

# Pitt Momentum Funds: Program Guidelines

**Mon. Sept. 25, 2023 = Expression of Interest (required)**

**Mon. Oct. 30, 2022 = Full Application**

## OVERVIEW

The **Pitt Momentum Funds** support high-quality research, scholarship, and creative endeavors, at three distinct scales. The suite of funds consists of: **Arts & Humanities Microgrants**, which support smaller-scale projects for individual faculty or teams in the arts and humanities; **Priming Grants**, which support significant and innovative scholarship by individual or small groups of faculty; **Teaming Grants**, which support the early-stage planning and capacity building of large multidisciplinary projects; and **Scaling Grants**, which support the detailed project planning, gathering of proof-of-concept results, and reduction of technical risk so that teams can competitively pursue large, complex, extramural funding.

Awards are made across the breadth of interdisciplinary scholarship at the University, and all eligible faculty are encouraged to propose new, innovative ideas that can contribute meaningful insight, understanding, or solutions to societal challenges. All proposals are reviewed by multidisciplinary faculty panels with Priming projects reviewed in one of the four following tracks:

- Creative Arts, Performing Arts & Humanities
- Engineering, Technology, Natural Sciences, and Mathematical Sciences
- Health & Life Sciences
- Social Sciences, which includes Business, Policy, Law, Education, Informatics, and Social Work

**Arts & Humanities Microgrants** support existing projects, works-in-progress, or to test ideas where a smaller grant with fast decision-making could be transformative. *Awards are made twice per year and are up to \$3,000 for 1 year.*

**Priming Grants** support significant and innovative scholarship by individual or groups of faculty at all ranks at the University of Pittsburgh. In constructing each year's portfolio of awards, particular attention will be given to supporting early career faculty\* and areas where external funding is extremely limited. *Awards are made up to \$25,000 for 1 year.*

**Teaming Grants** support the formation of new multi-disciplinary collaborations to successfully pursue large-scale external funding. Team and community building activities may include, but are not limited to, inviting external speakers, creating a working paper series, or organizing a workshop. Teams must include faculty from at least three schools as described in the eligibility criteria section below. *Awards are made up to \$60,000 for 1 year.\*\**

**Scaling Grants** enable multi-disciplinary teams to competitively scale their research efforts in targeted pursuit of large-scale external funding. Teams must include faculty from at least three schools as described in the eligibility section below. *Awards are made up to \$400,000 for 2 years.\*\*\**

Pitt Momentum Funds are administered by the Senior Vice Chancellor for Research through the Office of Sponsored Programs, in coordination with and supported by the Office of the Provost.

## ELIGIBILITY

All full-time faculty members with appointments that include research responsibilities may apply. The Lead Investigator **may not** be a graduate student, post-doctoral fellow, research associate, or visiting faculty member. *Faculty are permitted to join only one Teaming or Scaling grant proposal submission at a time.*

Faculty within the School of Medicine are eligible to apply for Teaming Grants and Scaling Grants; they are *not eligible* to apply for Priming Grants and are encouraged to apply to the Competitive Medical Research Fund (CMRF).

**Teaming and Scaling Grants.** In consideration of the goal of this program to foster cross-disciplinary collaborations, Dietrich School divisions of the Humanities, Natural Sciences, and Social Sciences will be considered as the equivalents of separate schools. However, neither an all-Dietrich team nor a team comprised of faculty solely within the Health Sciences division will be judged as meeting this cross-disciplinary criterion.

To enable research that is responsive to needs of the *local Pittsburgh community*, collaborators from government agencies or local organizations recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as a 501(c)(3) public charity may participate as co-investigator on Teaming or Scaling proposals, as long as their organization has the capacity to join Pitt in large-scale, follow-on funding proposals. No more than one local community collaborator will be credited towards meeting the three-school requirement.

## EXCLUSIONS

Faculty from outside the University of Pittsburgh are not eligible to participate in Priming Grants.

Faculty from outside the University of Pittsburgh may act as co-investigators on Teaming and Scaling Grants with the expectation that they would participate as co-investigators in any follow-on funding proposals, but they **will not** be credited towards meeting the three-school requirement. Momentum Funds awards **cannot** be used to support or supplement salaries for either Pitt faculty or external co-investigators.

- All Momentum Funds: Awards cannot be used to support or supplement salaries for either Pitt faculty or external co-investigators.
- Priming Grants: Awards cannot be used for travel to meetings or conferences (although travel for research purposes, such as visits to archives, is permitted); computer equipment is not given priority.
- Teaming and Scaling Grants: Awards are not intended to be used for extending existing, externally funded projects or for projects with sufficient preliminary results for funding by external agencies (e.g., NIH, NSF). Also, substantially similar teams of investigators cannot propose in subsequent cycles.

## PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Application materials are available online (<https://upitt.infoready4.com/>). To complete all proposals, use your University login and password. One team member is responsible for submitting the application; the online form is not a shared workspace.

