Purpose:

The College of Applied Science and Technology (CAST) at Illinois State University supports the research and scholarly efforts of tenured and tenure-track faculty through the University Research Grant (URG) Program. This program, funded through Provost’s Office, provides faculty with up to $5000 in support for projects approved on a competitive basis.

URG applications may be made to one of two programs: The “Grant Development” Program or the “Research Development” Program. The primary purposes of the URG "Grant Development" Program are to provide faculty with funds to develop significant research programs that have a high probability of acquiring external funding and to complement proposals submitted to an external agency. The primary purpose of the URG "Research Development" Program is to support quality undertakings of the faculty that are deemed important to the discipline but not designed to directly pursue external support.

In this program, research is defined as "A formal procedure which contributes to the expansion of basic knowledge or applies such knowledge to the solution of problems in society or exemplifies creative expression in a specific field of study. The results of research to be recognized by this program must be communicated to professionals outside the university through a peer review process in a manner appropriate to the discipline."

Eligibility:

1. Faculty members on regular appointment (i.e. tenure-track or tenured positions) may submit proposals.

   If awarded a grant, faculty members who will not be returning to the University in the fall following the grant award must resign the grant.

2. Faculty who have not completed every one of their specified professional outcomes from prior URG Awards will not be eligible to submit a URG proposal for this year’s competition. Faculty should contact the CAST Research Office if unsure about their eligibility.

3. Faculty awarded a "Grant Development" URG are required to submit their external proposal to a funding agency within one year after the completion of the URG project. Such proposals must be processed through the CAST Research Office and the University Research Office. URG recipients in this category for FY2006 who fail to submit the external proposal by October 15, 2006, will not be eligible for URG funding in FY 2008.

   After a faculty member has received three consecutive "Research Development" awards, the faculty member must apply for a "Grant Development" award or show evidence of a submission to an external agency via the CAST Research Office and University Research Office in order to reapply for another "Research Development" award.

   If awarded a FY08 URG, faculty members will be asked to report the professional outcomes of their URG approximately fifteen months after the start-up of the project (form provided by the CAST Research Office). Professional outcomes must be consistent with the highest academic standards for scholarly productivity in the discipline. Failure to return the form to the CAST Research Office will make the faculty ineligible for URG funding the following year. A report of additional accomplished outcomes will also be requested approximately twenty-seven months after the start-up of the project.
4. Only one proposal per each faculty member will be accepted. For example, faculty members may not apply for a "Grant Development" award and a "Research Development" award in the same year. Similarly, faculty members may not co-author multiple proposals.

**Evaluation Process:**

Each proposal will be evaluated by the CAST Research Committee (CRC). This committee serves in an advisory role to the Dean of the College of Applied Science and Technology. Final decisions on allocation of funds will be made by the Dean. The CAST Associate Dean for Research serves as an ex-officio member and chair of the committee.

The CRC will rank the proposals in two categories. The "New Investigator" category is composed of those individuals who have been awarded less than three URGs while employed by Illinois State University. The "Senior Investigator" category consists of those faculty who have received three or more URGs. Each category will be evaluated in accordance with the appropriate criteria and a separate ranking list will be formed. If a joint application is made, the proposal will be ranked in the "Senior Investigator" category if at least one faculty member has received three or more URGs during their career at ISU. It is the goal of the CAST Research Committee to support well-conceived and written proposals authored by New Investigators, especially those who are pre-tenure, as much as possible.

Proposals that reflect the scholarship of teaching and learning are appropriate for any category. The scholarship of teaching and learning has been defined at ISU as follows: “Systematic reflection of teaching and learning made public.” Proposals focusing on curriculum or program development would not likely be suitable.

Additionally, proposals that focus on the design and development of processes and products could also be appropriate for any category. Means by which the suitability, effectiveness, and/or feasibility of the process or product will be assessed, evaluated, or tested must be addressed.

**Evaluation Criteria:**

Proposals submitted by eligible investigators will be evaluated by the following criteria:

1. **Quality of the proposal.** The proposal must clearly a) define the research problem and b) describe an appropriate methodology that will be used to investigate the problem. Further, the objectives must be clearly stated. Finally, the professional outcomes must be consistent with the highest academic standards for scholarly productivity in the discipline.

2. **Importance to the discipline.** The proposed research must define activities that are expected to make a significant impact on the field of study.

