UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO RESEARCH ALLOCATIONS COMMITTEE (RAC)

GUIDELINES FOR GRANTS

A. OVERVIEW

The primary mission of the Research Allocations Committee (RAC) funding is to support the career development of faculty (research and creative works) who are in various stages of career development. Priority will be given to faculty: 1) in the early stage of their careers, 2) embarking upon new directions, or 3) in fields and disciplines where there is limited funding. RAC grants can provide seed money to support NEW research or creative works, to stimulate the development of funding from extramural sources, and to bring an existing project to fruition. The major objectives of RAC are to help junior faculty practice in preparing national-level proposals (NSF, NIH, NEA, IES, etc.), to promote transition to extramural funding mechanisms, and to facilitate national exposure for research and creative works by UNM faculty.

Internal grant awards represent an important means by which the university is able to support the scholarly and artistic activities of the faculty and foster academic excellence. The following guidelines and priorities have been established to ensure that the available funds are distributed fairly and are effective in sustaining the vitality and quality of research at the University.

B. ELIGIBILITY

RAC funds will be limited to voting members of the UNM main and branch campus faculty (excluding the Health Sciences Center). Research faculty, visiting faculty, and faculty on leave without pay or on a visiting appointment are NOT eligible.

Faculty may submit one RAC proposal in any funding cycle. Final reports from previous RAC grants must be submitted prior to submission of a new proposal.

There will be two types of proposals: (a) Small Grant with budgets under $4,000 and (b) Large Grant with budgets between $4,000 and $10,000.

C. FUNDING CYCLES AND SUBMISSIONS

Application Period for Fall Semester: October 1st – October 15th

Application Period for Spring Semester: February 1st – February 15th

Project Completion Funding Cycle: 18 months from award notice date.

Submission of Applications: Applications and all accompanying materials & appendices must be submitted via the RAC proposal server (http://rac.unm.edu), during the Application Periods in Fall and Spring semesters.

D. FUNDING PRIORITIES AND ELIGIBLE PROJECT CATEGORIES

The following criteria will be evaluated in a decision of a RAC grant award. In addition, extra consideration may be given to proposals addressing multiple funding priorities (*e.g.*, a proposal by a new faculty member to support research that was favorably reviewed by an extramural funding agency but not funded). The funding priorities for proposals are as follows:

- **Proposals by Assistant Professors.** Priority will be given to Assistant Professors, especially in their first 36 months as full-time faculty (tenure-track). Funding will be based on the need to establish research, scholarly, or artistic programs. In disciplines where extramural funding is available, the projects should include a specific plan and timeline for transition to such funding, or, in the absence of extramural funding opportunities, a plan for exposing the proposed work via peer-reviewed publications, presentations, performances, etc.

- **New research/creative work direction.** This category provides support for faculty members moving into significantly different areas of research, scholarship, and creativity. These are defined as projects that represent a new direction for the faculty, a new approach to a problem, or a creative work as yet undeveloped. The projects must be clearly designed to lead to new sources of extramural funding when such funding is available. This category does not provide support for faculty applying new techniques to ongoing research, but rather to those faculty proposing a very different set of research questions that will likely lead to new sources of extramural funding.

- **Fields with limited extramural funding.** This category provides support for faculty members in fields where there is little extramural funding available. The proposal should explain the limitations on available extramural funding and describe the faculty member's effort to pursue extramural funding with the advice of department chairs, college research development officers, and the Office of the Vice President for Research.

- **Small Grants** –Due to budget constraints, more small grants may be awarded than large grants.

- **New projects that have been favorably peer-reviewed by an extramural funding agency but were not funded yet have a strong probability for eventual funding.** Proposals in this category must address the reviewers' comments on the proposal (if available) and describe how the RAC funding will support research germane to resubmission.

- **Resubmissions** of RAC proposals that were not previously funded, addressing and incorporating the reviewers' feedback (see E8).

