SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

CYCLE 22 PRESIDENT'S RESEARCH FUND (PRF)

Deadline: **February 1, 2025 5:00 P.M. CST**

Questions regarding these guidelines may be directed to
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PURPOSE, GOALS, AND OBJECTIVES OF THE FUND

The President's Research Fund (PRF) supports promising projects that have strong potential to attract external research funding. PRF awards are aimed at supporting the collection of data or other pilot activities that the awardee will use as the basis for extramural grant or contract applications.

DEADLINE

Applications must be received by February 1, 2025 at 5:00 P.M. CST, via the OpenWater portal. Log in to myslu.slu.edu and click on the OpenWater icon in the 'My Apps' tab. Log in with your current SLU email address (i.e., first.last@health.slu.edu) and your password. The first time you log in, you will be asked to set up your profile.

AWARD DETAILS

Eligibility

Principal Investigators (PI), Multiple Principal Investigators (MPI), and Co-Investigators (CoI)

- PI: Full-time faculty members (tenure and non-tenure track) appointed at the School of Medicine at Saint Louis University. PIs control the budget, direct execution of the project, and have final responsibility for all aspects of its management.
- MPI: One MPI must be a full-time faculty member (tenure and non-tenure track) appointed at the School of Medicine at Saint Louis University. The other MPI must be a full-time faculty member (tenure and non-tenure track) appointed in any school or college at Saint Louis University. MPIs share control of the budget, responsibility for execution of the project, and final responsibility for all aspects of its management.
- CoI: CoIs must be full-time faculty members (tenure and non-tenure track) appointed in any school or college at Saint Louis University. They contribute to the execution of the project but do not direct it or control a portion of the budget.
- PIs and MPIs may submit only one application per application cycle
- PIs and MPIs can apply for a new award in any application cycle only after a previously funded project has been completed and a Progress Report has been submitted and accepted.
- CoIs may serve on multiple PRFs simultaneously and are not constrained by the reporting status of prior PRFs for which they are neither PIs nor MPIs.

- Faculty with interdisciplinary projects may also apply to other SLU internal annual project-based research awards (i.e., HRGs). However, only one award may be accepted in any annual cycle.

Resubmissions

- PIs and MPIs may resubmit a previously unfunded PRF01 or PRF02 application.
- Revised applications must include a one-page description of how criticisms raised in previous review cycles have been addressed.

Award Categories and Amounts

- **PRF01**: Single PI application describing a NEW project with a high likelihood of extramural funding, preferably through the R01 or U01 mechanisms; up to $37,500 may be requested for this award.
- **PRF02**: MPI application describing a NEW project with a high likelihood of extramural funding, preferably through the P01 mechanism; up to $75,000 may be requested for this award.
- **PRF03**: Existing R01 or U01 application, NEW or RENEWAL, which was scored but not funded by the NIH; up to $37,500 may be requested for this award.

Performance Period

- Support will be for the period from July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026.
- No-cost extensions (NCEs) will only be permitted under exceptional circumstances. Requests must be submitted at least 30 days before the end of the performance period. Requests will be reviewed by the Office of the Vice President for Research (OVPR) and the School of Medicine Research Planning Committee (RPC).

APPLICATION FORMAT

Applications should be submitted via the OpenWater portal. Log in to myslu.slu.edu and click on the OpenWater icon in the 'My Apps' tab. You can log in using your current SLU email address (i.e., first.last@health.slu.edu) and your password. The first time you log in, you will be asked to set up your profile.

Each of the following sections should be uploaded into OpenWater separately.

1. **LAY ABSTRACT – 350-word limit, written for a general audience.**

2. **RESEARCH PROPOSALS – 4-page limit.**

   Cover Letter (1-page limit) - Justify submission of the PRF01, PRF02, or PRF03 research project in the context of existing research support. If prior grant submissions are used to justify this PRF application, their review scores and key critiques should be included.

   Resubmissions only (1-page limit) - Revised applications must include a one-page description of how criticisms raised in previous review cycles have been addressed.

   Research Proposal (3-page limit) **- Please use sub-headings to delineate sections.**
   - Specific Aims
   - Research Plan
   - Significance and Impact of Research
   - Include the role of each collaborator for collaborative projects,

3. **FUTURE FUNDING PLAN (half-page limit)** - Provide an explicit funding plan that describes a path to extramural funding for the proposed project.

4. **REFERENCE CITATIONS LIST – No page limit.**

5. **RESPONSE TO REVIEWERS (for resubmissions only) or SUMMARY STATEMENT (for PRF03 only).**

   Response to reviewers (for resubmissions only; 1-page limit) - Summarize the substantial changes to the application and include a response to the issues and criticism raised in the reviewers' comments.

