Utah NASA Space Grant Consortium

Proposal Guidelines for the
Faculty Research Seed Funding Program
2021-2022 Grant Year

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA or Agency) is committed to defining and implementing a portfolio intended to drive a coherent and coordinated set of activities devoted to engaging students in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) through NASA’s mission. This portfolio contributes to achieving NASA’s STEM Engagement vision to immerse students in NASA’s work, enhance STEM literacy, and inspire the next generation to explore.

Central to this effort is a new architecture designed to enable relevant student contributions to NASA’s mission and work, driven by requirements from NASA’s Mission Directorates. This new structure will align appropriated STEM engagement programs, existing and emerging relevant projects, and activities and products from across the Agency, into an overarching framework and strategy.

The specific objectives of the Space Grant Program are to:

- Create cooperative programs among universities, aerospace industry, and Federal, state, and local governments to foster STEM ecosystems;
- Encourage interdisciplinary training, research, and public service programs related to aerospace;
- Establish and maintain a national network of universities with interests and capabilities in aeronautics, space, and related fields;
- Attract, recruit and train U.S. citizens, especially women, underrepresented minorities, and persons with disabilities, for careers in aerospace science and technology;
- Promote a strong STEM education base from elementary through secondary levels while providing support to teachers in these grade levels toward more effectively improving student academic outcomes;
- Create opportunities that enable student contributions to the development of solutions addressing NASA Mission Directorate challenges; and
- Advance aerospace knowledge and expand related activities.

Research Seed Funding Opportunity

New and early career faculty (assistant professor level or equivalent) at Utah NASA Space Grant Consortium (UNSGC) affiliated institutions are invited to submit proposals to the Faculty Research Seed Funding Program. The intent of the Utah NASA Space Grant Consortium’s Faculty Research Seed Funding Program is to help develop core expertise and infrastructure to enable investigators to build a sustainable capability in the state which supports NASA’s Mission Directorates. UNSGC encourages researchers to focus their research toward NASA priorities while building ties with NASA Centers and aerospace contractors. Selected faculty research projects will provide significant, hands-on, authentic research opportunities for two or more STEM students that aligns with one of the NASA Mission Directorate areas: (1) Aeronautics Research Mission Directorate; (2) Human Exploration and Operations Mission Directorate; (3) Science Mission Directorate; or (4) Space Technology Mission Directorate. Projects that emphasize partnerships with other universities, industry, state and local government, and that include women and underrepresented minorities are particularly encouraged. The proposal shall specify alignment with one of the four NASA Mission Directorate needs (see Appendix H). Successful
proposals will provide opportunities for students to gain hands-on research and engineering experience. Proposers shall describe how these activities will meet the STEM needs of the state and NASA.

**Period of Performance**
Each award will begin on May 18, 2021 and conclude on May 17, 2022. Budgets should reflect anticipated expenditures within this time period. Awards are not eligible for renewal.

**Funds Available**
Total funds proposed to be available for new research seed projects is near $75,000 and we expect to award 3-4 proposals for this year. Each proposer may request a minimum funding level of $10,000 to a maximum funding level of $25,000. Depending on the number of proposals received and the review of those proposals, your funding may be awarded at an amount lower than your request. The awarding of proposals is contingent upon UNSGC receiving funds from NASA for the FY 2021 funding cycle.

**Eligibility**
Faculty employed by Utah NASA Space Grant Consortium Affiliated Institutions are eligible to apply. The list of UNSGC affiliate institutions can be found on our website. Preference will be given to faculty who have not received Space Grant funding in the past. Faculty who have received funding in the past four years (2016-2020) are not eligible to apply and if they do send in a proposal, their applications will not be considered.

**Proposal Guidelines**
- No equipment purchases are allowed under this grant.
- Cost share is not required for this for this proposed research funding. However, cost share will be accepted, if available, especially from the research institutions (University of Utah, Brigham Young University, or Utah State University) in the amount of 50%.
- All students receiving direct support must be U.S. citizens.
- Expenditures for foreign travel are prohibited.

