



Faculty Incentive Program

Overview, Guidelines, and Application Process

Last updated June 29, 2016

Faculty Incentive Program (FIP) Overview

The Division of Research at the University of Maryland, College Park (UMD) has policymaking and oversight responsibilities for the research mission of the University which underpins our status as the modern metropolitan model of the land grant university, where a vibrant and creative research environment is crucial for high quality education.

The Vice President for Research (VPR):

- leads, facilitates, and supports current research initiatives across the campus;
- advocates for research needs and resources;
- sponsors and supports technology transfer efforts;
- enables development of new research areas and interdisciplinary initiatives;
- fosters programs that encourage economic development.

A key resource in this overall effort to enhance and expand UMD’s research activity, visibility and impact is strategic use of the Designated Research Initiative Fund (“DRIF”).

Since 2009 the **Faculty Incentive Program (FIP)**, utilizing resources from the DRIF, has been supporting the research and scholarly activity of our faculty, **subject to the availability of funds.**

FIP has 4 spokes:

| FIP Program Name | In Support of | Available Funding | Cost Share | Funding | Submission Deadline |
|---|--|-------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Tier 1 | Scholarship and/or new research directions | Up to \$50K | 50% VPR; 50% College/Unit | Up front distribution | June 1 and December 1 |
| Tier 2 | Proposal development needs | Up to \$75K | 33.3% VPR 33.3% Provost 33.3% College/Unit | Reimbursement only – as needed | rolling |
| Tier 3 | Campus wide initiative | Up to \$150K/year for 3 years | 33.3% VPR 33.3% Provost 33.3% College/Unit | Reimbursement only – 2 times per year | rolling |
| Tier 4 (formerly Tier 2 Annual Operating) | Operating support | Equivalent to 10% of IDC | 33.3% VPR 33.3% Provost 33.3% College/Unit | Reimbursement only – 2 times per year | rolling |

PLEASE NOTE: FIP funding is subject to availability of funds.



Definition of Unit: For all FIP spokes, the term “unit” can be defined as any combination of benefitting department(s)/college(s)/center(s)/individual researcher, etc. Formulas used for the “unit” cost-sharing portion are fluid and at the discretion of the benefitting entities.

Eligibility Criteria for all 4 Spokes:

All tenure track and professional faculty at the rank of assistant professor, assistant research scientist or higher, whose full-time, home position is at UMD, are eligible to apply to any spoke of the FIP.

Visiting, adjunct, and affiliate faculty are not eligible to apply.



TIER I: Proof of Concept/Seed Grant Program

Purpose:

The Tier I program supports:

- new proof of concept seed grants - typically for individual faculty or multidisciplinary teams of faculty pursuing /establishing new research directions;
- seed grants which support scholarship in fields where external funding is scarce; the expectation is that this funding will lead to a seminal publication or monograph.

Support Provided:

- **Up to \$50,000 per award.**

Cost Share:

- VPR will fund 50% of the requested amount;
- **The benefiting College/Unit(s) cost share 50%.**

Eligibility Criteria:

- Please see above criteria for the entire FIP program.

Submission Cycle:

- Applications for the Tier I program are accepted twice per year: **June 1 and December 1.**
- Notification to applicants/awardees is anticipated within 1-1.5 months following the submission deadline.
- Meeting with the Research Development Office is suggested prior to submission.

Review Process:

The application review process will take into account a number of factors including but not limited to:

- intellectual merit of the project and the quality of the research outlined;
- the societal interest of the proposal;
- whether or not the work outlined in the proposal can be leveraged in the future – either as external funding, scholarly recognition, and/or visibility.

Award Fund Use:

The fund use for this award should be considered very flexible but must be outlined in the proposal budget. Uses include but are not limited to:

- collection of pilot data required for agency/private proposal submission;
- graduate student support;
- coordination of new multidisciplinary activities that will lead to development of a proposal for external funding;
- development of proposal to establish new research directions;



- development of scholarship leading to seminal publication or monograph (e.g. travel, materials, equipment, copyright, student support);
- conferences which bring visibility and expertise to UMD.

