USC Lancaster Research and Productive Scholarship Grant
Application and Guidelines

Guidelines last updated: October 9, 2026
Grant applications due: 5:00 p.m. on Friday, 20 November 2026
Award Year: 1 May 2027 to 30 April 2028 (please note that faculty salary dispersals must occur between 10 May and 15 August 2027)
Please upload a single pdf of all application materials to MS Forms. Your document should be named YourLastName YourFirstName RPS 2027.
No late or incomplete grant applications will be considered.

Mission Statement
The purpose of the Faculty/Staff Research & Productive Scholarship Fund is to encourage and support faculty and professional staff in their efforts to pursue productive research and scholarship that will result in publication, presentation, creative exhibition, performance, or other formats suitable to their discipline or role at the university.

For faculty, the Fund may support scholarly activities that facilitate meeting the requirements for tenure, promotion, or post-tenure review.

For professional staff, the Fund may support professional development in the applicant's area of professional responsibility or university teaching. (Staff applicants should discuss their project and any necessary leave time with supervisors before submitting.)

Eligibility Requirements
All full-time faculty and full-time professional staff are eligible to apply for funds. Fund recipients become panelists for the next award period; therefore, they are ineligible to apply during the year following their awards. Prior award recipients are not eligible to submit a proposal until they have submitted the final report for their most recent award.

Review Process
Applications will be reviewed by a panel consisting of the Research and Productive Scholarship Executive Committee members appointed by the Dean and those previous year recipients who have made significant progress toward their project goals.

Restrictions
- The Fund will not pay tuition and fees for degree programs.
- Requests for equipment and supplies must be clearly justified as essential to completion of the project, and PI must demonstrate purchases cannot be accommodated through division or technology budgets. All equipment and supplies purchased with grant funds become the property of the university.
- Applicants may submit only one proposal per funding cycle.
- Fund recipients are ineligible to apply in the year following their award.
- Fund recipients must continue to be employed by USC Lancaster for the duration of the award year to receive funding.

Submission Process
Proposal packages are due by the deadline stated above. All required components of the grant application must be combined into **a single pdf document** and uploaded to The MS Forms link above. If you require assistance combining documents into a single pdf, please contact any member of USCL IT Support. You will receive upload confirmation, but you will not be able to access your document once submitted. If you have questions about your submission, please contact the Office of the Dean. Note that the link will no longer be available following the application due date, as late applications will not be accepted.

Awards
Award amounts vary based on the review panel's assessment of the merit of the project proposal and available funds and are recommended to the Dean by the review panel. Upon receipt of the award letter, please consult with the Business Office to establish the grant project in PeopleSoft to allow for expenditure of funds. Salary requests will also require the submission of a Personnel Request Form to the employee's supervisor. If there are unallocated funds after awards are made, there may be a second grant cycle to distribute the remaining money at the discretion of the Campus Dean in consultation with the RPS executive committee.

Application Materials Checklist
All support materials will be appropriate to the applicant's discipline and organized in the following order. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

- ☐ Cover sheet using the form provided.
- ☐ Two-page single-spaced description of the project, including a brief timeline. Depending upon discipline, this may include significance, intent, purpose, context, methodology, research outline, travel plans, expected outcomes, and success indicators. Please use Times New Roman twelve-point font and one-inch margins.
- ☐ Itemized budget using budget form provided on the USCL RPS website. Budget amounts should be stated as accurately as possible. All fringe benefits costs must be in accordance with published University rates and will be adjusted as appropriate.
- ☐ Budget justification is required and must provide sufficient detail of how the request will support the project. For summer salary requests, include a detailed justification. Please review the Budget Justification Checklist.
- ☐ Curriculum vitae relevant to project's research area (no more than 2 pages).
- ☐ (Optional) Support materials may include relevant samples of previous work, review of relevant literature, references, and bibliography, as appropriate for discipline.
- ☐ (Optional) Relevant approvals if applicable (i.e. USC IRB, Ethics/Human Subjects Committee, Animal Care Committee).

Panel Review Criteria
Applications should exhibit evidence that the project design is feasible, well planned, accurately budgeted, and that it supports the mission of the Fund and the University. Grant applications may be evaluated according to the criteria below. Applicants are not necessarily expected to address all criteria in their narratives or to do so equally:

- Is the application complete, detailed, and clear?
- Are there clearly defined outcomes for the project that fall under one of the categories of scholarship defined in the Palmetto College Campuses Faculty Manual?

- Is the proposed workplan likely to produce the promised outcome?
- Does the proposed work merit a grant of this size?
- Does the applicant demonstrate the value of the work for the campus?
- Does the applicant demonstrate the value of the work for their professional development, including, but not limited to,promotion?
- Does the proposed work reflect good practices within the applicant's discipline as far as the committee is able to discern?
- Does the applicant demonstrate a likelihood of successful completion of the proposed work and the relevant expertise to execute it?

Post Award Reporting

The final report should be submitted to this USCL RPS grant reports portal, no later than 90 days after the grant is completed. The final report should include a summary of research and/or scholarly results of the project. Prior award recipients are not eligible to submit a proposal until they have submitted the final report for their most recent award.

Extensions and Changes in Funding Allocations

After a grant has been awarded, if a recipient needs to request an extension to the research or funding period or wishes to make changes to funding allocations, they should follow the Procedure for Requesting Grant Period Extensions or Changes in Funding Allocation. Extensions must be requested no later than April 30 of the award year.

Questions

Please contact the chair of the USCL Research and Productive Scholarship Executive Committee at usclrps@mailbox.sc.edu with any questions.