### September 25, 2023 Expression of Intent (EOI) Deadline

EOI content is entered online. Detailed descriptions of the following required content and word limits are available via the documentation published at the online application):

- Proposal Title
- Proposal Abstract
- Personnel Listing

### October 30, 2023 Application Deadline

Application Content is entered online. Detailed descriptions of the following required content and word limits are available via the documentation published at the online application:

- Proposal Title
- Proposal Abstract
- Faculty Development Outcome
- Contribution to One's Scholarly Community or Broader Impact to Society
- Project Description
- Personnel & Team Building Description
- Project Work Plan
- Project Outputs

- Other Project Resources & Support
- Follow-On Funding Strategy with Specific Targets
- Pitt Internal Funding history

Application Documents are file uploads. Detailed descriptions of the following required content and page limits are available via the documentation published at the online application):

- Tables, Figures, Images and References
- Budget
- Budget Justification
- Letter of Commitment

## EVALUATION CRITERIA

- **Scholarly Excellence and Potential for Impact:** Momentum Fund projects are to be designed so that an award enhances investigators' research agenda or creative pursuits while also supporting their scholarly record. Momentum Fund projects should also create meaningful training opportunities for graduate and professional students whenever possible.
- **Scale:** Applicants to Teaming Grants and Scaling Grants must explain how a proposed project is "large" in the context of their scholarly community. For research areas where \$60K would be considered a large award, a Teaming Grant may be proposed for a 2-year project timeline.
- **Team Building:** Applicants to Teaming Grants and Scaling Grants must explain their team or community building strategy. Project budgets are expected to include funding for travel to host meetings or recruit team members as necessary.
- **Follow-on funding:** Applicants for Teaming and Scaling Grants must explain their follow-on funding strategy, including identifying one or more target agencies or foundations. Project budgets for both types of grants are expected to include funding for travel to meet with program managers at government agencies or foundations to further refine that funding strategy. **NOTE:** Scaling grants are intended to enable teams to gather proof-of-concept results to improve their chances of winning follow-on funding, so proposals that do not include support for graduate research assistants will not be given priority.
- **Support by Department Chairs or Deans:** Credible efforts at building cross-disciplinary teams that can tackle large-scale research efforts require administrative support. Applications for Teaming and Scaling grants must include a letter from the Dean or Department Chair of the team lead offering in detail appropriate in-kind administrative support.

## PROPOSAL REVIEW AND AWARD PROCEDURES

Proposals must be the original work of the proposing team. Priming, Teaming, and Scaling proposals will be subject to peer review. Teams with competitive proposals to the Scaling and Teaming Grants will be invited for 10 min oral presentations and 5 min Q&A with their respective selection committees.

The Senior Vice Chancellor for Research will make the final funding decisions for Priming Grants. The Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor for Research will jointly make the final funding decisions for Teaming Grants and Scaling Grants.

Funds for Teaming and Scaling Grants will be made available in the spring of each year. Funds for the current cycle will be awarded before March 29, 2023. Priming and Teaming Grants funding will remain available through June 2024, and Scaling Grants funding will remain available through June 2025.

## PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS:

- **Progress reporting.** Awardees will report on progress towards meeting their performance milestones 6-months and 1-year from the date when funds are made available. The 6-month progress report for Priming, Teaming, and Scaling awards will be a 1-page summary. If appropriate, progress reports should identify any unanticipated barriers to progress or requests for modifications to scope, schedule or follow-on funding targets. Scaling

projects will be reviewed at the conclusion of the first year of funding for satisfactory progress against milestones. Scaling projects not demonstrating adequate progress attaining scope and schedule milestones will be required to propose remedies before the second tranche of funding is released.

- **Symposium participation.** Each year, Momentum Fund awardees will participate in a fall symposium to present their work through posters, demonstrations, brief TED-style talks, or storytelling. Awardees of other internal development funds will be invited to participate.
- **Outcome reporting.** Awardees will report to the Office of Sponsored Programs all follow-on funding applications or awards and all scholarly outputs attributable to the Momentum Fund award within a 2-year period after conclusion of the period of performance.
- **Communication.** Project leads are expected to communicate in a timely manner any challenges that may impact the successful completion of a project within its awarded timeline. Lead investigators who believe they have an extenuating circumstance that merits a no-cost extension should email their request to [researchdev@pitt.edu](mailto:researchdev@pitt.edu).

*\*School of Medicine faculty are ineligible to apply for Priming Grants. They are encouraged to apply to the Competitive Medical Research Fund.*

*\*\*For scholarly communities where \$60K is considered a large award, a Teaming Grant may be proposed for a 2-year project timeline.*

*\*\*\*There is no requirement for awardees of Teaming Grants to subsequently apply for Scaling Grants and, similarly, there is no requirement for awardees of Scaling Grants to have previously won Teaming Grants.*

*\*\*\*\*Microgrants in the Arts & Humanities do not require an Expression of Interest.*