RESEARCH
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

Office of the Vice President for Research

Strategic Investment Program

Requests for FY27 Spring Semester Needs

Synopsis

Colorado State University is committed to supporting a wide range of activities across research, scholarship, and creative activity that advance the goals and success of the university. The Office of the Vice President for Research (OVPR) will utilize this Strategic Investment Program for a wide range of requests (see allowable) from colleges, departments, and other units to increase capacity and accelerate research success. This process is intended to ensure broad institutional alignment, structured allocation of available funds across the fiscal year, and maximized return on investments.

Description

The **OVPR Strategic Investment Program** (formerly Quarterly Strategic Investment) will provide funding broadly across the institution to strategically maximize momentum and drive our research enterprise forward to greater recognized excellence by addressing gaps, deficiencies, or opportunities. Continued growth and the accelerated ability to pursue new opportunities in an evolving funding landscape remains as a high OVPR priority. As such, this program will foster a heightened ability to thrive and pivot by supporting activities that increase capacity, increase collaboration, seed new pathways, and maintain a strong foundation of extramural funding.

Requests through this mechanism will need to be explicit about why funds are needed, with a clear link to growth or opportunity (e.g., identified follow-on funding and/or partnership opportunities). In addition, requests must address alignment with institutional strengths and college priority areas.

As with previous iterations of this program, this mechanism will synchronize the submission of requests to the OVPR, but it will now be aligned with academic semesters (fall, spring, summer). Through these cycles, the OVPR hopes to be able to strategically assess funding needs across larger pools of proposals across the fiscal year while lowering alignment and response barriers.

The Strategic Investment Program is not intended to sustain individual research projects or provide pilot project funding, replace the start-up/retention funding process, provide funding for capital infrastructure which should be directed to the OVPR Cores Infrastructure Investment, or manage requests for extramural proposal mandatory cost share (see *Mandatory Cost Share* below).

This program may change in subsequent FY27 cycles or future fiscal years, including potential shifts in eligible requests, prioritized activities, and funding availability.

General Information

Funding

For this funding cycle, the OVPR will consider requests that range from **$5,000 to $50,000 (or more)** per proposal, with thresholds for requests that do and don't have cost share/matching (see below). Requests over $50,000 may be challenging and we encourage proposers seeking these larger contributions from the OVPR to initiate a discussion prior to submission. Funds **can be spent over a 1-year** maximum timeframe from receipt. Funding requests are for **one-time funds only**, therefore, requests for recurring needs (e.g., recurring annual workshops or conferences) will not be considered. Funds in any given cycle are limited and the number of proposals received in each cycle can vary dramatically. Awards made in any given funding cycle do not imply approval for a similar request made in a future funding cycle. Additional consideration will be given to proposals that are broad-reaching and/or cross-disciplinary in nature.

Cost Share/Matching Funds

Generally, proposals that have financial support from non-OVPR units are viewed as indicative of higher prioritization within those units, therefore, cost share may be included at all funding levels but is not required for requests under $10,000. All requests **over $10,000 must demonstrate shared funding participation** (cost share/match) from non-OVPR sources, including any combination of PI, Department, College, or other internal/external sources. In general, the **OVPR contribution should be no more than 33-50% of the total budget**, however, the OVPR may contribute a larger fraction of the total cost in some instances. By practice, funded proposals typically demonstrate a strong contribution from non-OVPR sources. **CSU personnel time contributions** (faculty, staff, or student) may **NOT** be utilized as match.

Urgent Requests

Urgent requests (e.g., gap-filling for short-turn funding opportunities, catastrophic instrument failures) with significant time constraints outside of the open window for this process should be brought directly to the attention of the OVPR by the Research Associate Dean for the college making the request. See contact information below for urgent requests.

Extramural Proposal Submissions - Mandatory Cost Share Requests

Do not submit mandatory cost share requests through this mechanism. The OVPR accepts requests for mandatory cost share support at any time, through CSU's InfoReady Review system. See contact below if you have questions about making these requests.

