RISE Proposal Preparation Workshop

24 Oct 2025

C. Nathan Hancock

What is RISE?

Research Initiative for Summer Engagement

- Support research and scholarly activities.
  - **Aiken, Beaufort, Upstate,** Lancaster, Salkehatchie, Sumter, and Union
  - **$6000**
    - Summer salary, research supplies, travel related to research and undergraduate student support

Why should you apply for RISE?

Previous RISE Awards

2025

- **USC Upstate - 14**
- **USC Beaufort – 3**
- **USC Aiken – 2 (6 applied)**

2024

- **USC Aiken – 6 (9 applied)**

2023

- **USC Aiken – 5 (9 applied)**

Requirements

- Application Deadline: **5pm December 16, 2025**
- Proposal must be different from previously funded RISE Awards
- Summer salary can only be requested for a period in the summer when the faculty member is not teaching.
- Salary is not permitted for faculty with 12-month contracts
- Must submit a final report through the on-line report form to the Office of the Vice President of Research 30 days after the project end date

Application Components

- Title Page
- **Three Page Proposal**
- Bibliography
- Two page CV
- Budget (using the provided template)
- Current and Pending Support (using the provided template)
- Appendix - titles and funding amounts of previous RISE/ASPIRE awards, description of the impact of the awards on your research and scholarly activity. Letters of support if needed.

Three Page Proposal

- Use the specified categories
  - A brief discussion of the **background and significance** of the proposed idea, including its relation to the present state of knowledge in the field.
  - **Project narrative** - A detailed narrative of the project that includes the <u>objectives, significance of the research, the research task and expected accomplishments, and the expected outcome</u> of the project.
  - A discussion of **external scholarship that will result from RISE funding**, whether publications, book chapters, presentations, or grant submissions. RISE grants are intended to fund projects that will reach an audience external to the USC system.
  - **Timeline** with expected accomplishments during the grant.

Tips for Writing a Successful RISE Proposal

- Review an example of a previously funded proposal

- Start early

- Get feedback from collogues
  - Ask them to point out the flaws so you can address them

Example Timeline

	June	July	Aug	Sept-Dec
Objective 1 (Cloning)				
Objective 2 (Yeast Assays)				
Objective 3 (Write and				

Budget

- Ask for the full amount

- Fringe rates
  - Faculty = 32.72%
  - Undergrad = 8.06%

Campus/Dept:			
Project Title:			
Principal Investigator:			
Co-Principal Investigator(s):			
Provide an itemized breakdown of the line item expenditure accounts listed in the budget justification.			
Identify all line item amounts.		Fringe Benefits should automatically calculate.	
*Provide detail in budget justification.			
Line Item		**Requested Amount**	
Salary*	PI		
Salary/Stipend*	Temp		
Salary/Stipend*	Students		
Fringe Benefits	PI		
Fringe Benefits	Temp		
Fringe Benefits	Students		
Contractual Services*			
Travel*	In-State		
Travel*	Out-of-State		
Materials/supplies			
Publication costs			
Other (Describe)			
Other (Describe)			
Other (Describe)			
Other (Describe)			
Total		-	
Note: Fringe Benefits do not include health insurance costs as there is no health insurance paid in summer mon			

Current and Pending

- Include the RISE Proposal

CURRENT AND PENDING SUPPORT FORM
Failure to provide this information may delay consideration of this proposal.

Investigator:	Other agencies to which this proposal has been/will be submitted*:

*If this project has previously been funded by another entity, please list and furnish information for immediately preceding funding period.

Please check HERE _____ if no other project support is current, pending, or planned at this time

Support:	__ Current	__ Pending	__ Submission Planned in Near Future

Project/Proposal Title:

Source of Support/Funding agency:

Total Award Amount: $	Total Award Period Covered:

Location of Project:

Months of Your Time Committed to Project (YY: #mts)	FY __:	FY __:	FY __:	Summer:

Support:	__ Current	__ Pending	__ Submission Planned in Near Future

Project/Proposal Title:

Source of Support/Funding agency:

Total Award Amount: $	Total Award Period Covered:

Location of Project:

Months of Your Time Committed to Project (YY: #mts)	FY __:	FY __:	FY __:	Summer:

Support:	__ Current	__ Pending	__ Submission Planned in Near Future

Project/Proposal Title:

Source of Support:

Total Award Amount: $	Total Award Period Covered:

Location of Project:

Months of Your Time Committed to Project (YY: #mts)	FY __:	FY __:	FY __:	Summer:

Writing Style

- Persuasive not technical
  - Convince them that this research is worth funding
    - Need a good question
  - Convince them that you have the required skills
    - Tell them why you are the right person to complete this research
  - Convince them that it will produce the desired results
    - Show them that you have a track record of producing these products

- Understandable to a broad audience
  - Will be reviewed by faculty at other USC campuses

Submission Process

- Combine all documents into a single pdf (in the order specified)
- Submit to USCERA **before** 5 pm on the deadline
  - Login to USCERA
  - Create new Proposal
    - Title
    - Start Date 16 May 2026
    - End Date 31 Dec 2026
    - Internal Request
    - Total cost
    - IRB/IACUC
  - Internal Commit Form
  - Upload Proposal
  - Start Approval Process

Evaluation

A. Scholarly Merit:

•Does the proposal provide a compelling **argument** for the scholarship proposed?

