

Guidelines for 2026 CINSAM Research Grant Proposals

Initial Proposal Deadline: November 14 to Department Chair/School Director

Final Proposal Deadline: December 9 to CINSAM

[Submit proposals to CINSAM here](#)

The primary purpose of CINSAM research grants is to provide support for faculty research with students in CINSAM-related departments and programs. The policies below are intended to maximize the number and quality of student research experiences, especially those that are integrative in nature. The intended outcomes include presentations by students as well as presentations, publications, and grant proposals to external funding organizations by faculty. Furthermore, the grants are intended to support faculty in advancing their research agendas so early-career faculty are prioritized over more established researchers, and new avenues of research that might require preliminary data prior to external grant applications are prioritized over established research programs. Please note that the CINSAM Research Grants budget has been reduced so we are asking proposers to consider alternate plans for using their funding.

Changes to the 2026 RFP from the 2025 RFP include adjustments to align with Kentucky House Bill 4, setting a pay range for students, inclusion Neuroscience faculty from the Psychological Science Department and a timeline change (which was implemented in 2024-25 after release of the RFP).

General policies:

- Faculty members from CINSAM departments/programs (Biological Sciences; Chemistry & Biochemistry; Computer Science & Software Engineering; Cybersecurity & Information Technology; Mathematics & Statistics; Neuroscience from both Biological Sciences and Psychological Science; Educational Leadership & Advanced Studies; Physics, Geology & Engineering Technology; and Teacher Preparation and Educational Studies) may submit a proposal. Collaborations with faculty outside these fields are allowable as long as the lead investigator is within a CINSAM department/program. Faculty collaborators in non-CINSAM departments may be paid on the grant. The subject of the research must also be STEM-related. *At least two students must be included in the research project*.*
- In this document, “students” refers mainly to undergraduates, but because of CINSAM’s emphasis on training teachers, graduate students in teaching fields are also eligible to be counted as student researchers.
- Grants will run during the calendar year. Grant activity may be carried out any time during the year, although we prefer that most or all of the money be spent in the current fiscal year; supplies should be purchased in the first half of the year.
- Successful grants generally range from about \$7,000 to \$13,000. Applicants are strongly advised to limit requests to reasonable expenditures given the scope of the research; all expenditures must be well supported in the budget justification. The following caps* also apply:
 - Total spending cap: \$12,000 for proposals with one (1) faculty researcher; \$18,000 for proposals with two (2) faculty researchers
 - Salary spending cap: \$5,000 for each faculty member, not including FICA
 - Grant funds may be used for course releases with agreement from your chair and dean.
- Priority areas for funding are student stipends, research supplies (no major equipment), student travel to collect data, and faculty summer salary.
- Pre-tenure tenure track faculty will be given the highest priority, followed by associate professors. Proposals from full professors and teaching faculty, however, are still welcome. Visiting teaching professors and staff researchers

may also apply as Project Director II or III with a permanent faculty member as Project Director I. If a visiting teaching professor is included, the proposal must lay out a plan for project completion if the visiting teaching professor's contract is not renewed.

