



ASPiRE INTERNAL GRANT PROGRAM - JUNIOR FACULTY RESEARCH COMPETITION

Information, Guidelines, and Grant Proposal Components

(updated Fall 2011)

INTRODUCTION

Ball State University's Internal Grants Program was created in 1965 to provide funding to faculty and students to support and develop projects in the areas of research and creative endeavors. Based on recommendations from the Provost, the program was revamped entirely in Spring 2008, including a name change to ASPiRE. The name ASPiRE is intended to remind faculty that the goal of seeking internal grants is to turn internally funded research efforts into proposals to external funding agencies.

As the primary purpose of this program is to provide seed money for research findings that will lead to further support from external funding agencies, all awardees are expected to prepare and submit a proposal to an external funding agency that is related to their ASPiRE grant at or exceeding the ASPiRE award amount within two years of receiving the ASPiRE grant.

ELIGIBILITY

A Junior Faculty award will be granted only once to a recipient in a three-year period (excluding the Start-Up award). Junior Faculty are eligible for all ASPiRE programs and are not limited to submitting proposals only to the Junior Faculty competition. However, the Junior Faculty competition offers certain advantages, namely, that the competition pool is smaller than the General Faculty pool and that review emphasis is placed on the potential and promise of the project rather than past productivity. Further definitions of eligible "Junior Faculty" can be found below.

JUNIOR FACULTY

- Faculty members in their first, second, or third year of receiving a new appointment (tenure-track or full-time contract).
- Those faculty moving from contract to tenure-track status are considered eligible as junior faculty, again, in their first three years of receiving a tenure-track position.
- Faculty not considered Junior Faculty as defined above are not eligible to be co-applicants on a proposal submitted to the Junior Faculty competition; however, non-Junior Faculty can be used as mentors and advisors during the proposed project.

RESEARCH PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

In general, projects submitted to the research competition involve a process of study or discovery that will produce new insights, theories, or applications within the discipline and/or society. Project outcomes will result in the submission of an external grant proposal that will sustain and further

advance the research endeavors supported through this program. Results of the research should also be worthy of submission for publication in refereed journals and foster opportunities for commercialization where applicable.

Projects directed toward strengthening undergraduate university curricula, courses, or teaching skills, should be submitted to the Creative Teaching Program, which is administered through the [Office of Innovation in Teaching, Assessment, and Scholarship](#).

EXTERNAL FUNDING REQUIREMENTS

The intended impact of an ASPIRE grant is to generate external proposals that will sustain and further advance research endeavors initially funded through the program. As such, recipients of ASPIRE Faculty Research Grants are expected to submit an external grant proposal no later than 24 months after receiving their award. **Please note:** External grants submitted prior to receipt of the ASPIRE award will not count towards satisfying the external funding requirement.

Applicants are advised to carefully select external funding sources whose funding priorities are similar to their own research interests. Ball State offers many resources to aid in the search for external funding opportunities (see: <http://cms.bsue.edu/About/AdministrativeOffices/SPO/FundingOpportunities.aspx>). Applicants are encouraged to utilize these resources and to contact Augusta Wray, Research Information Coordinator (285-5033) in the Sponsored Programs Office for additional assistance in locating appropriate external grant opportunities.

PRE-SUBMISSION REVIEW

ASPIRE funding can be the first encounter with grantsmanship for many junior faculty members; as such we require a pre-submission review with the Sponsored Programs Office. The purpose of this is twofold: first, a pre-submission review will ensure that your proposal adheres to the guidelines and will allow you to garner feedback from your [Proposal Manager](#) in order to improve your proposal before it is presented for committee review; second, this process will acquaint you with our office and our proposal development services for subsequent external grants.

Sponsored Programs Office Pre-Submission Deadline: **Tuesday, January 17th 2012**

Please send an email containing your proposal as described on pages 3-5 of this document (e.g. narrative, budget form, budget narrative, etc.) to your [Proposal Manager](#) no later than Tuesday, January 17th. This will provide the time needed for a thorough review and to make the suggested changes to improve the proposal prior to submission.

