



Research in Mathematics and the Sciences (RIMS)

RFP - AY 2025-2026

Research in Mathematics and the Sciences (RIMS)

Faculty members in the College of the Sciences and Mathematics are invited to apply for the Research in Mathematics and the Sciences (RIMS) Award, funds will be available for use during the 2025-2026 fiscal year. Awards up to \$6,000 can be used for a variety of purposes, as described below.

Important Dates

Submission Deadline: **Friday, March 21, 2025 at 11:59 PM.**

All applications must be submitted to [Qualtrics](#) as a single pdf file, including the cover sheet signed by the applicant and their department chair. Email submissions will not be accepted.

Award notifications will be sent to the applicant's WCU email address the week of April 14, 2025.

Program Purpose, Eligibility, and Scope

The purpose of the RIMS Award is to support and encourage scholarly research by faculty in the College of the Sciences and Mathematics. Submissions should not only explain the immediate scholarly impacts of the proposed project, but also the broader social benefits, impacts and/or applications of the research. Applicants must also clearly demonstrate how their proposals could lead to external funding opportunities in the future.

Eligibility

Tenured or tenure-track permanent faculty members with an appointment in the College of the Sciences and Mathematics are eligible to apply. Priority will be given to proposals by applicants who have not received a grant from the Dean's Office in the previous year, probationary faculty members, and senior faculty members undertaking a major scholarly initiative.

Two-Phased Grant Cycle

In order to enable RIMS support of research during Summer 2025 and through Winter 2027, two phases have been built into the grant cycle. Awards made through this RFP can be disbursed over one of two phases of the grant cycle, or both. Budgets must clearly detail during which phase award monies will be spent. Total requests across both phases should not exceed \$6,000.

- Phase 1 awards will only be disbursed for the period July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026.
- Phase 2 awards will only be disbursed for the period July 1, 2026 to January 31, 2027.

No Phase 1 awards can be applied to the Phase 2 period, and vice versa. It is the faculty member's responsibility to ensure that award monies are spent during the phase in which they are budgeted. Any award money not spent during its allotted phase will return to the College.

Scope

RIMS Awards are made from discretionary funds available to the Dean of the College of the Sciences and Mathematics. They are synchronized with the fiscal year. Use of funds must comply with relevant PASSHE policies.

Specifically, RIMS Awards will fund the following budget items:

- Purchase of equipment or supplies needed to carry out a specific research project.
- Wages for students to participate in research projects during the academic year or summer.
- Pay for page charges and other publication costs.
- Expenses associated with data collection on a specific project.
- Faculty travel expenses for data collection for travel greater than 50 miles away (per the exclusions below)
- Faculty travel for conferences or other research presentation opportunities.

Exclusions

- RIMS does not fund release time (AWA) to pursue a scholarly project.
- RIMS does not fund summer salary for the faculty.
- Cost for hosting guest speakers.
- RIMS does not fund the following: local travel (within 50 miles of WCU), purchase of equipment that does not directly support a specific research project, department seminars, and materials or supplies used for classroom instruction.

- Proposal duplication is not allowed.

PASSHE has implemented Tax Procedure 2015-16 – Reimbursements for Meals to Employees Who Are Not in Overnight Travel Status. This procedure is consistent with IRS regulations, which state that in order for meals that are reimbursed as travel expenses to be excluded from taxable compensation, employees must be traveling overnight and away from their tax home. (Tax home is the general area of work and not the employee's residence). The application of this policy means that meal expense reimbursements will be paid via payroll rather than accounts payable and taxed as compensation when the employee is not in overnight travel status. For example, if an employee travels to a sampling site for one day, the cost of the lunch is considered taxable and will be paid to the employee via payroll.

Reporting and Other Requirements

Faculty who receive RIMS Awards are required to provide a final report as soon as possible and not later than three months after the grant period ends. The report must indicate how the RIMS Award advanced the scholarly growth of the applicant in a way that is meaningful to the applicant, to the University, and to the scholarly discipline. It should also indicate how the award prepared the faculty to apply for external funding. Faculty members are not eligible to apply for subsequent RIMS Awards until the Dean's Office receives reports from previous RIMS Awards. Please use the following link to submit your report: [RIMS Project Completion Report](#).

Award recipients agree to serve as mentors to any CSM faculty members who may request guidance during the RIMS application process in subsequent years.

Following completion of their project, award recipients may be asked to promote their research via a short video interview/demonstration, recorded by a CSM Student Ambassador and shared on the College's website and social media platforms.

Application Guidelines

All applications must be submitted via [Qualtrics](#). Email submissions will not be accepted.

Submit your proposal as a single PDF file, including the completed Cover Sheet with your chair's signature

Incomplete applications or proposals with multiple files will not be reviewed.