Notes on Fund Use:

- Tier I support is not intended for teaching buyouts for faculty members.
- Funds can be used to support summer salary – but only in cases where the researcher does not have 12 month salary support. Applicants should be prepared to justify why this summer salary is vitally important.

Expectations of Applicants and Awardees:

- Annual progress report will be completed for 2 consecutive years.
- Attendance at the Division of Research Spring Celebration of Scholarship and Research where the year's Tier I winners will be announced.
- Proposal submitted to external agency within two years of award or publication submitted or book contract secured within two years of award.
- **Note:** If proposal/publication reporting information is not submitted, faculty member's department may not be eligible for a Tier I grant for one year.

Application Process:

- Find the needed forms/information on Competition Space: <https://umd.infoready4.com/> “**Faculty Incentive Program – DRIF Investment**”; Tier I competition.
- Fill out the needed applicant information online
- Prepare a one (1) to three (3) page project overview (one additional page of diagrams can be included) which describes the project. This document should clearly outline:
 - the project's intellectual merit;
 - research or scholarship plan;
 - leverage strategies for the award, including but not limited to a plan for securing external funding, and/or planned publications or publishers to target;
 - alignment with departmental, college, and/or university goals.
- Prepare a proposed budget with brief justification.
- **Procure unit authorization** (chair/dean(s)/other) on the Universal Funding Form (all on one form), indicating their financial commitment to the required cost share; unit support contribution should equal 50% of the total request.
- Follow all application directions at <https://umd.infoready4.com/>.
- **Note:** This is not a limited submission competition. There is no expectation of review comments being provided back to the candidates/ awardees.

PLEASE NOTE: Meeting with the Research Development Office is encouraged prior to submission.



TIER 2: Proposal Development

Purpose:

The VPR, Provost, and Units(s) provide incentive support to faculty who are actively pursuing the development of externally-funded research programs which will contribute to the university's overall impact and reputation. These programs are typically large, multidisciplinary, highly visible and highly impactful.

Support Provided:

- **Up to \$75,000 per award.**

Cost Share:

- VPR will fund 33.33% of the requested amount.
- Provost will fund 33.33% of the requested amount.
- **The benefiting College/Unit(s) cost shares 33.33%.**
- Funds are distributed on a **reimbursement model from ledger expenditures**, therefore all applicants are required to document in the proposal how the funds will be used, via a detailed budget with accompanying justification.

Eligibility Criteria:

- Please see above criteria for the entire FIP program.

Submission Cycle:

- Applications are accepted on a rolling basis.
- Applications should be submitted prior to incurring proposal development expenses. Please allow at least 2 weeks to process these applications. 2-4 months prior to the agency submission date is preferred.
- Meeting with the Research Development Office is highly encouraged prior to submission.

Review Process:

The application review process will take into account a number of factors including but not limited to:

- how well the proposal/external program reflects University priorities;
- the extent to how multidisciplinary the proposal is;
- demonstrated, significant advocacy from department(s)/college(s);
- how highly visible the research initiative is;
- if the proposal has demonstrated the long-term financial sustainability of the research program;
- how well the program meets agency expectations;
- **Note:** all awards are typically \geq \$2M per year for multiple years with the



majority of the funds remaining at UMD.

Award Fund Use:

The fund use for this award should be considered moderately flexible but must be outlined in the proposal budget because funds will only be awarded as a **reimbursement for expenses already posted to the ledger**.

Uses include but are not limited to:

- collection of pilot data;
- student support;
- summer salary;
- required travel;
- workshops;
- hiring of outside technical editors/writers;
- proposal graphics development;
- use of specialized consultants such as programmers or web developers.

Expectations of Applicants and Awardees:

- Applicants must provide a complete copy of their proposal to the VPR following submission to the agency.
- Tier 2 awardees must notify the VPR in writing when a decision (either funded or not funded) has been made by the agency.
- Tier 2 awardees may submit expense ledger reimbursement reports to the VPR and Provost business offices on a rolling basis; funds will be reviewed for adherence to the proposal budget and allowable uses before reimbursement occurs.

