

Manual for Faculty Research Grant (FRG) Programs at UNT

**Internal Funding Mechanisms Administered by the UNT
Office of Research and Economic Development**

Research Initiation Grants (RIG)

Research Opportunities Program (ROP)

Research Enabling Grant (REG)

This manual contains an overview of the RIG, ROP, and REG mechanisms, as well as application forms and reviewer evaluation forms for each mechanism. Contact the UNT Office of Research and Economic Development (<http://research.unt.edu> or <http://research.unt.edu/intramural/intramural.htm>) for additional information or assistance.

Overview of FRG Mechanisms

Research Initiation Grants (RIG)

Purpose: The Research Initiation Grant (RIG) is intended to stimulate and aid (1) faculty members at the beginning of their academic careers or (2) faculty members seeking to rekindle their research efforts by undertaking research projects that will establish or re-establish their involvement and expertise in a given area of inquiry or activity.

Faculty Salary Allowed: Each RIG applicant may request a one-time \$3,500 summer salary allocation OR a one-time course buy-out during a regular semester for a maximum of \$3,500. If the applicant was awarded a previous RIG with this salary allocation, she/he is ineligible to request this allocation again. Any such allocation must be used to relieve the applicant of significant teaching responsibilities for the specified time period (rather than being used as a salary augmentation). Note that this program is completely separate from the Junior Faculty Summer Research Fellowship program.

Maximum Award Amounts: \$7,500 (whether or not the one-time \$3,500 allocation for summer salary or course buy-out is requested).

Eligibility: Assistant Professors in their first three years at UNT (including newly hired Assistant Professors) are automatically eligible to apply for a RIG. In special cases, more senior faculty who have been disengaged from a particular area of research for a lengthy period of time are allowed to apply for a RIG; contact the Office of the Vice President for Research and Economic Development to request such special permission. Otherwise, faculty beyond their first three years at UNT may seek FRG funding from other programs (e.g., Research Opportunity Program or Research Enabling Grant).

Eligibility for Repeat Awards: New faculty may apply for RIG funds in each of their first three years. However, faculty in areas with external funding potential will be expected to have submitted one or more extramural proposals prior to applying for a third consecutive RIG.

Requirements: Although not formally required as with ROP Grants, it is expected that whenever possible, RIG recipients should submit one or more formal proposals for external funding within 18 months after the receipt of the RIG Award. Evidence of this potential should be included in the proposal. A research report must be filed with the Faculty Research Committee to describe the progress and outcome of the RIG award.

Deadline: RIG competitions are conducted **only once each year**. RIG proposals are due in the Office of the Vice President for Research and Economic Development on a specified date in the early part of each Fall semester. Consult the website and the current RIG Application Form (available at <http://research.unt.edu/intramural/intramural.htm>) for the specific deadline in any given year. Consult with relevant Chairs and Deans, so that sufficient lead-time is allowed for them to review and sign the proposal.

Research Opportunity Program (ROP) Grants

Purpose: The Research Opportunities Program (ROP) provides assistance to university research and scholarly activities that show a high potential for attracting and maintaining support from external funding agencies.

Faculty Salary Allowed: No; salary requests for summer or for teaching release (buy-out) will not be considered in ROP proposals.

Maximum Award Amounts: \$7,500.

Eligibility: All tenured or tenure track full-time faculty are eligible to apply for ROP Grants. Permanent and temporary faculty appointees who hold the doctorate (or equivalent) may apply for a ROP, but the Faculty Research Committee reserves the right to give preference to proposals from tenured and tenure track faculty.

Eligibility for Repeat Awards: If a faculty member is awarded a ROP for two consecutive years, she/he is ineligible to apply for a ROP in the third year.

Requirements: It is expected that one or more formal proposals for external funding will be submitted within 18 months after the receipt of the ROP award. Evidence of this potential must be included in the proposal. A research report must be filed with the Faculty Research Committee to describe the progress and outcome of the ROP award.

Deadline: ROP competition is conducted **only once each year**. ROP proposals are due in the Office of the Vice President for Research and Economic Development on a specified date in the early part of each Spring semester. Consult the website and the current ROP Application Form (available at <http://research.unt.edu/intramural/intramural.htm>) for the specific deadline in any given year. Consult with relevant Chairs and Deans, so that sufficient lead-time is allowed for them to review and sign the proposal.