In addition, if the proposal is a revised version of a previously unfunded application, please also provide a copy of the previous proposal and the reviewers' critiques.

To identify your proposal manager, please see:

<http://cms.bsue.edu/About/AdministrativeOffices/SPO/AboutOurOffice/ProposalManagerList.aspx>

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR PROPOSALS

Proposals must be submitted via IRBNet. Step-by-step instructions for registering and uploading proposals for IRBNet can be found in the appendices as well as at the following url:
<http://cms.bsu.edu/About/AdministrativeOffices/SPO/ASPiRE/IRBNetASPiREHelp.aspx>.

A complete submission includes the ASPiRE Faculty Research Application Cover Sheet, proposal narrative (completed according to program guidelines), budget form and budget narrative, plus the required appendices.

PROPOSAL COMPONENTS

Because review committees are comprised of members from a variety of disciplines, all proposals should be written in clear, non-technical language readily understood by an educated layperson.

- **APPLICATION COVER SHEET (1 page)**

Application Cover Sheet is available via IRBNet. Note: See *Appendix C* for steps to access the form via IRBNet.

- **PROPOSAL NARRATIVE (limited to 5 double-spaced pages)** Double-space the text using no smaller than a size 11 font. Label the required sections as stated below and address each topic completely but concisely.

1. Executive summary - An overview of the proposed project.
2. Background information - History and the current status of research in this area in the form of a literature review.
3. Goals, objectives, and significance - A discussion of the scope of the project, focusing on the overall goals and specific objectives of the research. This should include a discussion on the anticipated impact in the field, anticipated scholarly outputs that will result from funding, as well as the impact on one's own research agenda. Material should be organized in such a way that a clear outcome of the project is readily discernable.
4. External funding plans - Identification of external sponsor(s) and specific grant program(s) (including links to program guidelines) targeted for future submission. It is essential to explain how internal funding from this project will lead to improved chances of obtaining external funding. Furthermore, applicants are encouraged to contact the Program Officer affiliated with the external grant program and initiate a conversation to determine if the targeted program is a suitable match for the faculty member's proposed research. Please note: applicants who include such correspondences from their program officers will receive higher consideration than those without such documentation. Previously funded applicants should also include an indication of success with prior external funding efforts.
5. Research Methods & Timeline - An identification of research questions and a detailed description of the proposed project. Describe in detail the methods, procedures, steps or activities to be undertaken, and a timetable for completing the work. Within the project timeline applicants should also address the proposal development timeline for external proposal

submission(s) that will be pursued as a result of this internal funding. Overall, the goal of the research methods section is to outline what will take place during the course of the research and how the project will lead to an outcome. The research methodology description should provide a reader with a clear mental picture of the proposed work. *It is often advisable for a colleague in another field to review the description of research methods for clarity, feasibility, and viability.*

Regardless of whether the research involves quantitative or qualitative methodology, a good description contains the following information:

- What research question(s) will the data propose to answer, or how will the defined inquiry be described?
- How will the data be collected and analyzed?
- If human subjects are to be involved, how will they be selected and why?
- What is the expected outcome or what further research questions may be prompted by the results?

6. Means of dissemination, or expected outcome - Plans for disseminating the expected results or the information generated by the project. Please also list any potential Intellectual Property and/or Commercialization opportunities that will result from this proposal.

- **BUDGET FORM**

The goal of the budget section of the proposal is to identify the type and amount of funds required to carry out the project. Total proposal requests **cannot exceed \$10,000**, and can include any of the following categories:

Summer Stipend: Provides a stipend of up to \$6,000 for a period of 10 weeks. Applicants also have the option of selecting a ½ summer stipend, equivalent to \$3,000 for a period of 5 weeks. For a project with multiple recipients, the salary award amount for each awardee is calculated by dividing \$6,000 (or \$3,000 for a single summer session) by the number of award recipients.

