WeR1: Program for Enhancing Research Capacity (PERC)
Fall 2024

Overview

The Office of the Vice President for Research (OVPR), in collaboration with Academic Affairs and ADVANCE at UNM, will be launching this year's cycle of the Program for Enhancing Research Capacity (PERC). PERC supports acquisition of shared instrumentation or enhancement of shared facilities that enable major endeavors to advance discovery, creativity, and innovation across campus. This program seeks to add or augment research capacity through the acquisition or upgrading of instrumentation for use by multiple investigators. Thus, the proposed equipment must be housed within a space accessible to more than one PI/lab group and must have multiple committed users either within a single department/college, or preferably from multiple departments and colleges. Up to $600,000 will be invested in this funding cycle. Future funding will be dependent on availability of funds and program outcomes.

Eligibility

Proposals may be led by any UNM faculty or staff member with a primary appointment on central campus who is eligible to serve as a PI according to UNM policies. In all cases, however, the manager of the facility/lab in which the proposed equipment will be installed and maintained must be either a PI or a Co-PI on the proposal. Faculty from other UNM campuses may serve as Co-PIs if they will have access to the equipment. Individuals other than the lab manager may serve as PI or Co-PI on no more than one proposal in each funding cycle and may not apply for a second award if a required report is outstanding. Proposals from department chairs for equipment that will benefit entire departments are encouraged.

Examples of eligible equipment include single, commercially available instruments; an added feature/component of an integrated system (e.g., adding an additional capability/module to an extant system to accommodate new types of research); digital technologies equipment for creating/processing humanities data (e.g., oral histories); and upgraded equipment for producing creative works (e.g., for applications in design, theater, dance, film, arts, etc.). Standard costs associated with acquisition, repair, or upgrade of laboratory equipment, including purchase price, shipping, installation (including minor necessary renovations), limited training, and integrated computing systems are allowed. Costs to acquire research-enabling information resources or technology, including, but not limited to, software acquisition are also allowable. **<u>Non-allowable costs</u>** include (a) extended maintenance/warranty and training or service contracts on new equipment (not included with the purchase price); (b) costs of consumables; (c) salary support for faculty, staff, or students; (d) access to databases, which would represent an ongoing expense; and (d) instructional or office equipment.

Note: Although instrumentation may have educational and outreach applications**, the primary use of proposed equipment must be for research and scholarship**.

Funding

Awards from this program will range from $25K to $100K. Requests up to $50K will not require any matching support/cost share, but cost share is still strongly encouraged. Requests above $50K will require a 1:1 match/cost share of the total amount above $50K. Matching funds may include the use of start-up funds and/or reserved funds to match PERC resources. If proposers wish to purchase equipment costing more than $150K, the budget must include a detailed plan for covering the remaining costs of the instrumentation, with firm commitments from stakeholders (e.g., department, college, PIs) in place and demonstrable at the time of proposal. If the actual purchase price is less than budgeted, any surplus funds will revert to the OVPR. If awarded, the OVPR will distribute funds to the PI's departmental plant fund index or the PI's index. The PI will then be responsible for organizing the purchase of the equipment from a plant fund in their department. The OVPR is not responsible for the acquisition or ongoing maintenance of the equipment.

Application Requirements:

The following application materials should be submitted through UNM's InfoReady Review https://unm.infoready4.com/.
- Name
- Email Address
- Phone
- Primary Organization (College/School/Level 3 Center)
- Department
- Primary Appointment Title
- Project Title
- Total Equipment Cost
- Amount Requested through PERC
- Amount of Matching Support/Cost Share (required for requests >$50K)
- Previous PERC/WeR1 Award Information

Uploads:
- **Project Narrative** (3-page maximum) - Project narrative should include the following information:
  - Description of the proposed equipment or services, including how it will initiate or expand research or scholarly activity at UNM.
  - Detailed examples of specific research projects/questions that are currently either unanswerable and/or hampered by lack of access to the proposed equipment/services. (In particular, we are interested in investing in instrumentation/services that will remove barriers for researchers seeking to explore new research and scholarship directions).

- o Assessment/justification of the need for the proposed equipment or services, including how the proposed equipment relates to or leverages existing/similar equipment at UNM.
  - o Ability of the instrumentation to increase researchers' competitiveness for external funding and/or enhance the pace or quality of the research to be supported by the proposed acquisition.
  - o Description of the prospective users/user group, including the extent of projected use and the availability of similar instrumentation/functions at UNM.
  - o Brief, yet specific, plan for how the equipment will be operated and maintained (Can be expanded on in more detail in the one-page business plan).
  - o Brief list of external funding opportunities for which proposed equipment will increase competitiveness.
- **References Cited** – To be uploaded; Does not count against the three-page narrative limit.
- **Biosketches** – If multiple, combine into a single PDF for upload; does not count against the three-page narrative limit.
- **Projected Users Table** – Upload a table of projected users with their departmental, college, and center affiliations; does not count against the three-page narrative limit.
- **Business plan** (1-page maximum) – Upload a one-page business plan for the long-term financial sustainability and management of the equipment, including projected usage and internal/external usage rates (as applicable); does not count against the three-page narrative limit.
- **Budget and Budget Justification** (1-page maximum) – Upload a 1-page document with the budget and budget justification. Include cost share amounts and partners, if applicable; does not count against the three-page narrative limit.
- **Optional Support Letters (if applicable)** – Upload (as a single PDF document) support letters confirming commitment of resources from department heads/deans if applicable.

Review Process and Criteria

The OVPR and FRDO will identify an appropriately qualified review committee to evaluate PERC proposals, and final decisions lie with the OVPR Executive Committee. PIs should write proposals that are understandable to an interdisciplinary audience. The following criteria will be considered:
- Evidence of need for the instrumentation/services to initiate or expand research or scholarly activity, especially relative to reduction or removal of critical research barriers to answering important research questions;
- Expansion of research infrastructure into new areas or disciplines not previously funded through PERC or similar mechanisms;

- Ability of the instrumentation to increase researchers' competitiveness for external funding and/or enhance the pace or quality of the research to be supported by the proposed acquisition;
- Feasibility of the total budget, including the practicality of the proposed cost matching if total instrumentation/services costs exceed $150K, and consideration of estimated use projections;
- Plan to sustainably operate and maintain the equipment/services; and
- Size and breadth of the affected user group, including the extent of projected use and the availability of similar instrumentation/functions at UNM.

Fall 2024 PERC Timeline
- **September 09, 2024**: Application window opens in InfoReady Review
- **October 25, 2024**: Proposal due date
- **December 11, 2024**: Notice of awards
- **January 6, 2025:** Proposals awarded/funds transferred for projects who have completed the required progress reports.

Questions pertaining to this RFP may be directed to the Faculty Research Development Office (frdo@unm.edu). Questions pertaining to the funding of awards may be directed to Greg Trejo (gtrejo@unm.edu).