- CINSAM Research Grants are designed to fund research and scholarship activity so the following expenses should *not* be requested through this grant program:
 - Faculty or student travel to conferences for presentation purposes
 - Course development or revision, unless you are researching the course changes as part of a well-described DBER/SOTL project
 - Outreach-focused activities, although outreach may be a secondary goal
 - Sabbatical salary support
 - Major equipment (>\$500)
- The following will serve as guidelines for personnel costs:
 - *Students*: A maximum stipend of \$3,500 per year, per student is allowable for full time summer term work. If fewer hours are expected, please request a smaller stipend. Students must be paid with stipends. Undergraduates must be paid between \$12/hr and \$15/hr, based on required skill level. *Funds allocated to students in the proposal may not be reallocated to other purposes after the award.*
 - *Faculty*: Faculty may request up to one month of summer salary. Preference is given to supporting additional students. While a summer salary is optional, the proposal should address how the faculty member will be compensated if no faculty summer salary is requested. Grant funds may be used for course releases with agreement from your chair and dean.
 - *FICA*: This should be computed at 7.65% of any summer salary for faculty and students. Please include FICA in your student stipend budget estimates even though it may not have to be paid out (based on student course load). Any funds not required for FICA will return to CINSAM.
 - A faculty member will not receive more than two months of summer salary for all projects supported by CINSAM including outreach and research. The faculty member is responsible for ensuring that the university-imposed summer salary limit of 25% of 9-month salary is not exceeded.
 - 12-month employees are not eligible for supplemental pay.
- Any faculty member that has received two or more years of CINSAM Research Grant must provide evidence of efforts to secure external funding for further research following the CINSAM Grants, including a brief narrative and complete citations of external grant proposals submitted (title, funding source, amount date, and result). If no external grant proposals were submitted, please provide an explanation.
- Faculty who have received CINSAM Research Grants in two of the last five years may apply for further CINSAM Research Grant funding this year, however other applications will be given priority.
- Reports due for the investigator's previous CINSAM projects must be on file by the submission deadline in order for the proposal to be considered.
- Grants will be peer-reviewed for selection by a panel of faculty from the CINSAM departments/programs. If you are interested in serving on the review panel, [please submit your name via this link](#).
- Investigators awarded a CINSAM Research Grant will be expected to serve on future CINSAM Research Grant review panels.
- Questions should be directed to Madhura Kulkarni via email kulkarnim2@nku.edu with "CINSAM Research Grant Proposal" in the subject line.

***Due to reduced funding, CINSAM also asks that all project directors explain the feasibility of their projects if their budget is cut to \$6,000. What portions of the project would be cut? How would that cut impact expected outcomes? At this level, CINSAM would only require one student researcher on the project.**

CINSAM Grants Timeline

November 14	Deadline to submit proposal to chairs
December 9	Deadline to submit proposal to CINSAM (with internal questions resolved and chair/director support)
Early January	CINSAM Research Grant Review Committee reviews proposals

Mid January	CINSAM communicates funding decisions
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Proposal Evaluation Criteria:

A committee of faculty/staff from CINSAM and CINSAM departments will review documents using the criteria laid out in a rubric shown at the end of this RFP document.

CINSAM is particularly interested in supporting proposals that:

- lead to submissions for external funding, and publications and presentations with student authors.
- are integrative and cross-disciplinary, proposing active involvement of faculty/staff and students from two or more departments or disciplines. Each investigator's contribution to the collaboration must be described.
- address broadening participation in STEM or research.

Submission and review of proposals:

- We highly recommend communicating with your department Chair(s) as early as possible about plans to submit a CINSAM Grant proposal.
- All required documentation should be submitted via an online form in the three (3) documents (cover page, proposal body, and budget spreadsheet), outlined below.
- The full proposal should include:
 - a. **Signed CINSAM Research Proposal Cover Sheet** (see updated version on page 6 below)
 - b. **Proposal body** – all in one unified .docx or .pdf document:
 - i. The **project description** (*no more than six double-spaced pages*) including:
 1. Description of the need for the work
 2. Description of all project-related activities
 3. Feasibility of the project – background and expertise of the proposer(s) and student(s)
 4. Expected outcomes from the project and means for evaluating them
 5. Plan for dissemination of results
 6. *NEW: An explanation of how feasible this project would be if your budget is cut to \$6,000. What portions of the project would be cut? How would that cut impact expected outcomes? At this level, CINSAM would only require one student researcher on the project.*
 - ii. **Works cited**
 - iii. Indication of **sources of potential future funding** for continuation of this project
 - iv. Record of **previous applications for funding** for related projects
 - v. Record of **previous CINSAM Research Grant funding**, including the year, title, collaborators, amount of funding, major findings, and subsequent funding obtained for further research
 - vi. A brief **curriculum vitae for each faculty investigator** including documentation of faculty and/or student publications and presentations resulting from previous CINSAM grants
 - vii. Optional **appendices**, which may include letters of match support (if any) or other very relevant documents (.docx or .pdf)
 - c. **Budget spreadsheet** using the attached form (.xlsx) and including a **detailed budget justification** that is aligned with each budget line item and the *reasoning behind each line item in the budget*. Prospective cost-share arrangements may be addressed here with supporting documentation from the interested parties included in the appendix. **Remember to offer alternative budget with a \$6000 upper limit. (See note above.)**
- **Proposals must be submitted by the deadlines above to the appropriate destination (chair/director, CINSAM).**
- Proposals will be reviewed by a cross-disciplinary panel of peer reviewers from CINSAM Departments. The panel will make funding recommendations to CINSAM and CINSAM will make the final decision based on panel recommendations, chair approval and available funds.
- **Project directors who receive a CINSAM Research Grant will be required to submit reports to CINSAM for three years following the grant.**