Eligibility

Who can Apply

Applications may only be submitted by: Tenure-track (TT) or contract and continuing (CC) faculty; research scientists/scholars; core, center or institute directors; associate deans and deans; and department heads. Adjunct faculty, post docs, and students may not apply to this mechanism.

Applicants who have been funded for a request in the immediate previous cycle are discouraged from submitting another request.

Allowable Costs

Requests for funding will be accepted for a broad range of activities that address gaps, deficiencies or strategic opportunities within the research, scholarship, and creative activity enterprise. Funds are intended to strengthen our ecosystem, infrastructure, visibility, and/or enhance the likelihood of success for pursuit of funding opportunities, particularly those in response to the changing federal landscape. ***In general, and particularly for infrastructure, the OVPR prioritizes requests for shared resources and interdisciplinary teams, focused on creating collaboration rather than focused on a single investigator, and demonstrating alignment to our broader strategic plan.***

Supported activities include but are not limited to:

- Project and Program Support
    - Specific gap-filling for:
        - Refocused/new directions due to changing federal or industry landscape
        - Deeper directions for projects aligned with key institutional strength areas
            - Individual or single-disciplinary team requests may be considered but should be discussed with OVPR staff prior to submission
    - Access to external research facilities or services
- Recognition
    - Costs related to honorific awards, fellowships, or memberships
    - Costs for publications and other products that position for a new opportunity/field/area or that advance recognition of institutional strength areas
- Conferences/Workshops/Special Events
    - Sponsorship of CSU hosted events with significant external participation/visibility
- Activities/Services to Strengthen Competitiveness for External Funding
    - External proposal review or facilitation services
    - Team and network building activities to fill gaps
    - Travel to establish partnerships or meet with program officers or industry partners
- Shared Research Infrastructure (up to $50,000)
        - ***Requests for infrastructure must be submitted as stand-alone requests, with no overlapping needs in other categories***
    - New equipment/instrumentation and costs for installation
        - Must have significant multi-use, cross-institution user base
    - Repair of equipment/instrumentation
        - Due to catastrophic failure with immediate external funding risks
    - Construction/alteration/renovation of research space
        - For repurposing to pursue new funding opportunities
    - Specialized software or data licenses
- Other

Unallowable Costs

This mechanism will not accept requests for:

- Capital equipment or other infrastructure needs that will be in a core facility or are more than $50,000 (see OVPR Cores Infrastructure Investment RFP)
- General small pilot projects for current research/scholarship, that can be funded extramurally (these should be submitted to external sponsors under their mechanisms)
- Student-led projects (initiated or submitted by graduate/undergraduate students)
- Curriculum development or other instructional needs
- Professional development
- Bridge funding
- Support for external partners
- Travel or fees to attend conferences or workshops.
- Requests for mandatory cost share for extramural proposal submissions

Submission Deadlines

The OVPR Strategic Investment Program will have **funding cycles that align with when funding will be needed, across a fall, spring, and summer semester timeline**. Submission deadlines are highlighted below and requests must be received **by 5:00 pm MT**. Requests received after the deadline will not be considered in that funding cycle and must be submitted to the next funding cycle. New cycles will be announced approximately four weeks prior to the submission deadline. Funding decisions are anticipated to be made within six weeks following the deadline.

