

Equipment Grants

Proposal Submission Deadline

Monday, December 2, 2024, before 5:00 p.m.

- Combine all files of the completed proposal into a single PDF, name the file LAST_FIRST_2024 where the LAST is your last name and the FIRST is your first name, and upload it to the online cover sheet using the “Apply for Internal Awards” link on the Division of Research (DOR) webpage: <https://uh.edu/research/funding-opportunities/internal-awards/equipment-grants/>
- Make sure that your affiliated pre-award personnel who generated the budget signed the budget template, indicating that they prepared and approved the budget. (In lieu of a signature on the budget template, a letter can be included certifying that the signatory prepared and approved the budget.)

LATE PROPOSALS WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED

Overview

The purpose of the Equipment Grants program is to support research labs and groups with modern equipment considered necessary for preparing competitive external research proposals. About 70% of the awards will be allocated for proposals in UH’s research priority areas (<https://uh.edu/research/about/thrusts/>). Another 30% will be for any relevant area selected by an investigator. Proposals will be considered for **small equipment grants** and can range up to \$50,000.

Proposals must have (i) clear focus on institutional research priorities (70%), (ii) heightened accountability during the two-year project budget period (in terms of brief reports on progress), and (iii) impact during and after the project in a final report. Programs representing the 30% open submission will be subject to the same restrictions and must also have high scientific merit and be focused on an area of need. DOR reserves the right to fund only those proposals that are clearly meritorious and to shift the 70/30 ratio depending on merit.

Funding Level

An allocation of \$200,000 is available in the current fiscal year for one round of competition. The total allocation is intended to fund small equipment awards at up to \$50,000 each.

Requests are anticipated to exceed available funds. Successful Equipment Grant proposals must demonstrate that the new instrument will fill a significant need and improve the chances of obtaining external funding.

Eligibility and Restrictions

Equipment Grant proposals are eligible for funding when they:

- Request a critical piece of equipment to facilitate grant submission.
- Are located on a University of Houston (UH) campus and run by faculty or staff employed by the University.

Full-time UH faculty members who are tenured, tenure-track, or promotion-eligible non-tenure track faculty may apply as the Principal Investigator (PI) or co-PI to this program. Each faculty member may submit one proposal per fiscal year as the PI. Each proposal should have one PI. One Co-PI from each additional laboratory is permitted, but no person may be PI or co-PI on more than two applications. Instructional faculty are not eligible for equipment awards. A faculty member currently holding an equipment award for which funds have not been fully expended may not apply, including awards that were extended.

Criteria for Award

Each proposal must supply convincing evidence that the following criteria have been met or will be met:

- The equipment purchase must lead to high-quality research of significant benefit to the University and society.
- A grant must be submitted in the identified research area during Year 1 of the project period. The proposal must specify the potential external grant source(s) in the proposal and in the timeline. In addition, the proposal should include a statement as to how the Equipment Grant award will improve the chances of securing that specified funding.

Formatting Requirements

All documents must be prepared on US Letter size paper (8.5"x11") with 1-inch margins on all sides, Arial font size 11 pt or greater. The proposal narrative must have exactly 1.5 line spacing; all other documents may be single-spaced. An Arial font size of no less than 8 pt. should be used for the captions to graphics and tables and may be single-spaced. The text in the captions must be legible. Applications that fail to follow the formatting requirements will not be reviewed.

Proposal Preparation and Submission

The application **MUST** be prepared using the guidelines below and submitted by the PI or the PI's affiliated pre-award research administrator. Combine all files of the completed proposal into a single PDF, name the file LAST_FIRST_2024 where the LAST is your last name and the FIRST is your first name, and attach it to the cover page using the application link on the DOR webpage: <https://uh.edu/research/funding-opportunities/internal-awards/equipment-grants/>.

No prior approval from chairs and deans is required unless the application requires a commitment of space or other resources, in which case a letter of commitment should be included. Emails to you, your department chair (or equivalent), and your associate dean for research will be sent after you submit the proposal.

Organize the proposal using the following sections with these headings:

Abstract/Summary

A 200-word single-spaced abstract must be submitted with the proposal.

Proposal Narrative (Up to 3 pages, includes graphics, tables, equations, and formulas)

The proposal narrative must not exceed three pages with exactly 1.5 line spacing and the font size of Arial should be no smaller than 11 pt. with 1-inch margins. The rationale for the proposed equipment should be described and must contain:

- a. An overview of the strategic research area and how the investment will enhance the applicant's ability to submit competitive proposals in the selected area. If the

application is intended for one of the four priority areas, the applicant should outline how the thrust area(s) is addressed.