3. **Breadth and depth of the proposed research.** The proposed research should be part of a significant project, one which constitutes a long-range research agenda.

4. **Research productivity.** The applicant's research record as determined by scholarly publications or presentations.

5. **Multiple investigator collaboration.** The need for multiple investigators must be well justified with the contribution of each investigator made clear.

6. **Potential for funding.** The research proposed should lead to an external proposal or contribute in a major way to an externally funded program.

7. **Applicant's research funding.** The applicant's past record in seeking and/or obtaining research funding will be carefully considered in the evaluation process.

*Proposals submitted to the “Research Development” Program will not be evaluated by these criteria.*
Proposal Format:

The CAST Associate Dean for Research will provide a Format for Proposal Preparation to be used by all departments. Any proposal which deviates from the required structure will not be considered.

URG applications are limited to a total amount of $5,000 to be used for the direct cost of research with the salary component limited to an amount equivalent to one month’s salary at the time of the award or $5,000, whichever is less.

As has been the case in recent years, the College Dean’s Office is offering a supplementary match in funding for non-salary budgeted expenditures. For every dollar, up to a maximum of $1,500, applicants plan to use for non-salary related expenditures which can justifiably enhance the implementation of this URG project and/or their long-term research agenda, the College will provide a corresponding match in funds. For example, an applicant could request $3,500 in salary. She could then request $1,500, plus a College match of $1,500, to purchase a piece of equipment that she can justify will enhance her capabilities to carry out the current project as well as other research she has in mind for the future. As further illustration, an applicant could request a salary of $4,250. He could then request $750, plus a College match of $750, to fund justifiable travel and commodity expenses associated with conducting interviews for the qualitative study he has planned.

The College has set aside approximately $10,000 to support this pilot venture. As it is hard to predict the level of interest in this opportunity, and thus how competitively these funds will be sought after, requests must be satisfactorily justified by the applicants. Thus, for proposals requesting matching College funds, two budget pages with accompanying justification sections will need to be provided. One budget page with justification should reflect the proposed use of matching funds, while a second budget page with justification should reflect how funds will be used should a College match not be possible.

Notification of Award:

Each application must be signed by the applicant and the department Chair and is due into the CAST Research Office on February 5, 2007. Applicants will receive written notification of the results of the review process from the CAST Associate Dean for Research on or before May 1, 2007. Final notification of award of funding may not be forthcoming at that time as the State Legislature may still be deliberating the state budget and the amount of funds to be provided the University for the coming fiscal year.
Please follow carefully the instructions for preparing applications which are given below to insure that your proposal will receive maximum attention. Applications must be printed using 12 point font with no more than 42 lines per page.

The proposal you develop should include and be organized according to the following items:

I. Cover page (form provided)
II. Abstract
III. Narrative (not to exceed five single-spaced typewritten pages)
IV. Special Items
V. Budget page (form provided)
VI. Professional Outcome Form (form provided)

II. Abstract

The abstract should be approximately 250 words in length and written in non-technical language. The abstract should describe the study's major objectives, the proposed research methodology, and the anticipated contributions that the research findings are to make.

III. Narrative

The narrative must not exceed five single-spaced typewritten pages, including bibliography. Pages beyond the five-page allotment will not be considered during the review process. The narrative should be written in a manner that would make it relatively easy for faculty from varied disciplines to evaluate. Evaluation Criteria items 1, 2, and 3 should be addressed in this section of the proposal.

The narrative ordinarily has four parts: Introduction, Objectives, Methodology and Bibliography. This structure may be slightly abridged or parts combined depending on the nature of the project.

1. The Introduction should be designed to educate the evaluators and include a description of the proposed research, presenting significance to your area of study, whether direct and immediate or indirect and long-term. A review of research literature, structured to provide a conceptual framework converging upon the scientific topic addressed, should be included in order to present the significance of the research as a contribution to knowledge.

2. The Objectives portion of the narrative should contain precise statements defining the goals and scope of the overall project. Research questions could be posed in this section of the narrative as well. Proposal authors often confuse “objectives” with the “professional outcomes” called for at the conclusion of the proposal. The objective(s) of a study would not be a grant proposal, a peer reviewed presentation at a conference, or a manuscript. Prior to devising the objectives, authors should ask themselves the following: Upon the completion of this study, a) what research questions do I intend to have answers to, b) what new knowledge do I intend to have generated, and c) what problems do I intend to find solutions for?