Any questions regarding what might constitute Eligible Projects and their priority should be directed to the RAC Committee Chair prior to submission of an application.

E. APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Clarity. All proposals should be written in language understandable to general academic audience because the RAC panel is composed of faculty from a broad range of disciplines. Avoid undefined and disciplinary jargon. Proposals with excessive jargon are generally not favorably reviewed.

Submit electronically and in the following order:

1. **Cover Page.** This page should include the following:

   A. Name of applicant, rank, department/division; campus address, phone number, email address; number of years as regular faculty at UNM; and number and date of any RAC award during the past five years. For the same time period, list all publications, grants, and other creative works that have resulted from RAC funding.

   B. Project title

   C. Total amount requested

   D. List of **all** current and pending support (funding agency and amount), indicating which, if any, are related to the current RAC proposal.

   E. Signature of Department/Division Chair

   F. Signature of Department Administrator or other person responsible for overseeing budgets

2. **Project Abstract (*250 words maximum*)**: A summary project statement, written in non-technical language, about the significance, the purposes, the research or creative work plan, and expected outcomes.

3. **Proposal Narrative (*4 pages maximum*).**

   *Format of the Proposal Narrative: To facilitate the review process, applicants must use a 12-point font, single-spaced, with 1-inch margins on all pages numbered consecutively. A list of references as needed and more detailed descriptions of data collection measures and procedures should be provided in an appendix and will not count as a part of the 4-page narrative. **Applications exceeding the 4-page limit or violating the format guidelines will not be reviewed.***

   The proposal narrative should address the following areas:

   (a). Significance and Innovation
   Provide background and literature review of the project, explaining the ideas or problems examined by the study. State specifically the goals or purpose(s) of the project. Explain how the project will complement, challenge, or expand relevant studies in the field. Describe any novel concepts, approaches or methods employed in the project. Emphasize originality, innovation, or creativity. Describe how the work will advance knowledge/art. When relevant, discuss potential problem areas and applicable alternative strategies.

If the proposal is a revised submission of a prior RAC proposal the revisions must be described in a 1-page **Introduction to Resubmission** (see E8 below regarding instructions for revised submissions).

(b). Methods, Work Plan and Potential for Completion
Describe method(s) and clarify the part or stage of the project that will be supported by the RAC grant. Provide a work plan including a **timeline**, describing what you will accomplish during the award period and the appropriateness of the fieldwork to be undertaken in order to reach your objectives. Describe the archival or source materials to be studied, the research or creative work site, the data to be collected, and a data analysis plan if it is a research project. **If IRB or IACUC approval is required, please indicate the status of the application** and your plans for obtaining the IRB approval.

If the project is a collaboration between multiple faculty members, please speak to the role of each individual in the research.

(c). Broader Impacts
Describe expected outcomes of the project and the impact of the proposed work beyond its disciplinary interest (*e.g.*, UNM, New Mexico community, national and global impacts, etc.).

4.   **Bibliography/References** *(2 pages maximum).* List complete citations.

5.   **Plan for Transition to Extramural Sources of Funding** *(1 page maximum).* Describe specifically how this project will be utilized to obtain extramural support. Describe funding mechanisms to be pursued and timeline for future proposal submissions, and list the extramural funding agencies to which you might submit your proposal. List any research mentors/collaborators for this project and their role in supporting development of funding proposals. It is not sufficient to simply state that the data from this proposal will be utilized to support future applications.

If a plan to transition to external funding is not applicable, explain why.

6.   **Budget and Justification** *(2 pages maximum).* This page includes itemized budget and budget justification. The budget justification must include a brief description of why each component of the itemized budget is essential to the project. The justification must also state why any other current funding/support (e.g., start-up funds) listed cannot be used instead of the requested RAC funds. Budget should be well justified and provide appropriate sources for cost. Include separate quotes for invoices, informal product pages, or vendor email correspondences of items or services that exceed $1000. (Separate quotes will not count toward page limit.)