Application Process:

- Find the needed forms/information on Competition Space: <https://umd.infoready4.com/> “**Faculty Incentive Program – DRIF Investment**”; Tier 2 competition.
- Fill out the applicant information online.
- Prepare a one (1) to three (3) page project overview which describes the research center or funding opportunity. This document should clearly outline:
 - the project’s intellectual merit;
 - how this fits into the university’s stated priorities;
 - research plan;
 - all UMD co-PI’s and any university sub-contracts;
 - proposed budget (excel) with justification.
- Additional Documents:
 - Universal Funding Form – procure unit signatures indicating the 1/3 financial commitment.

PLEASE NOTE: Meeting with the Research Development Office is highly encouraged prior to submission.



TIER 3: University Wide Initiatives Support

Purpose:

The VPR, Provost, and Units(s) provide incentive support for the development of broad, multidisciplinary research initiatives, institutes, centers or themes that will position the university to become a national leader in an emerging or sustained area of research. These areas typically respond to a national or societal need.

Support Provided:

- **\$150,000 per year for 3 years, subject to progress reporting.**

Cost Share:

- VPR will fund 33.33% of the requested amount.
- Provost will fund 33.33% of the requested amount.
- **The benefiting College/Unit(s) cost shares 33.33%.**
- Funds are distributed on a **reimbursement model from ledger expenditures**, therefore all applicants are required to document in the proposal how the funds will be used, via a detailed budget with accompanying justification.

Eligibility Criteria:

- Please see above criteria for the entire FIP program.

Submission Cycle:

- Applications are accepted on a rolling basis.
- Meeting with the Research Development Office is mandatory prior to submission.

Review Process:

The application review process will take into account a number of factors including but not limited to:

- 2-5 page concept paper which maps out the business case for the initiative and includes:
 - description of the initiative validating the university wide nature of the initiative (typically includes support from more than 4 colleges/schools);
 - list of participants (UMD and external if applicable);
 - detailed budget of the 1st planning year with justification (\$150K);
 - detailed plan for how external funding will be leveraged to ensure long-term sustainability past year 3;
 - description of the projected local, national and international impact;
 - overview of who are the public and private stakeholders and what plan has been outlined to engage their support;
 - clear milestones and deliverables.



Award Fund Use:

The fund use for this award should be considered extremely flexible but must be outlined in the proposal budget because funds will only be awarded as a **reimbursement for expenses already posted to the ledger.**

Funds can be used for:

- staff hires: coordinator and/or students;
- outreach efforts (e.g. conference or workshop);
- marketing;
- equipment;
- proposal development costs (e.g. travel, administrative costs, red team for proposal review, technical editors, graphic artists support);
- teaching buyout for lead PI;
- activities deemed necessary by lead PI to support the growth of research initiative.

Additional Support

If approved, Research Development Office is committed to helping establish the long-term viability of the initiative and will provide the following additional support that could include:

- facilitation of preliminary meetings among research units and faculty;
- coordination support for conferences or workshops;
- facilitation of contacts with corporate, state and federal agencies and officials;
- assistance with developing inter-institutional and corporate partnerships.

Expectations of Awardees:

- Development of a high level advisory committee to steer the initiative.
- Semi-annual progress reports demonstrating milestones met.
- External funding progress will be reviewed annually to assess viability and to assist in the movement toward funding sustainability.
- Funding support will be reviewed after three years and renegotiated, as necessary.

Application Process – to be customized per applicant:

- Find the needed forms/information on Competition Space: <https://umd.infoready4.com/> “**Faculty Incentive Program – DRIF Investment**”; Tier 3 competition.
- Fill out the applicant information online.
- Prepare a business case documents per the “review process” above.
- Additional Documents:
 - Universal Funding Form – procure unit signatures indicating the 1/3 financial commitment (VPR and Provost signature lines are blank).

PLEASE NOTE: Meeting with the Research Development Office and the VPR is mandatory prior to submission; application materials will be customized per initiative.



