



Faculty Incentive Program Overview, Guidelines, and Application Process

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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 SEE NOTE, pg. 7	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 SEE NOTE, pg. 10	Operating support	Equivalent to 10% of IDC	33.3% VPR 33.3% Provost 33.3% College/Unit	Reimbursement only – 2 times per year	rolling



Definition of Unit: For all FIP spokes, the term “unit” can be defined as any combination of benefiting 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 benefiting 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 1: Proof of Concept/Enabling Seed Grant Program

Purpose:

The Tier I program supports:

- **Proof of Concept** seed grants - typically for individual faculty or multidisciplinary teams of faculty pursuing new research directions;
- **Enabling** 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 1 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.

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;
- alignment with the goals of the Tier 1 program – e.g., novelty in research direction for proof of concept awards or impact of research outputs for enabling awards;
- the societal interest of the proposal;
- the potential for leveraging proposed work in the future – either as external funding, scholarly recognition, and/or visibility for the University.

Note: This is not a limited submission competition. Due to number of submissions, only limited review feedback can be provided back to the candidates/ awardees.



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.

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 1 winners will be announced.
- Within two years of award, at least one related research proposal should be submitted to an external funding agency, or otherwise a publication submitted or book contract secured.
Note: If proposal/publication reporting information is not submitted, faculty member's department may not be eligible for a Tier 1 grant for one year.

Application Process:

- Find forms and application instructions at <https://umd.infoready4.com/> “**Faculty Incentive Program – DRIF Investment**”; Tier 1 competition.
- Prepare a one (1) to three (3) page project overview* 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/publishers to target;
 - alignment with departmental, college, and/or university goals.
 - **NEW:** *Application must detail the status of any applicable faculty start-up resources.*
- Prepare a proposed budget with brief justification. Use Excel budget template provided.
Notes on Budget Preparation:
 - Tier 1 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.
- **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.
- Submit, as a single PDF, all the above via the online portal found at <https://umd.infoready4.com> for the Tier 1 competition.

* One additional page of diagrams can be included. Lists of references are not included in page count.



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: Proposals eligible for Tier 2 support typically involve multiple investigators and budget \geq \$1.5M 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 forms and application instructions at: <https://umd.infoready4.com/> “**Faculty Incentive Program – DRIF Investment**”; Tier 2 competition.
- 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.
- **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 33.33% of the total request.
- Submit, as a single PDF, all the above via the online portal found at <https://umd.infoready4.com> for the Tier 2 competition.



TIER 3: University Wide Initiatives Support

Please note that the Division of Research is currently reviewing its tier 3 and tier 4 faculty incentive programs. If you are interested in applying for a tier 3 or tier 4 award, please first contact Eric Chapman at echapman@umd.edu or 5-7136.

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:

- **Up to \$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 and renegotiated, as necessary.**

Application Process – to be customized per applicant:

- Find forms and application instructions at <https://umd.infoready4.com/> “**Faculty Incentive Program – DRIF Investment**”; Tier 3 competition.
- Prepare a business case documents per the “review process” above.
- **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.
- Submit, as a single PDF, all the above via the online portal found at https://umd.infoready4.com for the Tier 3 competition.



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

Please note that the Division of Research is currently reviewing its tier 3 and tier 4 faculty incentive programs. If you are interested in applying for a tier 3 or tier 4 award, please first contact Eric Chapman at echapman@umd.edu or 5-7136.

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 must be submitted prior to the funding agency decision and 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.
- Funded Tier 4 requests will be periodically reviewed to assess impact.
- **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 **front-loading model**, 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.
- Tier 4 submissions must be discussed with RD before submission; applications must be submitted prior to funding agency decision. *Meeting with the Division of Research is mandatory 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;
- 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. 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.
- 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 forms and application instructions at <https://umd.infoready4.com/> “**Faculty Incentive Program – DRIF Investment**”; Tier 4 competition.
- 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 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
- **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.
- Prepare Operating Support Additional Form which delineates funding request by year.
- Submit, as a single PDF, all the above via the online portal found at <https://umd.infoready4.com> for the Tier 4 competition.