- b. A brief description of the applicant's expertise in the selected research area.
- c. The availability on the UH campus of such instrumentation/services of similar function/use and capabilities. If such instrumentation/service is already available for shared use, why is the new instrumentation/service needed?
- d. The potential research outcomes (e.g., funding, publications, faculty hiring) of having this instrumentation/service. Identify any obstacles.
- e. Brief plans for its management and maintenance, including what type of continued investment might be required to maintain the instrument and its productivity.
- f. Plan and timeline for grant submission in the selected area. Include specific grant mechanisms and an estimate of the budget of the grant that will be pursued.
- g. References Cited are in addition to the 3-page Proposal Narrative.

Biosketch(es)

Provide biosketches for the PI and co-PI(s). The NSF style is preferred, but not required. The narrative format of an NIH Biosketch is acceptable. Regardless of the format, the biosketch is limited to no more than five pages.

The biosketch should provide the following:

- Current and Past Positions.
- Education: List degrees and dates awarded.
- Awards and Honors: Include dates.
- Other Relevant Professional Activities and Accomplishments.
- Publications: Include full citations for selected publications and presentations.

Current and Pending Support, including overlap with current funding, pending proposals, and start-up funding.

- Provide a list of current and pending support for each PI and co-PI. Include a clear description of overlap of the equipment request with current awards or pending proposals.
- If the proposal is related to a project supported by start-up funding, indicate the overlap.
- Proposals seeking to conduct research to improve a prior submitted external proposal that has received high but not-funded ranking must provide the external proposal reviews and describe the specific steps that will be taken to address the deficiencies stated in the reviews.

Budget

The budget **MUST** be constructed and presented using the standard UH budget template <http://www.uh.edu/research/resources/dor-forms/proposal-processing-forms/>. Please work with your affiliated pre-award personnel to generate the budget. This person must sign the budget template, indicating that they prepared and approved the budget. (In lieu of a signature on the budget template, a letter can be included certifying that the signatory prepared and approved the budget.)

The project period is 18 months, but prepare a single-year budget. The equipment must be purchased in the first 12 months after the cost center is established, and the DOR strongly recommends it to be purchased in the first 6 months.

- Allowable costs include equipment and related accessories, set-up/installation costs, service agreements.
- Unallowable costs include personnel, travel, computer hardware not connected to the proposed equipment, lab renovation, and other items ancillary to the specific equipment.

Budgets will be critically reviewed. Vendor quotes are required for the submission and must be made available to the reviewing committee. When awarded, the purchase must follow the University policies and guidelines.

Budget Justification and Fiscal Accountability

The budget justification should address the following topics:

- Describe the impact of funding on the improvement of resources or services within the unit.
- Describe how funds will contribute to the success and sustainability of the unit.
- Describe how these funds will benefit internal users within the unit.
- Will the equipment be available to other laboratories to maximize the use of the equipment between projects?
- Is there a plan for covering long-term maintenance costs?
- If the PI leaves or the equipment is under-utilized, is there a plan to reallocate the equipment to another laboratory unit or core facility?

Commitments

This program allows cost sharing or matching from non-DOR sources. Any financial or tangible commitments must be formally documented. Written commitments signed by the sponsoring unit authorities (i.e., dean, center director, and/or department chair) must be submitted when cost sharing or matching is proposed. Startup funds are not eligible for cost sharing because it bypasses the need for a discussion with the department chair/dean.

Space

Space availability and requirements must be identified.

- Location of the unit.
- What facilities, renovations, and technology needs are anticipated?

It is the investigators' responsibility to prepare the facility for installation and housing of the product. No funds from this program will be used for renovations.

User Group (Up to 2 pages)

Provide a list of the users, including the PI and co-PI(s), and include their departmental and institutional (if not UH) affiliation.

- Who are the primary expected users of the facility, including the PI and co-PI(s), whose research program will benefit?
- What is the anticipated usage time?
- How will users gain access to the facility/instrumentation/services?

Review Process

These proposals will be competitively reviewed and acted upon by subcommittees of the Research and Scholarship Committee (RSC) of the Faculty Senate. Winning proposals will be determined based on program criteria, merit, and available funds. Preference will be given to bold new ideas showing clear evidence of high likelihood of producing high quality, high impact products in the

short term and viability as a research program in the long-term. Preference will also be given to applications that include investigators from different academic units (e.g., Departments, Colleges, Centers/Institutes, etc.) who emphasize a team-science approach to research. Investigators with current funding must clearly state any overlaps between this and their current project portfolio.