Graduate Assistantship: Supports faculty in research and scholarly studies for which the appointment of a graduate assistant will advance the outcome of the project. This award normally provides 15% of the student's previous academic year stipend and is awarded summer term only (either first or second summer session). *Submissions should not identify an individual student by name at the time of application. This information will be requested upon the granting of an award.*

Student Requirements:

- The student must be an active partner in the project and must work a minimum of 20 hours per week. The award is not meant for routine technical, secretarial or administrative support.
- The student must be a regular graduate student in good academic standing and registered for graduate credit during the assistantship period.

Supplemental Assigned Time: Provides up to \$2,500 to the applicant's department for one-course buy-out to support research or a project of interest to a department. These awards will not exceed one award per department, per semester and will not be granted outside of the project period. It is

the **PI's responsibility** to secure course release approval from the department chair prior to submitting an ASPIRE application.

Supplies, Equipment, Expenses and Travel (S.E.E.T.): Supports costs associated with research up to \$3,000. Costs need to be itemized and justified and must follow accepted university accounting policies and procedures.

Category delineation of S.E.E.T. funds are:

- Personnel—*Wages to pay other BSU personnel to assist in the project, including hourly students.*
- Contractual—*Non-BSU personnel wages or consultant fees; external agreements (including software licenses)*
- Supplies, Materials, Minor Equipment—*Any supplies needed to complete the project, including office supplies, postage, software, laboratory supplies, books, etc.*
- Travel—*Expenses incurred during travelling or those directly related to travel: Airfare, lodging, mileage, per diem, etc.*
- Participant Stipend—*Stipend to pay research subjects or project participants.* **PLEASE NOTE:** Participant Incentives need to be in accord with the Controller's Office policy on awards, prizes, and stipends and **cannot be issued in the form of a gift card**. For details please see: <http://cms.bsu.edu/About/AdministrativeOffices/Controller/Resources/APGI.aspx>

- **BUDGET NARRATIVE**

Limited to **one double-spaced page** serves as a prose description of items denoted in the Budget Form.

Use the budget narrative to:

- Give a complete explanation of the amounts listed on the Budget Form.
- Relate budget categories to project objectives.
- Name the source of the contribution for the "BSU-Other" columns (e.g. Department, College, External Grant, out of pocket costs)
- Discuss how the provision of time for faculty or graduate students will further the successful outcome of the project.

In addition:

- All budget items that are requested must conform to University accounting policies and procedures.
- ASPIRE funds may not be used to pay non-PI/Co-PI faculty salaries. This includes the use of internal consultants or other university staff. Students are paid based upon current University hourly wages.
- The University nepotism policy is applicable to all employees on a grant.

PROPOSAL ATTACHMENTS

Please include the following required and optional materials as attachments to your proposal. These can be uploaded directly to IRBNet.

- Required:
 - Literature references (1 page maximum; use the format that is standard for publishing in your field.)
 - Letter of support from your department chair (preferably submitted as a pdf document on department letterhead and signed by chair)
 - Short Curriculum Vitae for applicants and co-applicants (limited to three pages per applicant) detailing applicant qualifications, relevant publications, and external funding submitted during the prior three years, including: title of project, awarding agency, submission date, funding status, and amount. CV should be included as an Appendix.
- Optional:
 - Additional letter(s) of support from faculty collaborators or other agencies. (It is recommended that a letter of support be obtained if an external institution is involved in any capacity.)
 - Glossary of Terms (1 page maximum). It is recommended that even though your proposal should be written for the educated lay person, it may be beneficial to the reviewer to refer to a glossary of terms used in the narrative or methodology.
 - Correspondences from external program officers discussing the appropriateness of the proposed proposal.
 - Appendix of related materials (e.g. survey questions, graphs, photographs, etc.)
 - Examples of previously published material (which are relevant to the proposed project).

SUBMISSION

A complete proposal submission includes:

- ✓ ASPIRE Faculty Research Application Cover Sheet
- ✓ Proposal narrative
- ✓ Budget form
- ✓ Budget narrative
- ✓ Required appendices (curriculum vitae, literature references, letter of support, and optional appendices. These items should be uploaded onto IRBNet (www.irbnet.org) and clearly labeled.

