

**STRATEGIC PRIORITIES PLAN**

**VCU Quest Grant FY 2025 Request for Applications**

**Purpose:** The goal of the VCU Quest Grant is to afford all faculty an internal funding opportunity to support new, emerging, or continuing research. Research proposals that advance any discipline and area of research focus are appropriate for consideration. Requests for grant support may be based on a broad array of needs, from restarting an inactive research program to pilot studies that would produce preliminary results on which external grant applications could be based. Proposed work that helps advance transdisciplinary research, multidisciplinary research, and cross-campus collaboration, as well as research that has the potential for translation to practice or market, is especially encouraged.

**VCU Quest Grant At-A-Glance** *(additional details below)*

<b>Proposal Deadline</b>	December 13, 2024
<b>Award Start Date and Project Period</b>	July 1, 2025 (18 months)
<b>Award Ceiling</b>	Up to \$50,000, inclusive of 25% unit cost share (required)
<b>Funds Release</b>	Funds are released in annual increments following the proposed budget. Year 2 funds are released following a successful mid-term report.
<b>Program Category</b>	Pilot/small project, funds for part of a larger project.
<b>Eligibility</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple PIs encouraged, but single investigators accepted.</li> <li>• Transdisciplinary research, defined as research that combines two or more areas of study into a seamless project, required.</li> <li>• PIs may be any <u>full-time, primary appointment</u> VCU faculty, research faculty or clinician researcher regardless of rank or tenure status, whose appointments are approved by the dean of their college or school. Clinician researchers must have a university faculty appointment to serve as a PI.</li> <li>• Staff without affiliate college/school faculty appointments are <b>not eligible</b> to be a PI.</li> <li>• Inclusive research teams encompassing meaningful participation of all members are strongly encouraged, including URM and/or minoritized faculty, early-stage investigators, trainees, and students.</li> <li>• Projects must demonstrate alignment with a research strategic plan initiative, along with specific goal(s) and objective(s) identified in the <a href="#">One VCU Research Strategic Priorities Plan</a>.</li> </ul> <p><i>Faculty who receive a grant from the Quest fund as either PI or Co-PI cannot serve as PI or Co-PI on future submissions to the Quest fund until three years have elapsed from the end date of their most recent award.</i></p>

**Full proposal deadline:** Application packages should be submitted via RAMS-SPOT Internal Opportunities here: [VCU Quest Grant OP00000699](#) no later than **5 p.m. (EST), Friday, December 13, the deadline for**

**any reason. 2024.** You will receive a confirmation email upon receipt. **Applications cannot be accepted after the deadline for any reason.**

**Format:** Applications must use [this template](#). Text must be single-spaced, Arial, 11-point (minimum) font. The template margins should not be altered. Proposals not following the format requirements will be returned without review. Once complete, **the template and any supporting documents must be converted to a single PDF file for upload.**

**Forms for submission:**

- [VCU Quest Application](#)
- [Biosketch Form](#)

**Budget guidelines:** All requested costs directly related to the project should be listed and justified in the budget section of the Quest Application Template. Facilities and administrative (F&A or indirect) costs are not allowed. **Budgets require approval from applicable chairs (or their designees) and deans before submission in RAMS-SPOT. Please allow adequate time for approval routing.** See the Budgeting Guide below for additional information about eligible and ineligible costs.

### VCU Quest Grant Budgeting Guide

CATEGORY	ELIGIBLE COSTS	INELIGIBLE COSTS
Salary support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Salary support, <b>including fringe benefits</b>, for PI(s) and co-investigators, <b>collectively not to exceed 20%</b> of total project costs (i.e., if the total project budget is \$50,000, the collective PI/Co-PI salaries and fringe cannot exceed \$10,000 total).</li> <li>• Salary support, including fringe benefits, for project staff.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Salary support for administrative personnel or 12-month UAP or executive personnel.</li> </ul>
Equipment and supplies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research/project supplies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Office equipment and supplies (including faculty computers, laptops, and tablets unless strictly related to project).</li> </ul>
Student costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undergraduate, graduate student, and postdoctoral stipends, if relevant to the project, with a detailed justification.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tuition other than graduate student tuition.</li> </ul>
Travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essential travel related to the project to include conference and site related visits.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Travel not strictly related to the project.</li> </ul>
Other costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participant fees.</li> <li>• Other expenses (i.e., laboratory and shared core facilities/resource fees).</li> <li>• Consultant costs.</li> <li>• Equipment/technology critical to the project. (Requests over \$5,000 must include a detailed justification.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional organization dues or membership fees.</li> <li>• Sub-contracts to institutions or salary support for individuals external to VCU.</li> <li>• Pre-award costs.</li> </ul>

**Review process:** The submission, review, and funding process are coordinated by the Office of Research

and Innovation. There are three levels of review: 1) school- and college-level review and ranking with recommendations, 2) review of level one recommendations by the associate deans for research (ADR) from each school and college, and 3) the final decision on ADR recommendations by the Vice President for Research and Innovation (VPRI.) Review feedback is available for all applicants through the ADRs associated with cost share on the application.

**Note:** Multi-investigator proposals will undergo initial review in all units from which cost share funds are requested. The number of proposals recommended for funding is dependent upon available funds from each unit where cost share funds are requested.

While each school/college/relevant unit will establish its own review process, proposals are assessed in the following areas:

- Merit, including scholarly merit, impact on the field of study, and feasibility (budget and timeline)
- Broader impacts, including translational potential and potential for high return on investment.
- Relation to the One VCU Research Strategic Priorities Plan, including specific potential for a project to further the goals and objectives identified.
- Team, including PI(s) preparedness, transdisciplinary qualities, and diversity (meaningful participation of trainees, students, URM and/or minoritized faculty and early-stage investigators as well as cross-campus collaboration).
- Additional school/college criteria as relevant.

**Award and reporting process:** The project start date is July 1, 2025 and the award period is 18 months. Funds will be released in annual increments following the proposed budget. Year 2 funds will be released following a successful one-year report documenting meaningful progress toward achieving the project aims/goals. Progress should include evidence that the applicants have met with a relevant program officer/director from the planned funding agency if such a meeting is allowed by the agency. The Vice President for Research and Innovation (VPRI) and ADRs will review progress in comparison to budget utilization and project milestones based on the initial project proposal. The remaining funds will only be released following approval from the VPRI. A final project report including an accounting of all funds expended, a summary of work completed, and progress on sustainability plans will be required 30 days after the project end date.

**Additional requirements for all Quest Fund awards:**

- Projects are required to adhere to all VCU research-related policies, procedures, and compliance approvals, including intellectual property, IRB, IACUC, etc.
- The principal investigator(s) will be required to participate in an annual survey of results and outcomes (e.g., external grants submissions and awards, publications, creative work, intellectual property, etc.) associated with their fund-sponsored research. Participation will begin one year after the project end date and continue annually for a total of three years.
- All publications, presentations, etc., resulting from the project must acknowledge financial support from the VCU Quest Fund.
- Projects are expected to be completed within the specific budget period. If an extenuating circumstance should be considered for a no-cost extension, the PI(s) will be expected to fully justify the request in writing. Extensions are at the discretion of the VPRI and applicable deans, and there is no guarantee that the extension will be approved.

**Questions:** For specific questions about proposal budgets, cost-share commitments, school/college level review and endorsement signatures contact your [Associate Dean for Research](#). All other questions may be directed to [ovprifunds@vcu.edu](mailto:ovprifunds@vcu.edu).