



Bumpers College of Agricultural, Food and Life Sciences  
College of Engineering  
Division of Agriculture  
Walton College of Business

## **Request for Proposals**

### **Research Collaboration Seed Funding Program**

**Solicitation Announcement:** March 26, 2025  
**Submission Deadline:** May 15, 2025

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## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Background**

The College of Engineering, Bumpers College of Agricultural, Food and Life Sciences, the Division of Agriculture and Walton College of Business are investing seed funding to initiate collaborations among the faculty in these colleges in the areas of Biosensing, Digital Agriculture, Environmental Sustainability, Food Supply Chain, Health & Nutrition, and Robotics and AI in Agriculture.

### **Program Description**

The overarching goal of this program is to encourage researchers to develop new research collaborations with colleagues from other colleges and to assist researchers in developing proof of concept research outcomes that have strong potential for securing future external funding. Proposals should be of high risk/high gain and describe how the project will advance research in these areas. Proposals must develop research initiatives with high potential for significant extramural funding. Be as specific as possible, including agency names, programs, dates, and potential amounts.

## **AWARD INFORMATION**

### **Type of Award**

The solicitation will open March 2025. Submission deadline is May 15, 2025. Awards will be effective for projects lasting twelve calendar months or less, beginning on July 1, 2025.

### **Estimated Number of Awards and Anticipated Funding Amount**

Awards are expected to range between \$25,000-\$30,000, with an anticipated 5 – 8 awards. Extensions to the award period are not permitted.

### **Eligibility**

Eligibility is limited to faculty of University of Arkansas College of Engineering, Bumpers College of Agricultural, Food and Life Sciences/Division of Agriculture and Walton College of Business. Faculty can serve as Principal Investigator (PI) on one proposal; however, there is no limit on the number of proposals in which a researcher can serve as Co-PI. At least two of the three colleges need to be represented on each proposal.

## PROPOSAL CONTENT AND SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

### Proposal Content

Proposals must include the following sections:

- **Cover page (see required cover template on page 6):** The cover page includes the title of the proposed project, contact information of the submitting Principal Investigator, list of Co-PIs and other key personnel, requested budget amount, five (5) keywords, research area(s) addressed, and a 1,000-character synopsis of the proposed project.
- **Project description (3 pages max):** The project description must address the novelty of the proposed research, how the proposed activities are consistent with the goals of the program, the potential for external funding, and the interdisciplinary nature of the research. The description should include sufficient detail such that reviewers can evaluate the appropriateness and feasibility of the proposed plans. Please keep in mind that not all reviewers will be experts in every proposed field of study, and thus project descriptions should be written for a broad audience.
- **Budget with Justification (required budget template is also attached):** The budget and justification should include funds requested from this program. Indirect costs are not applicable. Faculty salaries, equipment purchases, foreign travel, tuition waivers and cost share are not permitted.
- **Team Description:** The team description should describe the role of each PI, Co-PI, and other key personnel mentioned in the proposal.
- **References:** No limit
- **Appendices:**
  - **Biosketch (up to 2 pages each):** Biosketches of each PI, Co-PI, and other key personnel that should include information relevant to the proposed project.

## SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Proposals must be submitted electronically in MS Word or PDF format to: [cbdye@uark.edu](mailto:cbdye@uark.edu). Subject of the email should be: "Collaborative research submission: *PI name*" (where PI name is the last name of the submitting Principal Investigator).

Proposals are due on **May 15, 2025**.

## REVIEW PROCESS

## Review Cycle

March 26, 2025	Request for Proposals announcement sent to the faculty
May 15, 2025	Proposals due; Electronic submission to: <a href="mailto:cbdyer@uark.edu">cbdyer@uark.edu</a> ; subject line: Collaborative research submission: <i>PI name</i> (where PI name is the last name of the submitting Principal Investigator)
After June 15, 2025	PIs notified of award status; summary of reviewer comments emailed to submitting PIs.
July 1, 2025	Project begin date
June 30, 2026	Project end date
July 31, 2026	Final report that describes accomplishments to date due to the COE Associate Dean for Research

## Review Criteria

Each proposal will undergo an internal peer review based on the following criteria:

- Potential for future funding (50%): The potential for follow-up funding for the project is high and clearly defined.
- Novelty of research and feasibility of the research plan (35%): Goals and objectives are clearly defined and aligned with the specific purposes of the program; proposed research is novel and does not extend previously funded research efforts surrounding the proposed problem area; plan of work is clearly articulated and adequately meets the goals of the project; the proposed research plan is feasible.
- Team qualifications (15%): PI and team are qualified and appropriate for the project; roles for team members are clearly defined; and the research team is interdisciplinary.

## Review and Selection Process

Proposals will be reviewed by a committee with faculty from three colleges. In order to be ranked highly, proposals must use language that can be understood by persons lacking expertise in the discipline. Highly ranked proposals will clearly state the:

- Problem or need to be addressed;
- Innovativeness of the model and solution proposed;
- Specifics of activities;
- Appropriateness and contribution of the named team members;
- Cross-disciplinary nature of the approach;
- Expected outcomes from one year (or less) of work;
- Long-term implications for the work; and
- Funding agencies and specific opportunities likely to fund ongoing proposals generated from this effort.

Following peer review, proposals and reviews are presented to a separate selection committee consisting of the Associate Deans for Research. The selection committee decides the number of awards and the amount of each award.

## NOTIFICATION OF AWARD

The submitting PI(s) for the awarded proposals will be notified within 1 week of the award selection. The submitting PI(s) for non-awarded proposals will be notified within 1 week of the awardees' notification. A synopsis of reviewer comments will be provided to the submitting PI(s) for all proposals after all PI(s) have been notified of their award status.

## **REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

The PI will be required to report on measurable outcomes of their seed funding effort (i.e. continued funding for the project, published reports, graduate students funded, etc.). The first report will be due one month after the close of the grant period. Periodic status updates on the progress of the project may be requested at the discretion of the program administration.

## **REFERENCES**

The program and this document are heavily based on the [Research and Innovation Seed Funding Program at North Carolina State University](#).

Research Collaboration Seed Funding  
**Proposal Cover Page**

Please complete the information in the shaded areas below.  
Submit this cover page with your proposal and supporting documents as one document in MS Word or PDF format to: swilmoth@uark.edu

**Proposal Title:** A Spatial Look at Healthcare Spillovers

**Submitting Principal Investigator Information:**

Name: Abhijith Anand

Phone:

Email: aanand@uark.edu

Department: Walton College of Business

**Collaborator Information:**

Role	Name	Department
Co-PI	Aranyak Goswami	Department of Agriculture
Key Personnel	Shakil Rafi	Department of Agriculture

**Key Words (5):**

1. Econometrics
2. Spatial Analysis
3. Deep Learning
4. Health Outcomes Research
5. Spatial Modeling

**Budget Amount Requested:**

\$30,000

**Research Area(s) Addressed:**

Health outcomes, deep learning, spatial modeling

**Synopsis (1,000 character max):**

Healthcare outcomes spread through institutional networks, yet current models fail to capture nonlinear, dynamic spillover effects. We address this gap by combining spatial econometrics with spatio-temporal graph attention networks (ST-GATs) to model hospital quality diffusion. Activities include spatial lag model estimation and ST-GAT implementation on proprietary data. The team—experts in policy, econometrics, and AI—offers a rare interdisciplinary synergy. In one year, we expect validated models, influence maps for Arkansas, and identification of high-impact intervention hubs. Long-term, this will inform scalable healthcare policy and funding prioritization. The project is positioned for follow-on support from NSF Smart Health, NIH NLM, and PCORI.