The submission deadline is noted for each grant on the SPO website; all materials are due by **5:00 p.m.** that day.

REVIEW PROCESS

The University Research Committee reviews the proposals submitted to the research program. The University Research Committee is divided into three subcommittees according to discipline:

- Subcommittee #1: Humanities, Arts, Music, and Architecture
- Subcommittee #2: Education, Business, and Social Sciences
- Subcommittee #3: Mathematical, Biological, Physical, Health & Applied Sciences

All proposals submitted will undergo the same review process, which includes:

- Pre-Submission review by SPO Proposal Manager for:
 - Adherence to proposal submission guidelines (Proposals that do not adhere to the directions as stipulated by these guidelines will not be eligible to go forward for committee review).

- Narrative Review
- Budget Review
- Administrative review by SPO, for:
 - Eligibility, including previous internal and external awards documentation, etc.
- Subcommittee Review by the subcommittee selected by the applicant
- Funding Recommendation – Subcommittees make suggestions for funding to the Director of SPO, who then makes the final funding decisions based on availability of funds.

REVIEW CRITERIA FOR RESEARCH COMPETITIONS

All proposals are reviewed by the appropriate research subcommittee. Proposals are scored out of a possible 40 points (see below for exact criteria and point weighting).

External Funding (maximum of 10 points)

Applicants are advised to spend significant detail outlining their external funding plans to warrant receipt of the ten points allocated to this section of their proposal. In particular, applicants are expected to identify funding agencies and specific grant programs targeted for future submission, including links to program guidelines. It is essential to explain how internal funding from this project will lead to improved chances of obtaining external funding. Furthermore, applicants are encouraged to contact the Program Officer affiliated with the external grant program and initiate a conversation to determine if the targeted program is a suitable match for the faculty member's proposed research. Please note: applicants who include such correspondences from their program officers will receive higher consideration than those without such documentation.

Proposal Background and Significance of Project (maximum of 10 points)

Literature review

Goal of proposal clearly stated

Benefits to discipline and/or society

Anticipated Impact on scholarship, teaching or learning

Plans for dissemination, publication, commercialization, or presentation

Research Methods (maximum of 10 points)

Project plan (e.g., development of creative design, or data collection and analytical procedure)

Feasibility of project within time frame

Budget Justification (maximum of 5 points)

Clear justification of resources and budget

Adherence to budgeting practices listed in guidelines

Adherence to Format (maximum of 5 points)

Text is lucid and written in non-technical language

Proposal narrative adheres to the format described in this guide

Accuracy in grammar and spelling

Forms are properly filled in

APPENDIX A:

INSTRUCTIONS ON REGISTERING WITH IRBNet

1. Go to <http://www.irbnet.org>. [Do not request a demo from this site; the demo is not for training purposes.]
2. Click on the 'New User Registration' link in the upper right-hand corner of the screen.
3. Create your username and password. This system does not interface with Ball State's system, but you may choose to use your BSU username and password if you like. Click 'Continue'.
4. Read and accept the Individual User Terms of Use.
5. To add your affiliation, type the word BALL into the search box. **Uncheck** 'Boards' and 'Sponsors' leaving only 'Research Institutions' checked. Click 'Display'. Select 'Ball State University, Muncie, IN' from the organization box. Click 'Continue'
6. Enter your contact information. Enter the email address at which you would like to receive communications through the IRBNet system (e.g. notification of ASPIRE decisions, communications from your research team or administrator). Click 'Continue'.
7. Review your provided information and edit as necessary. When you are satisfied, click 'Register'.

An email will be sent to the email address you provided in Step 6, with "IRBNet Activation Required" in the subject line. You will need to click on the link provided in this registration email in order to activate your account. Clicking on the link will take you to the IRBNet homepage.