The TOTAL amount of the budget request for <u>Small Grant Proposal must not exceed $4,000 and the total amount of the budget request for Large Grant Proposal must not</u>

<u>exceed</u> $**10,000**$ for an 18-month funding period. The budget must reflect the appropriate funding period.

The following **may be funded** by RAC grants:

- Equipment, supplies, animals, services (please refer to UNM Policy on Property Management and Control https://policy.unm.edu/university-policies/7000/7710.html)
- Project Assistants who are students paid hourly (rather than GA/RA) if there is a persuasive explanation in the budget justification as to why they are essential for completion of the project
- Travel as essential to conducting the research or creative work (please refer to UNM policy on travel: https://policy.unm.edu/university-policies/4000/4030.html)

The following **cannot be funded** by RAC grants:

- Faculty and post-doc salaries
- Any partial support of a GA/RA position
- Course buyout
- Travel for conference presentation

(NOTE: F & A costs are not charged for RAC awards)

No-cost extensions may be granted on a case-by-case basis. A written justification detailing the reasons for the extension must be submitted prior to one-month before the scheduled end of the funding cycle. If extension requests are denied, any remaining funds will be frozen and automatically withdrawn and returned to the RAC index.

One month after the project termination date, any remaining funds will be automatically withdrawn and returned to the RAC index

7. **Curriculum Vita (CV) or Biographical Sketch (*2 pages maximum per person*).** Attach an abbreviated CV that includes education, work history, and relevant grants and publications, or an NSF- or NIH-format Biographical Sketch for yourself and for any key collaborators identified in the proposal.

8. **Introduction to Resubmission or Revision Application *(maximum of 1 page)*** Revised applications will be accepted. However, there must be substantial changes in the content of the application. The revised application must include an *Introduction to Resubmission or Revision* that summarizes the substantial additions, deletions, and changes. The Introduction must also include responses to the criticisms and issues raised in the previous reviewers' comments. The changes in the Proposal Narrative *must be clearly marked by appropriate bracketing, indenting, or changing of typography (font)*, unless the changes are so extensive as to include most of the text. This exception must be explained in the Introduction. If the revision is so extensive that the revised proposal is

largely unrelated to the original, the application may be reviewed as New, rather than as a revised application.

9. **Previous RAC Support Funding**
Describe any RAC funding (title, amount of funding, funding period) in the past five years. If none, state NONE.

Provide a brief synopsis of the results of RAC funded projects during the past five years. If none, state NONE.

If you have had previous RAC funding, describe what if any extramural funding has been obtained as a result of this previous support. Describe this funding and provide grant numbers when applicable. If none, state NONE.

10. **Conflicts of Interest.** The annual UNM conflict of interest disclosure form(s) must be completed for all the key personnel. For conflict of interest disclosure procedure, refer to UNM Research Compliance website: http://researchcompliance.unm.edu/coi-policy. When potential conflicts of interest exist, distribution of funds will be contingent upon approval by the Research and Compliance Office.

11. **A Letter of Collaboration** is required from other key personnel on the project (when pertinent).

12. **Appendices/Other.** If any human or animal subjects are involved, attach the appropriate approval letters here (if already obtained[1]). **If human subjects are involved**, provide Institutional Review Board Approval (if already obtained). If IRB approval has not been obtained at time of RAC submission, it must be obtained prior to release of funds. **If animal subjects are involved,** provide a brief description of the proposed involvement of animal subjects and an IACUC approval letter (if already obtained) in the Appendix. If IACUC approval has not been obtained at time of RAC submission, it must be obtained prior to release of funds. For IRB and animal research approval letters: if the approval of the proposed research is not received by the proposal submission date, it is acceptable to include a statement that an application for approval has been submitted

In the appendices, you may also include letters granting access, as necessary to your proposal, and/or letters of support from department/division chairs for shared costs, as applicable. Furthermore, here you can provide a hyperlink to any additional materials you believe will aid our understanding of the proposal, such as auditory or visual supplementary materials. The time duration of linked streaming audiovisual material should not exceed 10 minutes.