3. The Methodology is that portion of the proposal in which the research design is concisely and explicitly described. Methods, including instrumentation and data collection, should be described with detail and should relate back to the specific objectives to be measured. Should statistical analyses be involved, such means of analysis should be included in this section of the proposal. Means of analyzing qualitative data, if involved in the study, should also be described here. Further, means by which the suitability,
effectiveness, and/or feasibility of any process or product will be assessed, evaluated, or tested must be attended to in this section of proposals that are design and development oriented.

4. The Bibliography should be composed of a current list of related works keyed to the preceding narrative. The Bibliography should be comprehensive but not exhaustive.

IV. Special Items

All proposals submitted for evaluation MUST contain responses under separate headings to the following items. Be sure to use a separate heading for each response:

1. **Summary of Applicant’s Research Program.** Applicant should provide a comprehensive statement about her/his research program and how this URG project relates to this overall agenda.

   For collaborative projects involving more than one applicant, explanation describing the unique and worthy contributions of each investigator to the planned research should be provided in this section. Investigators in the “Senior” category must provide a rationale regarding their need for support at this juncture in their research career.

2. **Timeline.** Provide a timeline which includes major activities of the project and the outcomes listed on the Professional Outcome Form. Please note: This proposal is for funding for FY08 (2008). Project activities should begin in July 1 of 2007. Professional outcomes are to be completed by October 15, 2008.

3. **External Funding Potential.** Only proposals submitted to the “Grant Development” Program should address this item. The applicant should explain how this proposal will lead to the development of an external proposal and acquisition of external funding. The applicant should list in specific terms the steps anticipated in seeking external funding including a list of funding source(s) where the proposal will be submitted.

4. **Scholarly Publications.** List your publications and scholarly accomplishments of the past five years. To aid in the evaluation process, applicants should list the following separately:

   Scholarly publications (research articles, reviews, books and monographs). Use the following format: Name of author, title of article or chapter, name of journal or book, exhibitions and performances. List refereed and non-refereed articles separately.

   Scholarly accomplishments, e.g., papers presented at professional meetings, productions, exhibitions and performances.

5. **Previous External Funding.** The applicant should provide a list of external proposal submitted during the past five years. Please indicate those which were funded and those which were not. Indicate by means of an asterisk those grant applications that resulted, in total or in part, from an internal grant in the past five years. Use the following format: title of proposal, co-investigators, agency, date, dollar amount.

6. **Internal Funding.** List all University Research Grant and College Research Grant proposals submitted during the past five years and indicate which of them were funded. Explain how any funded URG proposals are related to external grants submitted and/or received. Also, explain how any publications described below are related to previous URG awards.
V. **Budget Page Instructions:** Accuracy in selecting the correct budget line is very important. The CAST Research Office should be contacted for any questions.

Proposals requesting matching College funds for non-salary expenditures should include two budget pages. One should reflect the distribution of funds if the match is approved and one should reflect the distribution of funds if the match is not approved.

1. **Personnel Services**
   a. A URG is limited to a total of $5,000, with the salary component limited to an amount equivalent to one month's salary at the time of the award or $5,000, whichever is less.
   b. Student Help. The University has set the hourly minimum for paying students at $6.50. URG budgets that include pay for students must at least abide by that minimum. Please contact the Student Employment Office (8-2027) for further details.
   c. Graduate Assistants. Monthly stipends vary within CAST by department (ranging from $750 to $900), but must not be less than $700 per month for a full-time graduate assistant (maximum of 20 hours per week) according to the Graduate School Office.
   d. Civil Service - Extra Help. The hourly wage for Extra Help corresponds to the position level. There is now a 900 hour limit for Extra Help employees. Check with the Human Resources Office (8-8311) for details.

