REGENT SCHOLAR GRANT PROGRAM: 2016

OVERVIEW

Following are details for the 2016 UW System Regent Scholar award program.

The Regent Scholar program provides one-time grants to individual faculty or to campus programs working in conjunction with students who undertake innovative and collaborative undergraduate research projects. These projects should have the potential to lead to job creation and economic development, and foster entrepreneurship. In terms of focus, they may have an emphasis in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) or include pursuits in any of the academic disciplines, including arts, humanities, or professional studies. The 2016 program will provide three awards of up to $50,000 each.

Background

In mid-2013, the REDI Committee passed a resolution asking that opportunities be identified to reward faculty members who engage in activities related to research, economic development, and innovation. The grant programs described in this document are a result of discussions designed to address this objective. The UW System has worked closely with the National Council on Undergraduate Research (CUR), the country’s leading voice to support and promote high-quality undergraduate student-faculty collaborative research and scholarship.

Teams from UW four-year campuses have developed campus-wide engagement plans to institutionalize undergraduate research at their respective campuses. Topics that were addressed included resource scarcity, faculty workload issues, support for faculty and students to conduct summer research, and the recognition of undergraduate research in setting criteria for faculty promotion and tenure.

In 2014, the REDI Committee endorsed two initiatives that were designed to begin addressing these identified needs.

First, an Undergraduate Research and Discovery Grant program provided resources for administrators and faculty to collaborate in ways that support undergraduate research expansion across all disciplines. This one-time Discovery Grant program provided grants to campuses during 2015 only.

The second program, the Regent Scholar Grant program, began last year and will continue in 2016. This program was designed to stimulate faculty-student collaborative research primarily at the comprehensive and two-year campuses in the UW System. Through a highly competitive process, Regent Scholar Grants provided summer funding support for faculty to engage in research with undergraduate students, ultimately benefiting both. Early in 2015, five initial awardees were selected from a field of 32 entrants from across UW System and were recognized as “Regent Scholars.” Undergraduate research programs prepare students to participate in basic and applied research and contribute to the state’s overall research and development efforts.
Regent Scholar Grant Implementation Plan

In 2016, the Regent Scholar Grant program will provide three awards of up to $50,000 each. The funding for the Regent Scholar Program for FY 2015-16 will be sourced from Systemwide balances. Regent Scholar Grants will be available for faculty, along with undergraduate students and other collaborative partners, supporting entrepreneurial ideas and innovative projects, with the following goals in mind:

1. Providing summer funding support for faculty to engage in research and other scholarly activities;
2. Promoting stellar research experiences for undergraduate students, thus preparing a high-quality workforce;
3. Stimulating research, primarily across UW System four-year and two-year campuses, ultimately driving regional economic development; and
4. Recognizing research and scholarly activity (URSCA) at the UW System Board of Regents level.

Again this year, grants will be awarded competitively, based on recommendations by a selection committee made up of both public and private-sector experts. Please be aware that each grant application should indicate that plans will go through the IRB or IACUC approval process as appropriate. Grant recipients will be recognized by the UW System Board of Regents as “Regent Scholars.”

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS AND PROCESS

Regent Scholar Grants will be available for faculty, undergraduate students, and other collaborative partners to explore entrepreneurial ideas and innovative projects that aim to expand the boundaries of knowledge, enhance research, stimulate new technologies, inspire start-up activity, fuel product development, better prepare the future workforce, and create or retain jobs in Wisconsin.

To be considered for funding, a proposal must complete all of the following application requirements outlined below. Selection committee members will evaluate each grant proposal and score it using a possible total of 100 points. Possible point totals for each application section are outlined below. Grants will be awarded based upon cumulative point totals.

To be considered, applicants must submit a cover page and a proposal narrative that includes the following:

1. **Cover Page.** Please use the form available on the grant application website.

2. **Abstract.** Maximum length: One double-spaced page, 12-point font.

3. **Description of the project and its innovativeness (35 points).** Maximum length: Three pages, double-spaced, 12-point font.

4. **Project significance and impact (30 points).** Maximum length: Three pages, double-spaced, 12-point font.

5. **Roles and responsibilities of faculty investigator and students (20 points).** Maximum length: One page, double-spaced, 12-point font.

6. **Detailed Budget and Budget Narrative (15 points).** Maximum length: Two pages.
Budget Requirements and Guidelines

The detailed budget narrative and spreadsheets should itemize proposed expenses, including salary, fringe benefits, student stipends, equipment, travel, and other eligible expenses. Funds may be used for many purposes, such as salaries, wages, fringe benefits, consultants, equipment, materials, supplies, and travel. It is expected that students will be compensated to a level that allows them to participate fully in the summer project. Indirect costs are not allowed. Funding is for FY 2016 and may be carried over to FY 2017 with approval from UW System.

Additional Documentation

Letters of reference from individuals within the business community and/or letters of commitment from collaborators are welcomed, though not required.

Institutions may submit a maximum of three proposals. The awards application process will need to be managed on each campus, per campus norms, but is likely to include submission by the institution’s research grants office.

SELECTION TIMELINE

1. For the 2015-2016, the application deadline is end of day on **November 13**.

2. Applications will be reviewed internally by UW System to ensure completeness. Completed applications will be forwarded to the selection committee for review by **November 20**.

3. The selection committee will review and discuss (in-person and/or via teleconference) applications between **December 7 and December 11**.

4. The selection committee will make final award decisions **no later than December 17**.

5. UW System will distribute award funding to recipients beginning **in early January**.
SELECTION COMMITTEE AND PROCESS

The selection committee includes individuals from both the public and private sectors. One of the members will be a Regent or Regent Emeritus; two members will be employees of UW System; and three non-UW System members will be from Wisconsin businesses and organizations experienced with economic development, workforce development, STEM, and arts and humanities education. UW System will consult with the Legislature and Joint Committee on Finance to help determine selection committee members who reflect diverse economic and workforce needs.

Selection committee members will evaluate each grant proposal and score it using a possible total of 100 points. Possible point totals and guidelines for each application section are outlined below. Grants will be awarded based upon cumulative point totals.

1. Description of the project and its innovativeness (35 points)

2. Project significance and impact (30 points)

3. Roles and responsibilities of faculty and students (20 points)

4. Detailed Budget and Budget Narrative (15 points)

AWARD TERMS AND REQUIREMENTS

In early 2016, the UW System Board of Regents will formally recognize faculty and students involved in the project as “Regent Scholars.” Regent Scholars will be encouraged to disseminate the results of their work in other local, national, and international venues as well.

It is expected that Regent Scholars will work with the UW System Administration to document the education, economic, and workforce outcomes of the Regent Scholar Grant Program over time, including supplying data to capture:

- The impact of undergraduate research experiences on student learning, workforce readiness, preparation, and professional success, including, if appropriate, postgraduate placement and success;

- Expansion of research activities and scholarship outputs;

- Economic development contributions of UW System campuses to the State of Wisconsin.

October 9, 2015