F. RAC REVIEW PROCESS

      1. Review Criteria. All proposals will receive ratings (1-5 with 5 being the best) for the following areas: *Significance/innovation, Methods, Broader Impacts, Clarity, and Budget and Budget Justification*. Committee members will provide written critiques. Each of these criteria will be addressed and considered in assigning the overall score. Note that the application does not need to be strong in all categories to be judged likely to have major impact and thus deserve a high priority score. For example, a faculty member may propose to carry out important work that by its nature is not innovative but is essential to move a field forward and is therefore still judged likely to support the applicant's subsequent extramural funding applications, substantial advancement of a project, and/or dissemination of the results. Review criteria will be based on scientific, scholarly, or artistic merit. Review will be patterned after the NSF/NIH/NEA review process. All proposals will also be rated based on the stated RAC funding priorities, as listed on page 2.

      2. Policy of Recusal. Applications will be reviewed by the members of the RAC. RAC members are recused from review whenever an appearance of conflict of interest may arise (e.g., the RAC member and the proposal author are collaborators or faculty members from the same department; see also http://research.unm.edu/coi/). Where appropriate and necessary (if more than 33% of eligible RAC reviewers have to be recused), additional outside reviewers' opinions may also be solicited.

      3. Questions. You are encouraged to contact the RAC Chair or any other RAC committee member to address any questions. Moreover, with consent of previous PIs, sample copies of funded proposals may be made available for examination.

G. SPECIAL CONDITIONS

All recipients of research funds are required to provide reports of progress and other accomplishments related to the project no later than 30 days following the termination of the award period, or the end of any extension granted. The report should include but not be limited to manuscripts, grant applications and awards resulting from the project. Failure to comply with reporting requirements will limit eligibility for future RAC funding.

All presentations and publications of work resulting from a RAC award must acknowledge having received financial support from the University's Office of the Vice President for Research.

RESEARCH ALLOCATIONS COMMITTEE CHECKLIST FOR GRANT PROPOSALS

1   **COVER PAGE - GENERAL INFORMATION**
_____ Name of Applicant, Rank, Department/Division
_____ Contact information: Campus address, Telephone number, E-mail address
_____ Number of years at UNM as regular voting faculty
_____ Number and dates of previous RAC awards
_____ Title of proposed research/creative work
_____ Total amount of RAC funds requested
_____ List of all current and pending research support
_____ Signature of department/division chair
_____ Signature of department administrator or other person responsible for overseeing budgets

2   _____ **ABSTRACT** *(Does not exceed 250 words)*

3   **PROPOSAL NARRATIVE/PROPER FORMAT**
_____ Maximum of 4 pages, single-spaced and numbered consecutively
_____ 12-point font, 1-inch margins at top, bottom, and both sides of all pages

4   _____ **BIBLIOGRAPHY/REFERENCES**: list of complete citations (*2 pages maximum*)

5   _____ **PLAN FOR TRANSITION TO EXTRAMURAL FUNDING** (*1 page*)

6   **BUDGET AND JUSTIFICATION** (*2 pages maximum*)
_____ Itemized budget (Maximum of $4000/$10000 for Small/Large Grants)
_____ Justification of budget items *(Separate quotes will not count toward page limit)*
7   _____ Curriculum Vitae or biographical sketch *(2 pages maximum)*
8   _____ Introduction to resubmission, if applicable (*1 page*)
9   _____ Statement elaborating results from previous RAC support, if applicable (*1 page)*
10 _____ UNM annual conflict of interest form is up to date (not attached to proposal)
11 _____ Letter of Collaboration (when pertinent)
12 _____ Appendices/Other: Copy of IRB and/or animal research letter of approval (when pertinent), Letter(s) of access for all resources required, letter of support from department/division chair for shared costs, links to additional materials