**Specific Proposal Requirements and Format**
Proposals should be single-spaced on standard 8 ½ x 11 paper, no smaller than 11-point font and with no less than one-inch margins throughout. The proposal package should include the following elements:
- Internal competitive solicitation cover sheet should be the first page of submission of the entire document. This page specifies the UNSGC opportunity you are applying for as well as which NASA Mission Directorate your proposal is aligned with.
- Cover page – should state the proposal title, principal investigator(s), department and institution, project duration, total amount requested and signatures of the principal investigator, UNSGC affiliate trustee, and other appropriate signatures required at your institution
- Project Abstract – 250 words or less
- Project Narrative (3 pages max) – to include an Introduction, Project Objectives, Key Personnel, Student Participants, Implementation Strategy, Alignment to NASA Mission Directorate and to the UNSGC Mission, Potential for Follow-on Funding
• Budget (1 page max) – clear, concise budget including matching support documentation if proposed, the budget must reflect a clear alignment with the content and text of the proposal, institutions submitting a proposal are expected to waive F&A costs.
• Curriculum Vitae – attach a curriculum vitae for each principal investigator

Proposal and budget cannot exceed four pages in length, excluding cover page, abstract, and curriculum vitae. The concise length of the proposals will enable expediting the review and award process. Please submit the proposal as one pdf file with completed cover sheet as the first page of the package, naming the file LASTNAME_FIRSTNAME_ResearchSeed.

PLEASE NOTE:
Funds will be paid through your Space Grant affiliate (existing subcontract) with the PI being the Space Grant Trustee at your institution. It is the responsibility of your institution to transfer funds internally from your Space Grant affiliate to your research account.

Evaluation and Selection Process
Each proposal submitted will be evaluated using the following criteria:
1. Scientific and technical merit of the proposed project as given by the project goals and specified project outcomes, realizing interdisciplinary research projects collaborating with other universities, industry, and state and local government are highly encouraged. (30%)
2. Degree to which the proposed work contributes to one of the NASA Mission Directorates (see Appendix H). Proposals will also focus on projects that can contribute to building future research and innovative activities in Utah. (30%)
3. Degree to which the project contributes to the UNSGC strategic goal of increasing diversity in the STEM workforce and contributes to the UNSGC network. (10%)
4. Probability for the investigator(s) to carry out the research plan and achieve the stated goals and the potential for follow-on funding. (10%)
5. Appropriateness of budget to carry out the project. (10%)
6. Degree of significant student involvement, measured in terms of value (≥ $3,000) or participation (≥ 160 hrs) or impact on student’s academic achievement and employment. (10%)

Fixed Timeline
February 1, 2021 Release of Call for Proposals document
April 12, 2021 Proposals due, 5:00 p.m.

Proposed Timeline (no earlier than these dates)
April 14-29, 2021 Proposals reviewed
April 30, 2021 Award notification anticipated
May 18, 2021 NASA Space Grant funding year 2 begins*
February 15, 2022 Preliminary reporting due
June 15, 2022 Final results submitted

*NASA Space Grant funds for the next cycle have start date of May 18, 2021, however, we will likely receive our NASA funding award at a later date than this if history repeats itself. UNSGC will only be able to make awards and issue subcontracts upon receipt of NASA award. Therefore, the availability of funds could be delayed past the planned timeline shown above.
**Reporting Requirements**
A final project report is due June 15, 2022, with preliminary annual reporting details needed by February 15, 2022. Each report shall describe progress toward meeting project objectives and complete the research seed funding award reporting form for the project which is required to be submitted to the NASA Office of Education Performance Measurement System.

Additionally, faculty researchers agree to cite UNSGC as a source of funding in all publications resulting from the funded research. References to UNSGC funding should utilize the phrase “…supported in part through the Utah NASA Space Grant Consortium, NASA Grant # 80NSSC20M0103.”

Students participating in a faculty research project must complete a Student Data Award Form. Student demographic data is required to be submitted to the NASA Office of Education Performance Measurement System.

Students participating in a faculty research project will also be encouraged to prepare a paper and/or poster and make a presentation at the Annual Space Grant Fellowship Symposium to be conducted in May 2022.

**Submission Procedures**
By April 12, 2021 5:00 p.m., submit an electronic file of the complete package (pdf) via electronic mail to:

Kim Olson, Program Coordinator, Utah NASA Space Grant Consortium
kim.olson@utah.edu

This application package is also posted on the UNSGC Website under “For Educators/Researchers” at:
http://www.utahspacegrant.com/for-educators/

**Appendix H**
The following pages in “Appendix H – Research Priorities for NASA Mission Directorates and Centers” comes from the National Space Grant College and Fellowship Program Opportunities in NASA STEM FY 2020-2024 Solicitation. Please use these guidelines in preparing your proposal and aligning your proposed research within these parameters.