If you need further assistance with this process please contact ASPIRE at 765-285-1600 or aspire@bsu.edu.

APPENDIX B:

INSTRUCTIONS ON CREATING A NEW PROPOSAL

1. Login to IRBNet (www.irbnet.org). This will take you to the Project Manager page.
2. Click on the Create New Project button located on the left-hand side of your screen. Complete the required information fields. Click Continue.
3. You will now be on the Designer page. You can access this page at any time by clicking on the Designer button under the heading “Project Administration,” located on the left side of your screen.
In Step #1:
 - a. Select ‘Ball State University ASPIRE Grant Program, Muncie, IN’ from the ‘Select a Library’ drop-down menu.
 - b. In the ‘Select a Document’ drop-down menu, you will find the ASPIRE cover sheets and budget forms.
 - c. Select the ASPIRE Faculty Research Application Cover Sheet and click the ‘Download’ button
 - d. Save the form to your local machine and complete the form.
 - e. Please note: PDF forms may be completed, saved, and edited in Adobe Reader. Please see the following website to make sure that you have the most up to date version: http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2_allversions.html
4. In Step #2:
 - a. Upload your completed documents by clicking on 'Add New Document'.
 - b. Select a Document Type from the drop-down menu that corresponds with the document you are uploading, and then click on the ‘Browse’ button to search for your document.
 - c. Then click on the ‘Attach’ button.
5. If applicable, share the proposal with your research team. Click the ‘Share this Project’ button located on the left-hand side of your screen. Click on the blue ‘Share’ link within the text to grant access to this proposal.
 - a. Select ‘Ball State University, Muncie, IN’ from the organization box. Click ‘Select Organization’. [Note: if the individual is not affiliated with Ball State University, select the organization under which they registered with IRBNet.]
 - b. Search for registered users with whom you’d like to share this proposal (i.e., your co-PIs, research assistants, consultants). Grant each user a level of access:
 - i. Full: user may add/edit/delete proposal documents, share the proposal with other users, and submit the proposal.
 - ii. Write: user may add/edit/delete proposal documents, but cannot share the proposal with other users or submit the proposal.

- iii. Read: user may only view proposal documents.
 - c. Selected users will be notified automatically via email that the proposal has been shared with them. You may enter comments to be included in this email in the 'Your Comments' section. Click 'Save'.
 - d. Note: If the individuals you are seeking are not in the list of registered users, please ask them to register with IRBNet. Instructions on registration may be found at: http://cms.bsu.edu/About/AdministrativeOffices/SPO/ASPIRE/~media/DepartmentalContent/SPO/pdfs/Compliance/registeringwithirbnet_aspire.ashx.
6. Sign the proposal. ***PIs must sign the proposal before it is submitted.***
 - a. Click on the Sign Package button located on the left-hand side of your screen. Select your role, and click 'Sign'.
 - i. The lead researcher should sign as "Principal Investigator". A designee may NOT sign for the PI. ***Applications will not be scheduled for review if required signatures are missing.***
7. Once you have attached all of your necessary documents and signed your proposal, you should be ready to submit your proposal. Click on the Submit this Package button located on the left-hand side of your screen.
 - a. From the Submit Package Screen, type in the word "Ball" in the 'Search for an Organization' box and click 'Search'.
 - b. Select the **Ball State University ASPIRE Grant Program, Muncie, IN** and click continue. Please note that there are several Ball State University Committees to submit your proposal to. If you submit your proposal to the wrong committee, you will be asked to withdraw your proposal and resubmit to the proper committee.
 - c. In the Submission Type drop-down menu, select 'Funding/Grant' and click 'Submit'.

The Submission Manager screen (can be found by clicking on the Submission Manager button located on the left-hand side of your screen) will show you the list of studies to which you have access – those you have created and those which have been shared with you at any level of access. Studies which have not been submitted are labeled "Work in Progress" in the Status column. Studies which have been submitted but not reviewed are labeled "Pending Review." Clicking on the title of any proposal will take you to the Project Overview for the selected proposal.