Merit Criteria

All applications will initially be checked against the eligibility criteria outlined above. If eligibility is not fulfilled, applications will be returned without additional review alongside an appropriate explanation by DOR staff. After the initial screening, applications will be submitted to the RSC. Each accepted proposal will be competitively reviewed and acted upon by a subcommittee of the RSC that may include non-RSC members from the campus. The RSC will make recommendations to the VC/VP for Research, who will be responsible for awarding and administering the grant. The DOR reserves the right to review and change budgets and ask for clarifications from potential awardees. Reviewers will be internal to UH and may not be disciplinary experts. For instance, a colleague from the College of Arts or the College of Education might review an application from the College of Pharmacy. It is important to ensure that reviewers who are not technical experts in the field of inquiry can understand the proposal narrative. Avoid jargon, unexplained abbreviations, and narratives that are highly technical.

Each proposal must supply convincing evidence that the following criteria have been met or will be met:

1. The proposed activities must represent high-quality research of significant benefit to the University and society.
2. A grant must be submitted in the identified research area during Year 1 of the project period.
3. The PI must demonstrate the potential to compete in the designated area by virtue of publication record and prior funding or the potential to be competitive by virtue of other completed research.
4. The review committee will rank each proposal in five domains on a 1 (highest) to 5 (lowest) scale:
 - a. Impact of proposed equipment request
 - b. Plan for external grant submission, including the timeline
 - c. Need for the equipment and plan for maintenance
 - d. Investigator expertise, track record, or potential
 - e. Long-term prospects for substantive contributions to the selected research area

Congruency Review

Congruency review by the Research Integrity and Oversight (RIO) Office is required for all research submitted to this program. Congruency review includes human subjects, animal usage, biological materials (rDNA, human samples, microorganisms, etc.), and radiation (radioactive materials, lasers, and x-rays).

All oversight committee approvals must be secured within three months of the award announcement, or the funds will be forfeited:

- All projects involving human subjects must be reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) before the grant cost center will be established.
- All projects involving the use of animals in research must be reviewed and approved by the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) before the grant cost center will be established.

- All projects involving biological materials must be reviewed and approved by the Biological Safety Manager and the Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC) before the grant cost center will be established.
- All projects involving radiation must be reviewed and approved by the Radiation Safety Officer (RSO) & Laser Safety Officer (LSO) and authorized by the Radiation Safety Committee (RSC) before the grant cost center will be established.

Intellectual Property

In accordance with University policy, faculty members and the University share in net income generated from intellectual property. For additional information, refer to the [Faculty Handbook](#) or contact the [Office of Technology Transfer and Innovation \(OTTI\)](#) at 713-743-9294.

Schedule

Program Announcement	September 9, 2024
Application Deadline	December 2, 2024
Initial Review Completed	February 21, 2025
Announcement of Awards	March 14, 2025 (approximate)
Effective Date of Award for 18 Months	April 1, 2025-October 2, 2026
Interim Report 1	September 30, 2025
Interim Report 2	April 1, 2026
Final Report and Product Submission	October 2, 2026

Extensions

The equipment must be purchased in the first 12 months after the cost center is established, and the DOR strongly recommends it to be purchased in the first 6 months. Failure to purchase the equipment in a timely manner may result in loss of funding. Extensions of up to 6 months will be granted only for circumstances that would extend the tenure clock.

Reporting and Acknowledgement

Use the *Internal Grant Reports Form* button on the DOR Internal Awards webpage to submit progress reports that are due on the established dates regardless of progress through the congruency review. Interim reports are required at 6-month intervals. These reports should be narrative

summaries of progress made toward achieving the proposed research objectives and not to exceed one page.

The final report should identify how the equipment was utilized and identify specific grant applications applied for and received as a result of the equipment grant and not exceed three pages. Failure to comply with this reporting requirement will disqualify an individual for future consideration in all internal funding programs.

Notice must be given of publications, presentations, exhibitions, or performances resulting from the award. The grantee must acknowledge DOR support in all products and publications resulting from the award and provide one copy of the publication to the DOR.

Assistance

All questions related to this program should be submitted to Dr. Claudia Neuhauser (cmneuhauser@uh.edu), Vice Chancellor/Vice President for Research. Please do not call or email regarding the review results because the dates depend on the RSC review capacity and are approximate.