Research Priority Areas of the University of Kentucky

FY25 Enabling Equipment for Materials Science and Energy Research Grants (EEMSERG)

The University of Kentucky Energy Research Priority Area (e-RPA) and Materials Science Research Priority Area (m-RPA) are soliciting proposals for research equipment (instruments) or clusters of equipment that will increase research competitiveness in the broad areas of energy and materials science. Because common equipment is often used by these areas, we are issuing a joint call for proposals, with opportunities for funding individually by one or jointly by both RPAs.

Background

The e-RPA and m-RPA's missions are to enhance the energy and materials science research strengths of the University through further development of a diverse cohort of faculty and staff working within the energy and materials science spaces. We will extend the University's current strengths through targeted programs aimed at increasing research activity, collaboration and competitiveness.

One area of need to increase UK's proposal competitiveness identified by members of the e-RPA and m-RPA is funding to acquire or build equipment and instrumentation. New or replacement equipment can be difficult to purchase on a typical award and is often needed to obtain data or support ongoing programs prior to submission of a proposal.

To continue to modernize our research capabilities, and to assist in replacing aging workhorse research equipment, we will support requests that:

- Facilitate acquisition of major equipment housed within an institutional research core
- Facilitate acquisition of shared equipment that has a large user base
- Facilitate equipment or equipment cluster purchases that enable novel analysis capabilities
- Facilitate replacement or repair of essential pieces of dedicated equipment within individual laboratories or in shared-use equipment facilities
- Facilitate acquisition of new equipment essential to individual research program(s)
- Support instrument and/or software development that meets the above goals
- Support construction of equipment or instrumentation that meet the above goals

Submission

Proposals must be received before 5pm on January 10th, 2025. Proposals should be submitted via the VPR [Internal Grants Portal](#).

Eligibility

Proposals may be submitted by an individual investigator, teams of investigators or by the appropriate administrator on behalf of a unit (ADR, chair, director). Individuals or teams must be RPA members at the time of submission to be eligible. Anyone who would like to become an e-RPA member can join here: [Join the e-RPA](#). Anyone who would like to become an m-RPA member can join here: [Join the m-RPA](#).

Funding

- **e-RPA**: Funding of up to $500,000 will be available from the e-RPA to support an estimated 4-8 proposals.
- **m-RPA**: Funding of up to $175,000 will be available from the m-RPA to support an estimated 3-6 proposals.

Funding requests of any amount may be proposed. If requested and appropriate, co-funding may be considered by the e-RPA and m-RPA review panels.

Format

Proposals should be prepared according to standard guidelines for federal proposals (NSF, DOE, NIH), albeit in an abridged form. Proposal must include:

I. Cover Sheet – list PI, Co-Is, Department/Centers/Colleges involved. Specify whether your request is for funding from the e-RPA or m-RPA. If you would like your proposal to be considered for co-funding, indicate a primary RPA (for initial review).

II. Abstract (250 words).

III. Justification of Need (3 pages exclusive of citations).

       A. Description of equipment to be purchased or built.

       B. Need for equipment, including the areas of energy or materials research that the equipment will foster. If the same (or similar) equipment is present at UK, explain the need for a second such piece.

       C. List of users and _brief_ description of near-term research objectives.   The relevance of the equipment to the RPA area research should be made clear.

       D. Location where equipment will be housed, and any new utilities required.

       E. Plan for allowing campus-wide access to equipment and method of tracking users.

       F. Plan for providing user training and equipment maintenance.

       G. Citations.

IV. Budget.

A budget and justification must be included with sufficient detail for reviewers to judge adequacy. Budget can include typically allowable expenses, but no F&A should be budgeted.

- The program will not support purchase of instructional equipment.
- The program will not support salaries.
- Training activities (including necessary travel) may be included.
- Necessary utility installation may be included, but general renovations should not.
- Funds must be expended before June 30, 2025, unless special provisions are made for long lead-time items.
- ***No cost share is required for proposals less than $100,000. Proposals requesting greater than $100,000 do not require cost share, but cost share will be considered in proposal review. Amount and source of funds must be identified in budget justification.***

V. Biographical sketch for PI only (2 pages).

VI. Vendor quote(s).

Review

Proposals will be reviewed using typical NSF/DoE/NIH criteria. External reviewers will be used to the extent possible. The e-RPA and m-RPA will maintain separate review panels. Requests for co-funding will be evaluated by each review panel with recommendations forwarded to the leadership teams. Final decisions will be approved by the appropriate RPA leadership teams.

Deliverables

No later than June 30, 2025, and for 3 years thereafter, a one-page report is required listing users, as well as publications, presentations, and proposals (the number submitted and the number funded) that have been (at least in part) generated by the equipment.

Questions should be addressed to:

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