rationale for the work.
- Feasibility. The work is achievable in the proposed timelines and with the requested budget support.
- Impact. The produced work has the potential to impact COVID-19 research and response efforts.
- Sustainability. The research products can be used as preliminary data for extramural funding, and specific extramural funding opportunities have been identified.

Post-award Expectations

- Funds must be expended within 9 months, preferably within 6 months.
- A progress report must be submitted at end of the project period.

Please contact Stefanie Picard (stefanie.picard@umassd.edu) with questions regarding this opportunity.