

Early Career Grants: Strengthening Proposals for External Funding

PROGRAM GUIDELINES

1. Purpose

The purpose of the Early Career Grant (ECG) program is to support projects with potential to lead to significant external funding. Eligible projects include—but are not limited to—research, creative activity, and innovation in academic programs.

2. Required Submission of a Proposal for External Funding

Anyone who accepts an ECG grant will agree in writing to submit a proposal for external funding within 24 months of the end of the ECG grant. In some cases, a longer time may be allowed in order to accommodate the normal funding cycle of an agency; such an exception must be justified in the ECG proposal and agreed to by the reviewers.

Priority will be given to applicants who include with their application an outline or rough draft of the proposal they plan to submit for external funding.

3. Frequency of ECG Grant Competitions

There will be a single application deadline per year; the date will be the same date that Fall CFR proposals are due.

4. Duration of ECG Grants

Each grant will carry an expiration date that coincides with the end of the fiscal year in which it is awarded.

5. University Criteria

Applicants must make a convincing case that the grant will support efforts that will substantially improve the chance of success of a proposal for external funding.

The proposal for external funding required of any recipient of an ECG grant must be for a grant to the Board of Trustees of Eastern Illinois University rather than to an individual applicant.

The maximum amount for the budget of an ECG grant is \$5,000.

The proposed external grant must have a budget at least tenfold the amount of the ECG grant.

F&A costs for the external grant will be budgeted at the full amount allowed by the funding agency.

An ECG grant may not be used simply to augment an existing external grant; an ECG grant may not be used as cost sharing for any external grant.

The applicant must demonstrate a record of successful use of internal funding such as CFR grants.

The applicant must demonstrate a record of application for external funding.

6. Eligible Participants

All University personnel within their first six years of employment by EIU are eligible to submit ECG proposals.

Collaborative proposals are welcome. A collaborative proposal is defined as a proposal whose budget is divided among more than one recipient.

In any round of ECG funding, an individual may submit no more than one proposal.

An individual may be the sole recipient of an ECG grant only once in an entire career. An individual may be the collaborative recipient of an ECG grant more than once in an entire career.

7. Evaluation of Proposals

A. Initial Review by CFR

Proposals will be reviewed by CFR in order to assure evaluation by a broadly representative group. This review will assess the intellectual strength of the proposal, the clarity of expression of the proposal, and the applicant's record of using internal funding.

B. Final Review

Proposals will be reviewed by a group consisting of the Director, Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, the Dean of the Graduate School, and at least one other academic administrator. This review will assess the applicant's record of applying for external funding and prospects for success with external funding. This group will make the final funding decision.

C. Review Criteria

Detailed review criteria and the associated point totals are listed on the Proposal Review Form, the final page in the Program Guidelines.

8. Allowable Expenses

Early Career Grants may be used for any of the following:

A. Travel.

The applicant must show that the proposed activity requires travel to the destination specified. Travel must be completed in time to submit the travel voucher to the Business Office by the normal deadline for the fiscal year in which the grant is awarded.

B. Student help

Wages must be appropriate to the task, as defined by EIU classifications.

C. Equipment

The applicant must show that the equipment is needed for the proposed activity and is otherwise unavailable. Equipment purchased with the funding is the property of the university.

D. Commodities

E. Contractual Services

F. Other

The applicant must show that some other type of expense is required to make the ECG-funded project viable.

9. Unallowable Expenses

Early Career Grants may not be used for any of the following:

- Salary of the project director(s);
- Completing a dissertation;
- Typing and copying of finished manuscripts;
- Page charges assessed by journals;
- Shipment of property for the purpose of performance, exhibit, etc.

10. Reports

A project report will be due 30 days after the expiration of the grant. Reports should be submitted on the form available on the web site of the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs.

11. Revision of Program Guidelines

ECG Program Guidelines may be revised occasionally.

12. Submission of Proposals

The proposal should be submitted by email to mamattingly@eiu.edu by noon on September 6, 2023. Late proposals will not be reviewed.