Research Enabling Grants (REG)

Purpose: The Research Enabling Grant (REG) enables faculty members to carry out high quality research and scholarly activities in areas for which external funds are demonstrated to be unavailable.

Faculty Salary Allowed: No; salary requests for summer or for teaching release (buy-out) will not be considered in REG proposals.

Maximum Award Amounts: \$7,500.

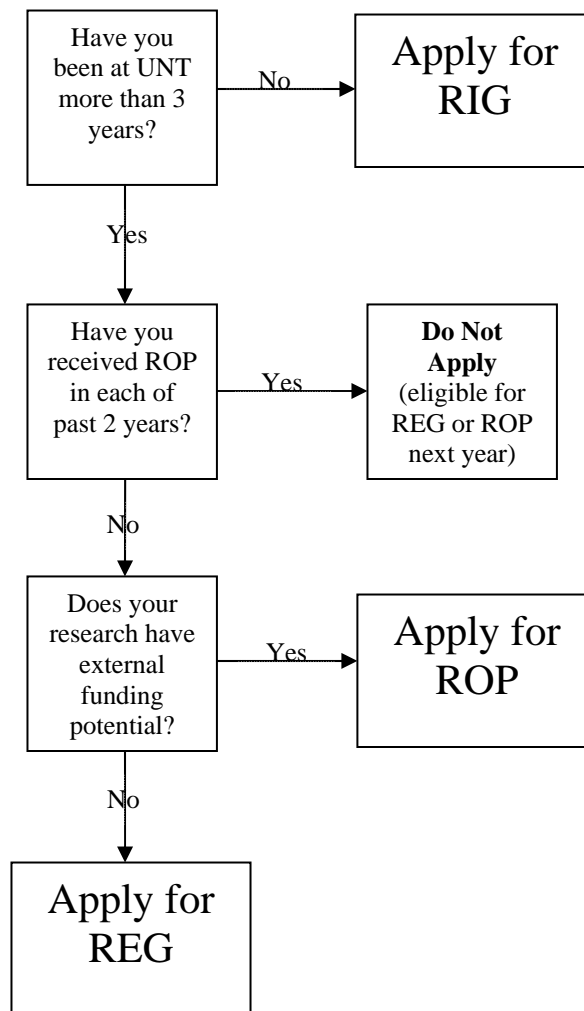
Eligibility: All tenured or tenure track full-time faculty are eligible to apply for REG Grants. Permanent and temporary faculty appointees who hold the doctorate (or equivalent) may apply for a REG, but the Faculty Research Committee reserves the right to give preference to proposals from tenured and tenure track faculty.

Eligibility for Repeat Awards: Eligible faculty may apply for a REG each year.

Requirements: A research report must be filed with the Faculty Research Committee to describe the progress and outcome of the REG award.

Deadline: REG competition is conducted **only once each year**. REG proposals are due in the Office of the Vice President for Research and Economic Development on a specified date in the early part of each Spring semester. Consult the website and the current REG Application Form (available at <http://research.unt.edu/intramural/intramural.htm>) for the specific deadline in any given year. Consult with relevant Chairs and Deans, so that sufficient lead-time is allowed for them to review and sign the proposal.

Choosing the Appropriate Mechanism



Review Processes for RIG, ROP, and REG

Evaluation Processes

The process described in this section is aspirational and represents how the FRC currently envisions administering the reviews. However, given the extent to which these processes differ from previous processes, it is possible that pragmatic variations may be necessitated during implementation.

The Faculty Research Committee (FRC) determines the awardees for RIG, ROP, and REG competitions. To facilitate that decision-making, the FRC creates separate review panels for each of the three programs, which then makes funding recommendations back to the FRC. In addition to participating in the final deliberations of the FRC, each member of the FRC sits on at least one review panel (described below).

Composition of Review Panels: Each review panel is composed of at least three members of the FRC, and five-seven members of the faculty selected and invited by the FRC.

Items Provided to Reviewers: In addition to the application and vita provided by the applicant, reviewers will also be provided with additional information when available. Recent Research Reports submitted by the applicant to the FRC subsequent to past FRG awards will be provided to reviewers, and a report from the Office of the Vice President for Research and Economic Development summarizing the grant-related activity of the applicant.