The RIMS program provides an opportunity for faculty to gain valuable experience preparing grant proposals that will be peer-reviewed. Receipt of a RIMS Award is a scholarly product that carries merit in the teacher-scholar models of many departments and by tenure and promotion committees. Therefore, the quality of the applications is expected to be commensurate with professional and academic standards. The application for a RIMS Award must consist of the following materials:

- **Narrative Description.** 5 pages, single-spaced, 0.75-inch margin, 12-pt font (not including references). A narrative description of the proposed project that contains the components listed below must be provided. The components of the proposal should be labeled, using the topics below as section headings. The evaluation of the proposal will be based, in part, on how the narrative description addresses these topics. Proposals will be evaluated by faculty from disciplines throughout all departments in the College of the Sciences and Mathematics - use language that can be understood by a colleague who is not an expert in the discipline.
 - **Purpose and Significance.** Address the intellectual merit and the scholarly importance of the proposed project. Include a review of the relevant literature with references to the most recent literature. Describe the research question to be answered or the scope and purpose of the creative work. Describe how the research will add to the body of scholarship in the discipline. Clearly identify broader social benefits, impacts and/or applications of the research being proposed.
 - **Methods and Procedures.** Describe how the project will be implemented: approaches, theoretical frameworks, as well as relevant procedural details of data-gathering and other research methods and methodologies. Describe materials, supplies or resources that will be used to carry out the work. Provide a project timeline.
 - **Dissemination of Results.** Describe how the results of the project will be disseminated to the campus, scholarly, and/or creative community. Specifically, a clear description of plans to share the results of the research project with the WCU community should be included in the proposal. Describe papers, presentations, books, and other scholarly products that are anticipated as a result of the work. Describe the likelihood of completion of these scholarly products and any anticipated obstacles to their completion.

- **Outcomes.** Describe the scholarly growth and development anticipated for the RIMS applicant. Describe other scholarly opportunities that might become available to the applicant following the completion of this project. Describe how other sources of funding might be identified for a subsequent project or continuation of the project.
- **Budget.** 1-2 pages. Budget components must be itemized as specifically as possible and clearly reported as either Phase 1 budget components or Phase 2 components. Expenses must be based on research about relevant costs (e.g., current published airfare and other costs, state per diem rates, equipment costs, maintenance plans, hours and wage for workers, etc.). Consultation with the department chair and/or Dean's Office Assistant Dean is recommended. A justification for each item must be provided, explaining why the item is needed to complete the project. If certain items or expenses could be covered through other funding streams (e.g., tech fee, department travel budget, startup funds) please justify the cost to RIMS. Items described as not eligible for funding (above) should not be included in the budget request. The funds will not be available for use until you have connected (over email, zoom, phone, or face-to-face) with the CSM Assistant Dean Rebecca Grisillo rgrisillo@wcupa.edu for your pre-award meeting. No purchases will be made until this has occurred and no reimbursements will be processed if this connection has not happened.
- **Résumé.** 2 pages. Please include relevant qualifications, experience, publications, and applicable research grants.

Faculty Mentors

The following CSM faculty members are recent RIMS recipients who have kindly agreed to serve as a mentor to any applicants who would like guidance with proposal preparation or the RIMS submission process. Mentor contact information is provided below:

- Dr. Marc Gagne, mgagne@wcupa.edu, Department of Earth and Space Science
- Dr. Benjamin Chambers, bchambers@wcupa.edu, Department of Biology
- Dr. Jenna Becker-Kane, jbeckerkane@wcupa.edu, Department of Political Science

Evaluation

The RIMS applications will be evaluated by the CSM Faculty Proposal Review Committee on the quality of the project proposed and the quality of the proposal submitted. Be advised that it can be difficult to evaluate the quality of the project if the proposal is not written in a manner that clearly addresses all of the components required in the narrative

description. Below is the rubric that will be used to evaluate the proposal and the project. The rubric corresponds directly with the RIMS guidelines, and applicants are encouraged to use the rubric as a guide as they prepare their proposal.

RIMS Evaluation Rubric

Evaluation

RIMS applications will be evaluated by the CSM Faculty Proposal Review Committee (CSMFPRC) on the quality of the project proposed and the quality of the proposal submitted. Be advised that it can be difficult to evaluate the project's quality if the proposal is not written in a way that clearly addresses all the components required in the narrative description. Below is the rubric that will be used to evaluate the proposal and the project. The rubric corresponds directly with the RIMS guidelines, and applicants are encouraged to use it as a guide as they prepare their proposal.

Evaluators will score each proposal using the following rubric: (will finalize after specifics in RFP are finalized).

RIMS Evaluation Rubric

Adherence to Guidelines. The cover sheet is filled out completely and correctly and the chair's signature has been included to ensure that the chair has been notified. The proposal includes all the components required and meets the guidelines for length – narrative (5-pages), budget (2-page) and resume (2-pages). (10 points)
Purpose and Significance. Addresses the intellectual merit and the scholarly importance of the proposed project. Includes a review of the relevant literature, describes the research question to be answered, describes how the research will add to the body of scholarship in the discipline and clearly identifies broader social benefits, impacts and/or applications of the research being proposed. (20 points)
Methods and Procedures. Describes how the project will be implemented as well as relevant procedural details of data-gathering and other research methods and methodologies. Describes materials, supplies or resources that will be used to carry out the work. Provides a project timeline. (20 points)
Dissemination of Results. Describes how the results of the project will be disseminated to the campus, scholarly, and/or creative community; including papers, presentations, books, and other scholarly products that are anticipated as a result of the work. (20 points)
Outcomes and Deliverables. Describes the scholarly growth and development anticipated for the RIMS applicant and describes other scholarly opportunities and external funding opportunities the applicant intends to pursue following the completion of this project. (20)
Budget. The budget components are itemized specifically, and expenses are based on informed estimates that have been appropriately researched. A budget justification for each item is provided, explaining why the item is needed to complete the project. (10 points)
Total (out of 100)

The recommendations of the CSMFPRC will be taken into consideration by the dean, who will make the final decision on the awards to be made.

Dean's Office Contact

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