CINSAM Research Grant Evaluation Rubric

All criteria are scored on a scale of 1-5, where:

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

DIMENSION 1: OVERALL QUALITY

Relative weight 0.7

a. How well the proposal meets the purpose of the program for which the application is made

CINSAM Research Grants are awarded to provide funds to pay for stipends, supplies, and research travel for faculty/staff research with students. (This does not cover conference travel.)

- i. This proposal clearly meets the purpose of a CINSAM Research Grant.
- ii. The proposal clearly includes a role for at least two student researchers. (DBER/SOTL grants must have a minimum of one student researcher.)

b. The value of the project to the applicant's growth and professional status; the value of the project to the scholarly community

This project represents value, merit, or worth to the applicant's:

- i. Academic or scholarly development
- ii. Professional growth and advancement (CINSAM Grants prioritize Assistant, then Associate Professors. Full professors and non-tenure track faculty are also eligible. Staff and temporary faculty and may apply as secondary investigators on a permanent faculty member's proposal. For temporary faculty, a plan for project completion in the event of this faculty member's nonrenewal must be included.)
- iii. Scholarly community

c. The ability of the applicant to convey the content and importance of the project to those outside his/her own academic discipline

For those in other academic disciplines, this project's:

- i. Content is described clearly, coherently, and non-technically
- ii. Importance is readily understandable or knowable

d. Overall quality of the proposal

This project:

- i. Follows the requested format by addressing all requirements of the application
- ii. Presents a logical, reasoned argument following the scientific method, design process, or other discipline-specific research methods (e.g. research questions or design problem is clearly articulated)
- iii. Provides adequate academic references and in-text citations
- iv. Demonstrates alignment between the proposed work and requested budget, with a clear and reasonable budget justification

DIMESION 2: APPLICANT DILIGENCE

Relative weight 0.3

e. The probability that the project will be carried out (to be measured in terms of the applicant's background, previous successes, and attainability of the goals stated)

This project:

- i. Has goals that are achievable in the time allotted
- ii. Is likely to be performed or executed, given the applicants' background, expertise, and prior accomplishments (i.e. publications, presentations, references, creative activities, previous grants, etc.)

f. Contribution of the project to the applicant's ongoing scholarship or creative activity

The applicant:

- i. Will be able to use this project to advance their ongoing scholarship or creative activities

g. Investigation of further funding sources

This applicant:

- i. Has examined other funding sources for this project
- ii. Has applied other funding for research supported by prior CINSAM Research Grants (applicable if the recipient has received two or more CINSAM Research Grants)

DIMENSION 3: VALUE ADDED

Additional consideration beyond main score calculated from Dimensions 1 & 2

h. Value added

This project:

- i. Will address DBER/SOTL questions
- ii. Will address broadening participation in STEM or research
- iii. Crosses disciplinary boundaries

Revised 2025

CINSAM Research Grant Proposal Cover Sheet

Proposal Title: _____

Amount Requested: _____

Project Director(s) (PD)	PD I (main contact)	PD II (if applicable)	PD III (if applicable)
Name:	_____	_____	_____
Email:	_____	_____	_____
Phone:	_____	_____	_____
Department:	_____	_____	_____

Repeat as needed for additional project directors.

Brief, non-technical summary that may be used in publications about CINSAM Grants (150-300 words):

Please indicate any other funding (ALL SOURCES including private, university, state, or federal).

- Pending:
- Current:

If any of the PDs have received two or more years of CINSAM support, include abstracts of external proposals and referee reports *in the Proposal body*. Also include a brief (less than one page) narrative justifying how the new proposed CINSAM work improves the PD's chances of receiving external funding.

Department Chair(s) Signature of Approval

PD I's Chair Signature: _____ Date: _____

PD II's Chair Signature: _____ Date: _____

PD III's Chair Signature: _____ Date: _____