13. Instructions for Preparing Proposals

A. Length, Fonts, and Margins

- The narrative portion of the proposal (sections 1 - 4) must not exceed five pages. This limitation does **not** include attachments (cover page, outline or rough draft of external proposal, vita, and supplementary materials).
- The text should be single-spaced.
- Margins must not be smaller than one inch.
- The font should be 11 point Arial, Helvetica, or Times New Roman.

B. Style of Writing

Proposals will be reviewed by committee members from diverse backgrounds. Therefore, proposals should be free of unnecessary jargon.

C. Format

Include each of these section headings along with its number:

1. Proposed Internal Funding (from the Early Career Grant)
 - A. Project goals
Describe what you propose to accomplish with an Early Career Grant.
 - B. Strengthening the Case for External Funding
Describe how an ECG grant would enhance your effort to acquire external funding.
 - C. Methodology
Describe the steps you will take to implement the ECG-supported project. Include the anticipated schedule for completing the separate parts of the project.
 - D. General Value
Describe how an ECG grant would be valuable for you and for EIU even if your proposal for external funding is not successful.

2. Proposed External Funding
 - A. External Funding Opportunity
Describe the externally funded project you hope to enable with an ECG grant. Include the name of the funding agency, the name of the grant program, the approximate application deadline when you will submit a proposal, and the approximate dollar value of the proposal you plan to submit.
 - B. Significance
Describe the significance of the externally funded project, including the features of your idea that should make it a good candidate for external funding. Please cite references as appropriate.
 - C. Further Steps
Describe how you would respond if your proposal for external funding is not successful.

3. Prior and Current Support
If you have received any internal or external grants in the last 5 years, please list them in the table below. You also may list grants received more than 5 years ago if they are relevant to any point you wish to make. You may extend the table as much as necessary.

Year	Source of Funding	Award Amount (\$)

4. Budget
Separately list expenditures for travel, student help, equipment, commodities, contractual services, and other. **Itemize** specific expenditures within each category. Provide sufficient explanation to justify the budget items.

Attachments

- A. Attach an outline or draft copy of the external proposal you plan to submit. There is no page limit on this draft.

- B. Vita
Please attach a current vita and indicate ***with an asterisk*** any publications or papers or

other experiences that relate to the proposed project or which provide evidence of your ability to complete the work. The vita may not exceed five (5) single-sided pages. Joint applicants may **each** include a vita not to exceed (5) single-sided pages.

C. Supplementary Materials

Examples of acceptable supplementary materials include survey questionnaires or other research instruments. Explanation of the relationship of these materials should be included in the five pages of the proposal itself. There is no page limit on supplementary material.

EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
Early Career Grant
SAMPLE Proposal Review Form

Proposal Title _____

Submitted By _____

Please rank the proposal on a scale of one (minimum) to four (maximum). Do not use zeros or fractions.

	Minimum.....		Maximum
Proposed Internal Funding: Evaluated by CFR only			
The project proposed for internal funding is specific and feasible.	1	2	3 4
An ECG grant would significantly enhance the applicant’s chances of obtaining external funding.	1	2	3 4
The applicant has used internal funding effectively in the past.	1	2	3 4
The applicant’s use of an ECG grant will benefit EIU even if the application for external funding is not successful.	1	2	
The budget proposed for the ECG grant is reasonable.	1	2	
The applicant is qualified and motivated to both write the proposal for external funding and oversee all proposed work (both internally and externally funded).	1	2	
Proposed External Funding: Evaluated by Final Review Groups			
The plan for pursuing external funding is specific and feasible.	1	2	3 4
The applicant’s idea has a reasonable chance of attracting external funding.	1	2	3 4
The applicant has a record of applying for external funding.	1	2	3 4
The applicant is qualified and motivated to both write the proposal for external funding and oversee all proposed work (both internally and externally funded).	1	2	

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Additional Comments:

Pre-discussion Proposal Rating _____

Post-discussion Proposal Rating _____