TIER 4: Operating Support (Formerly Tier 2 annual operating)

Purpose:

The VPR, Provost, and Units(s) provide support to faculty who have successfully pursued the development of externally-funded large research centers/programs whose establishment improves the university's overall impact and reputation. These centers/programs are typically large, multidisciplinary, highly visible, multi-year, and highly impactful.

Operating support is intended for new centers/programs, to build an infrastructure in the early, critical years. This funding is particularly appropriate when grant funding is not available to cover certain operational expenses.

Application for these funds should be requested just prior to proposal submission for approval but are only awarded if the proposal is successful.

Support Provided:

- **Up to the equivalent of 10% of budgeted IDC.**
- **Note:** Start-up operating support will be provided for the first 5 years depending on the term of the establishing grant/contract, and renegotiated as necessary.
- **Note:** As the center/program grows and/or follow on awards are significantly larger, the 10% equivalent of budgeted IDC basis for annual operating may be reduced subject to negotiation and need.

Cost Share:

- VPR will fund 33.33% of the requested amount.
- Provost will fund 33.33% of the requested amount.
- **The benefiting College/Unit(s) cost shares 33.33%.**
- **Note:** Funds are distributed on a **reimbursement model from ledger expenditures**, therefore all applicants are required to document in the proposal how the funds will be used, via a detailed budget with accompanying justification.

Eligibility Criteria:

- Please see above criteria for the entire FIP program.

Submission Cycle:

- Applications are accepted on a rolling basis.
- Submission just prior to the agency deadline date is preferred so that a more complete proposal can be included as part of the application package.
- Meeting with the Division of Research is highly encouraged prior to submission.

Review Process:

The application review process will take into multiple factors including:

- award size of \geq \$2M/year for multiple years with 50%+ remaining at UMD;

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- how well the proposal/external program reflects University priorities;
- multidisciplinary nature of the proposal;
- demonstrated, significant advocacy from department(s)/college(s);
- how highly visible the research initiative is;
- if the proposal has demonstrated the long-term financial sustainability of the research program/center.

Award Fund Use:

The fund use for this award should be considered moderately flexible but must be outlined in the proposal budget because funds will only be awarded as a **reimbursement for expenses already posted to the ledger**. Uses include center-styled support activities, which are unallowable under the grant/contract such as, but not limited to:

- coordinator/administrator support;
- new proposal generation;
- outreach to partners;
- general equipment and operating expenses;
- training;
- required travel;
- center communication efforts (graphics, website, social media platforms etc.).

Expectations of Applicants and Awardees:

- Applicants must provide a complete copy of their proposal to the VPR following submission to the agency.
- Applicants must notify the VPR in writing when a decision (either funded or not funded) has been made by the agency.
- Funded Tier 4 awardees may submit expense ledger reimbursement requests on a bi-yearly basis (December 10 and June 10); funds will be reviewed for adherence to allowable uses before reimbursement occurs.
- Awardees must submit yearly progress reports on the program/center progress.
- Unit earned DRIF distributions will be allocated directly to departments and colleges whose faculty participate in the center/program, based on level of faculty contribution negotiated at time of proposal submission.
- If the center receives fees (e.g. UARC), has a special IDC arrangement, or has state funding, then the equivalent 10% additional annual support will not apply and the Tier 4 approval will be voided.
- Only additional increments to the original, establishing award will receive the same annual operating support as the original contract/grant.
- If center funding is discontinued, the special provisions of the FIP (as covered above) will no longer apply.

Application Process:

- Find the needed forms/information on Competition Space: <https://umd.infoready4.com/> “**Faculty Incentive Program – DRIF Investment**”; Tier 4 competition.
- Fill out the applicant information online.



- Attach draft proposal.
- Prepare a one (1) to two (2) page budget justification overview which details:
 - What expenses will be borne by the agency program (if awarded)
 - What expenses will not be covered by the agency program
 - Detailed outline of how the equivalent 10% IDC will be spent and justification for how/why this will best support the program
- Additional documents:
 - Universal Funding Form – procure unit signatures indicating the 1/3 financial commitment.
 - Operating Support Additional Form which delineates funding request by year.

PLEASE NOTE: Meeting with the Research Development Office is highly encouraged prior to submission.