•Does the proposed project represent a **significant** contribution to the field of study?

•Is there a probability of **publication or other public dissemination**?

B. Nature of Proposal:

•Does the proposal provide a clear statement of overall project **objectives**?

•Is the proposed methodology **appropriate and realistic**?

•Does the proposal provide a sound justification with **clear and specific budget information**?

•What is the likelihood the project goals will be met during the proposed timeline? Is a **clear timeline** presented?

•Is the requested **budget appropriate** to accomplish the aims proposed?

RISE Research Grant Proposal Evaluation Rubric

Criteria	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Needs Improvement
Justification of Need or Scholarly Significance	Presents a compelling, well-substantiated rationale of the proposed work's importance in the field, grounded in disciplinary context; clearly articulates a gap or problem.	Provides a strong, clear justification with good disciplinary grounding and relevance to the field.	Presents a reasonable argument; may lack depth or specificity.	Justification underdeveloped or general; lacks specific relevance.	Justification is weak, unclear, or missing; fails to demonstrate relevance to the field.
Presentation of Research Question, Hypothesis, or Problem Statement including the Aims, Goals, and/or Objectives for this work	Clear, specific, logically structured, and tightly aligned with the overall project rationale.	Clearly stated and well aligned with project rationale; may have minor ambiguities.	Stated in general terms but may lack clarity, specificity, or logical alignment with project rationale.	Vague, overly broad, or does not clearly define project rationale.	Unclear, unrealistic, or absent.
Appropriateness of Approach (Plan of Work or Methods) for proposed project.	Approach demonstrates disciplinary rigor; thoroughly appropriate and justified; well-aligned with the proposed project.	Approach is appropriate and aligned, though some details of the approach or justification may be lacking.	Approach is generally suitable; some aspects may be underdeveloped, misaligned, or not fully justified.	Approach is minimally described or justified; lacks depth; weakly connected to proposed project.	Approach is inappropriate, not justified, poorly defined, or missing.
Significance of Deliverables or Outcomes	Deliverables/outcomes are highly significant within the field; strong potential for impact or advancement of knowledge.	Deliverables/outcomes are meaningful and show potential for contributing new insights.	Deliverables/outcomes are reasonable; may be limited in significance or impact.	Deliverables/outcomes are weakly defined or lack meaningful impact.	Deliverables/outcomes are unclear, insignificant, or poorly developed.
Justification Toward Public Dissemination	Clearly articulates how the project will lead to significant public dissemination; Provides specific and appropriate venues, publications, or audiences.	Provides dissemination goals but minor concerns with specificity or justification of targets.	Discusses dissemination in general terms; outlets or audiences are only loosely described; lacks specificity or depth.	Minimal justification for dissemination; plan provides few specifics, vague, and/or poorly developed.	Lacks a dissemination plan or rationale; fails to articulate potential public engagement.
Feasibility of Scope of Work Within Time Period	The scope of work is well-defined and appears realistically achievable within the proposed timeframe; clearly demonstrates realistic planning.	Scope appears feasible and well considered in relation to the timeframe, with only minor concerns.	Scope seems reasonable but may require adjustments to fit within the proposed timeframe.	Scope seems overly ambitious for timeline or vague; does not provide sufficient evidence the work can be completed within the timeframe.	Scope appears unrealistic within the proposed timeframe, with significant concerns about feasibility.
Clarity and Accessibility of Writing (*Please provide specific guidance for improvement in comments below*)	Writing is exceptionally clear, well-organized, focused, accessible, and engaging for readers across disciplines.	Writing is clear, generally well-organized, and mostly accessible with occasional jargon, complexity, or vagueness.	Writing is generally understandable with moderate areas of improvement needed; such as jargon-use, complexity, or vagueness.	Writing overall is somewhat unclear or difficult to follow; may include significant jargon-use, complexity, or vagueness.	Writing is unclear, disorganized, or inaccessible to non-specialists.

While the following is not rated it will be taken into consideration in final funding decisions:

Budget seems appropriate to accomplish the proposed project

Spending the Funds

- You need a project number
  - Summer Salary
  - Student Hiring
  - Travel Authority (TA)
  - Equipment - Sole Source, Multiple Quotes, Out for Bid
  - Supplies
    - P-Card
    - Special cases – Incentives/Gift Cards, food, plants…