Submission deadline dates for upcoming cycles, including the current cycle, are:

Cycle	Submission Deadline Date
FY27 Fall Semester Needs	---
FY27 Spring Semester Needs	**November 11, 2026**
FY27 Summer Semester Needs	February 1, 2027
FY28 Fall Semester Needs	May 1, 2027

Proposal Procedure

Submit your proposal as a combination of fillable fields and a PDF document, using **CSU's InfoReady Review system**, described below. Proposal title, applicant/co-applicant information, and total budget amount requested/matched will be submitted within fillable fields in the system. All other proposal components **(2 pages max, with additional budget form, quotes, and match**

commitments as appendices) must be uploaded into the system as one combined PDF document. These uploaded components should include a detailed description and justification of the request, with the following required elements, in this order:

- ***Need.*** Clear and concise description of need (what are you requesting?), why internal funds are needed (as opposed to external sources), and how OVPR funds (and non-OVPR funds if applicable) will be utilized to fill the need. Must include a justification for how funds will address gaps, deficiencies or opportunities, as well as how the request, if funded, will extend to broadly benefit CSU, the college, and/or the department.
- ***Institutional Alignment.*** Description of how the investment aligns with institutional strengths and college/other unit priority areas.
- ***Outcomes and Impact.*** The expected outcomes and impacts of a funded request.
- ***Sustainability, Anticipated Growth, Follow-on Opportunities:*** Identify a clear follow-on plan for sustainability and anticipated growth of the investment (e.g., specific identified follow-on proposal submission for additional funding; partnership and economic development; grad student recruitment plan; etc.). Requests must include a clear link to growth or opportunity with an estimated return on investment.
- ***Timeline.*** Date funds are needed and when activities will take place.
- ***Budget.*** A completed **Budget Form** summarizing major elements, cash/in-kind types, and contributor sources (see **Budget Form,** attached or downloadable in the InfoReady system). Save as a PDF and incorporate into the document.
    - *Not included in page limitation*
- ***Quotes.*** Include quotes for all requested capital equipment (greater than $10,000) or renovations for repurposing requests, if applicable.
    - *Not included in page limitation*
- ***Match/Cost Share.*** If cost sharing is included in this proposal, evidence of matching funds with appropriate sign-off from department/college authorities (e.g., letter from department head or associate dean for research indicating availability and commitment of funds, if awarded).
    - *Not included in page limitation*

SUBMISSION PROCESS

Applications are ***due by 5:00 pm on the submission deadline date (see submission deadline table)*** through the CSU InfoReady Review system. The system will not accept applications after 5:00 pm MT.

Accessing the CSU InfoReady Review system to submit:

1. From the opportunities list found at https://colostate.infoready4.com/, locate "***CSU – OVPR Strategic Investment Program – FY27 Spring Semester Needs***" and click on the title to open the opportunity page.
2. From the opportunity page, click "Apply".

3. Use your CSU NetID and password to log into InfoReady Review.
4. Complete and upload all required components. You can save your application as a draft prior to submission.
5. Be sure to submit your application. Applications left as "draft" will not be reviewed.

NOTE: Colleges and other units may have separate internal processes for screening and submission. Applicants should confer with their department head and/or research associate dean prior to preparing an application for advisement on any additional processes.

Review Criteria

All proposals will be reviewed by members of the OVPR Leadership Council and an internal review committee that may include members of VPR advisory groups, the Council of Research Associate Deans, former recipients of similar investments, and other university faculty/staff as needed. Final allocation decisions will be made by the Vice President for Research. Special consideration will be given to activities that are broad-reaching or cross-disciplinary in nature. Likewise, collaborative cost share funding from PIs, colleges, departments, and other sources is strongly encouraged and will be viewed positively in the review process.

The review committee will evaluate proposals based on the merits of the request, including perceived need, benefit, and return on investment. Thus, the following elements are considered:

- Need and degree to which funds will assist with advancing research and scholarly activities, including addressing gaps, deficiencies, opportunities
- Alignment with university, college and/or department strategic initiatives, goals and priorities
- Scholarly impact and broader institutional impact (beyond one investigator or department)
- Long-term sustainability (e.g., will this truly fill a gap or will the need persist; are follow-on growth and funding opportunities clear and attainable)
- Leveraging of resources and indication of prioritization within supporting units

Contact Information

If you have questions or need additional information about this process, please contact:

Dinaida Egan
Director, Research Acceleration Office (RAO); dinaida.lopez@colostate.edu; 970-491-2448