2. **Operations**
   a. Contractual Services, which include:
      professional and artistic services
      purchase of computer software
      photographic services
      off-campus copying
      electrical supplies
      mechanical supplies (repair & maintenance items)
      parts and fittings for furniture & office equipment (repair parts)
      structural and maintenance materials and repair parts
      statistical & tabulation services, including computer services when performed by other than ISU Computer Center
      subscriptions & information services
      rentals - real & personal property
      **postal services**

* If the copying is done on campus using the services at Rapid Print, using the investigator's department auditron, or having library materials copied at Milner, the line item to be used is Printing. These methods can be charged to the investigator's account. If the copying is to be done off campus, with reimbursement to the investigator or to the place of business, the line item is Contractual.
**Postal service is no longer a separate line item. Reimbursement cannot be provided for the purchase of postage stamps from an off-campus post office. Postal charges must go through the University Mail Service.

b. Commodities, which include:

- educational and instructional materials*
- office and library supplies
- Boise Cascade catalog supplies
- video cassettes, films and tapes costing under $100
- floppy disks for computers
- food supplies
- industrial and shop materials
- medical, scientific and laboratory supplies
- **printing**

If the cost is under $100, the following are also classified as commodities:
- office and furniture equipment (under $100)
- all tools (under $100)
- medical scientific and laboratory equipment (under $100)
- household, laundry and cleaning equipment (under $100)
- equipment parts and fittings (minor accessories for equipment purchases)
- parts and fittings for furniture and office equipment (minor accessories under $100)

*Do not request funds for books and journals available through the library unless you provide a strong justification.

** Printing includes paper for typing, duplicating and printing; printed forms, reports, pamphlets, booklets and flyers; charges for mimeograph, copying or duplicating services; letterhead and/or envelopes--printed with return postage. Off-campus copying is classified as contractual.

c. Travel

Use of travel funds is governed by regulations of the Board of Trustees. Copies of these regulations are usually available in department offices and in the Comptroller's Office. Travel includes transportation, per diem for meals, lodging and other costs in connection with official business. University vehicles are now charged to 991800--Automotive. You should contact Suzi Davis or Seven Seas travel agencies to purchase air and rail tickets. However, you may also investigate airfare prices on the Internet and may secure tickets if you can verify they are lower than what either travel agency can provide.

The rate for mileage for private cars is 40.5 cents per mile. Per diem for meals is $28 for in-state travel and $32 outside the state of Illinois. For University cars allow $44.50 per day. Rates are $62 per day for mini-vans and $91.50 for larger vans. Please check with the Comptroller's Office for details about travel costs. For help with travel vouchers, call 8-3295.

d. Equipment

Includes items of a durable nature costing $100 or more. Equipment items costing less than $100 are purchased from Commodities.
If the cost is over $100, the following is considered Equipment:

- office furniture and accessories (over $100)
- household equipment and furniture (over $100)
- machinery and major tools (over $100)
- scientific instruments and apparatus (over $100)
- video cassettes and films (over $100)
- reference book sets (over $100)
- equipment not elsewhere classified (over $100)

Do not request funds to duplicate equipment already available within the University unless you provide a very strong justification.

It should be understood that equipment purchased with University Research funds becomes the property of the University, and it will normally remain in the investigator's department for instructional or research operations.

Budget Justification Instructions: Each budget item must be clearly and completely justified. Special attention should be given to the following.

Proposals requesting matching College funds should include two budget justification sections. One section should provide rationale for the items on the budget reflecting matching funds from the College, if approved, and one section should provide rationale for the items on the budget that does not reflect any matching funds from the College.

1. If salary is requested, indicate the exact dates for the time period in which remuneration is requested. This is necessary because a contract is required. The designated time period for receiving salary must be specific dates within the fiscal year (July 1-June 30). Identify the research tasks these salary dollars will support.

2. If a proposal is submitted by more than one person, each may request up to $5,000 in total funding. Once again, explanation for salaries for more than one investigator must be given. Describe the unique and worthy contributions each investigator will provide.

3. For Regular and Work-Study student help, describe duties, number of hours and hourly rate in each category.

4. For Graduate Assistants, describe duties, the number of months or semesters to be employed and the monthly stipend.

5. Describe work to be done by Civil Service Extra-Help and number of hours of anticipated use.

6. Itemize and detail all other operations that will be used: Contractual Services, Travel, Commodities, Equipment, and Telephone Services.