Review Panel Functions: What follows is a summary of the review panel process that we intend to implement. However, the FRC reserves the right to adjust the process, in consultation with the Vice President for Research and Economic Development, to effectively administer the FRG program. Each review panel meets soon after the deadline date for its respective program. In advance of the meeting, the review panel members receive copies of all proposals for that program. For each proposal, one member of the review panel is designated as the primary reviewer and another member is designated as the secondary reviewer. The reviewers evaluate each proposal according to a set of criteria specific to each program (see Evaluation Criteria section below). Via reviewer presentations and panel discussions, the review panel sorts the proposals into three categories: High Priority; Medium Priority; and Low Priority (the maximum proportion of High Priority proposals being annually pre-determined by the Vice President for Research and Economic Affairs and communicated to the FRC and the review panel prior to the meeting). High Priority proposals are recommended for funding without further rating/ranking. Low Priority proposals are recommended to be declined funding without further rating/ranking. Via panel discussion and pooled numerical ratings, the review panel ranks all Medium Priority proposals from most-to-least recommended for funding.

Final Decisions: Following each review panel meeting, the FRC meets to review, discuss, and act on the recommendations of the review panel. All review panel

recommendations may be accepted or reconsidered by the full FRC. Based upon the amount of funds available and the final proposal categorizations, the FRC determines the cutoff point for proposal funding. Proposals with final priority status above the cutoff receive the award; proposals with final priority status below the cutoff are declined without funding.

Reviewer Conflicts: During review panel meetings, should a panel member have a proposal being reviewed, she/he will leave the room during all discussions and categorizing/ranking of the proposal. During the FRC meeting to make final funding decisions, any proposals belonging to FRC members will be de-identified such that only the review panel's recommendation/ranking will appear in available materials. Thus, FRC members will make decisions regarding cutoff scores without identifying information of FRC members that might be affected by the decision.

Evaluation Criteria

Because the RIG, ROP, and REG mechanisms have divergent goals and targets, the evaluation criteria are distinct for the three programs. For all programs, the outcomes of any previous FRG awards to the applicant will be a serious consideration. The following evaluation criteria infuse the respective programs' review processes from the primary and secondary reviewer, through the review panel discussions, and the final FRC deliberations. Refer to the reviewer evaluation forms (available at <http://research.unt.edu/intramural/intramural.htm>) for specific weighting of criteria.

RIG Criteria: Because the focus of the RIG program is to stimulate and aid the initiation of research programs, much attention is paid to the quality of the research plan as communicated in the proposal, and to the promise of the applicant's proposed work to result in a program of scholarship that elevates the research profile of the faculty person as an academic professional, and of UNT as an institution. Depending upon the professional area as well as the specific research goals, this promise might or might not be represented by a high likelihood for subsequent external funding. To that end, the RIG program has its own application format and reviewer evaluation form to highlight information relevant to these criteria.

ROP Criteria: The ROP grants are intended for the express purpose of increasing the amount of external research funding sought and obtained by UNT researchers. Thus, the quality of the research plan remains very important in evaluating a ROP proposal, but so are a variety of other factors. The availability of funding in a given area, the clear linkage of the proposed project to a larger (externally-fundable) program of research, the track-record of the applicant in following through on past programs of research, and the track record of the applicant in seeking external funds, all take on paramount importance in reviewing ROP applications. To facilitate this evaluation, the ROP application and the ROP reviewer evaluation form highlight these dimensions.

REG Criteria: Very much unlike the ROP grant mechanisms, REG applications are appropriate only for projects *not* viable for external funding. This is usually because

funding for a particular area is not very available. However, a REG project is still expected to be of high quality such that its completion elevates the research profile of the faculty person as an academic professional, and of UNT as an institution. Given this expectation, the two primary foci of evaluation become the quality of the research plan and the accuracy of the assessment that external funding is not viable. Other considerations in the review process include the track-record of the applicant in following through on past research, and whether the applicant is or could be engaged in alternative research programs that are viable for external funding. The REG application and REG reviewer evaluation form reflect these criteria.

Online Resources

Available in completable .doc format at <http://research.unt.edu/intramural/intramural.htm>

Application Forms

RIG Application Form

ROP Application Form

REG Application Form

Reviewer Evaluation Forms

RIG Reviewer Evaluation Form

ROP Reviewer Evaluation Form

REG Reviewer Evaluation Form