VI. Professional Outcome Form

A. Instructions

1. Complete information asked for in the box.

2. Description of project should be brief and in non-technical language suitable for informed, non-specialist readers. The purpose of this description is to inform the reader of the primary focus of the project and the appropriateness of the intended professional outcomes.
3. Professional outcomes can include a wide range of scholarly activities. Possibilities include: conference presentations, research articles, research books, and chapters or articles in books, external grants, exhibitions and performances, research lectures or recitals, or other professional outcomes appropriate to the discipline. The professional outcomes of each faculty member will be products that are consistent with the highest academic standards for scholarly productivity in one’s particular discipline. A summary of characteristics and examples of professional outcomes follows in the next section.

When selecting professional outcomes for the Professional Outcome Form, the time frame for the URG project should be kept in mind including the deadline for reporting accomplished outcomes. Please identify outcomes to be accomplished by October 15, 2008. Investigators will eventually be asked to also report on any additional professional outcomes that are accomplished between this date and October, 2008.

4. Outcomes for jointly authored proposals should proportionately reflect the contributions of multiple investigators.

5. Faculty who do not complete every one of their specified professional outcomes from prior URG Awards will not be eligible to submit a URG proposal for this year’s competition. Faculty should contact the CAST Research Office if unsure about their eligibility.

6. Complete signature section.

B. Characteristics and Examples of Professional Outcomes (provided by Research and Sponsored Programs Office)

Acceptable Professional Outcomes: discrete, finite, achievable, related to goals identified in URG, typically involve dissemination of scholarly work, must be completed within established deadline of October 15, 2008.

Examples

- Primary focus of this project is to determine the economic competitiveness of crop production systems which reduce soil erosion and improve water quality. The primary result of this research will be a journal article submitted to the Journal of Soil and Water Conservation (peer reviewed). Also intend to submit a paper to the American Agricultural Economics Association for presentation at 2008 Annual Meeting. Project will be completed by October, 2008. (Strength: peer reviewed journal identified, outcome clearly identified as paper and journal articles, project completed by deadline)

- In the long term, I plan to submit a first draft of this project (a book chapter) for review to a publisher during the 2008 school year. During the tenure of this grant, I will produce either a scholarly paper to be presented to a national conference in the fall or spring, 2007-2008, or an article to be submitted to a "specific" scholarly journal during the same period. Project will be completed: Paper or article by June, 2008. (Strength: outcome clearly identified as book chapter, project completed prior to October 15, 2008 deadline)

- The primary foci of this project are to (1) test alternate formats of benefit communication, and (2) empirically test one of the existing models of benefit satisfaction. A grant proposal will be forthcoming as will at least two journal article submissions (one for each of the primary focus areas). The grant proposal will be sent first to the SHRM Foundation (which has become very aggressive in funding applied projects related to human resource management). If not funded there, a grant proposal will be submitted to the Employee Benefits Research Institute. Finally, a small grant will be submitted to the subject organization for project cost sharing. Project will be completed: July 1, 2007 - July 31, 2008. (Strength: outcome clearly identified, describes an alternate plan for submission, project completed prior to October 15, 2008 deadline)
• The primary objective of this project is to assess the extent to which youth with learning disabilities are identifying post-school goals and making plans to reach their goals. Two products will result: 1) A proposal to present the findings at the 2008 National Conference of the Council for Exceptional Children, and 2) An article submitted to a special education journal with a national readership. First, it will be submitted to Exceptional Children and if not accepted, it will be submitted to Rural Special Education Quarterly. Project will begin: July 1, 2007. Project will be completed: June 30, 2008. (Strength: outcomes clearly identified, describes an alternate plan for submission, project meets October 15, 2008 deadline)

Unclear Professional Outcomes: nonspecific, unrealistic, not related to goals in URG proposal, not achievable by October 15, 2008.

Examples
• This research project will result in a paper to be submitted to a major journal on regulation. (Problem: fails to specify journal planned for submission, does not include completion date)

• During the grant period, I will continue to work on my book. The novel is a fictive study of the attitudes of siblings and parents. Project will be completed: August 1, 2008. (Problem: fails to specify what work will be accomplished, e.g., chapter, draft of book, introduction)

• Publication/manuscript submission. Project will be completed by December, 2008. (Problem: too general, need to specify journals planned for submission, completion date after October 15, 2008)

• Primary Objective of the Project: Manuscript publication. Other Products: Submission for national/regional or state presentations (possible search for external funding). (Problem: too general, does not specify where the manuscript might be published, which type of presentation, nor name the organization, does not include completion date)