   Summary Statement (for PRF03 Only) - Provide a copy of the Summary Statement with scores and reviews received by the NIH Study Section.

6. **BUDGET AND JUSTIFICATION (1-page limit)**
   Include a detailed, itemized budget. Provide a clear narrative description of how funds in each category will be used.

7. **BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION**
   Submit biosketches for all PIs, MPIs, and CoIs in the NIH format. Upload all required biosketches in a single PDF document.

8. **CHAIR APPROVAL**

Please upload a letter or email from your chair acknowledging support for your application. If selected for funding, the chair will be contacted to sign off before an award is initiated.

BUDGETING GUIDELINES

ALLOWABLE EXPENSES

Research Expenses

Expenses that are essential to the proposed project are allowed. Materials, supplies, and other expenses requested from the President's Research Fund must directly relate to the proposed project and be justified in that context. Budget items will be reviewed and may be adjusted or removed.

Salary and Fringe Benefits for SLU Faculty and Staff

- PRF Salary Cap: The *total amount* of salary and fringe benefits is capped at $10,000/year per PRF application. Salary will be subject to tax and fringe adjustments.
- Salary is allowed *only* for non-key personnel with the exception of a summer salary being allowed for senior or key personnel on 9-month contracts.

Student Labor

- Student labor is *not* considered part of the $10,000 PRF Salary Cap.
- Activities of the student and educational benefits to the student must be described clearly in the budget justification.
- A student is eligible to work on a PRF-sponsored project only if all the following criteria are met:
    - Holds student status at SLU for the duration of the project
    - Is in good academic standing
    - Complies with the guidelines for any other funded positions, for example, students who hold GA positions must be compliant with their GA policy.

Payees Outside the University: Subcontractors, Service Providers, Consultants

- Applicants must itemize all proposed subcontractors, service providers, and consultants as separate line items in the budget and provide convincing justification for their inclusion on the project, explaining clearly and thoroughly why the proposed work cannot be done at SLU.

UNALLOWABLE EXPENSES

The following are ineligible for support from the PRF and should not be included in proposals for the Fund:
- Indirect Costs
- Pre-Award Costs, i.e., any expenses incurred before the official start date of the PRF award
- Tuition or Fees
- Salary of key personnel with 12-month contracts

Peer reviewers are asked to give their opinion of costs as proposed in the application. PIs are therefore advised to provide sufficient detail in their budget justification such that this determination can be made.

REVIEW PROCESS

All applicants (PRF01, PRF02, and PRF03) will be reviewed by an Internal Study Section appointed by the Research Planning Committee and chaired by the current co-chairs of the RPC or their designee. Recommendations about the funding and amounts to be awarded rest entirely with the Internal Study Section and will be based on scientific merit and likelihood of extramural funding. These recommendations will be forwarded to the Vice President for Research and the Dean of the School of Medicine for final approval. Scoring of all applications follows NIH guidelines (see below), using a range from 1 (exceptional) to 9 (poor). Applications that fail to meet the criteria of novelty (PRF01 and PRF02) or high likelihood of funding (PRF01, PRF02, and PRF03) will be triaged.

Scoring System

Impact Score		Rating	Guidance on Strengths or Weaknesses
High			
	1	Exceptional	Exceptionally strong with essentially no weaknesses
	2	Outstanding	Extremely strong with negligible weaknesses
	3	Excellent	Very strong with only some minor weaknesses
Medium			
	4	Very Good	Strong but numerous minor weaknesses
	5	Good	Strong but with at least one major weakness
	6	Satisfactory	Some strengths but also some moderate weaknesses
Low			
	7	Fair	Some strengths but with at least one major weakness
	8	Marginal	A few strengths and a few major weaknesses
	9	Poor	Very few strengths and numerous major weaknesses
Minor Weakness: an essentially addressable weakness that does not substantially lessen impact			
Moderate Weakness: a weakness that lessens impact			
Major Weakness: a weakness that severely limits impact			

INSTITUTIONAL COMPLIANCE

Projects including human subjects, animals, hazardous materials, etc., must have appropriate approval(s), such as Institutional Review Board (IRB), Animal Care Committee, and Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC), prior to the start of the project.

POST-AWARD TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Post-Award Administration

PIs are required to oversee and approve all expenditures according to the approved PRF budget. PRF awardees are expected to use funds according to the budgets submitted with their original proposals. All budget revisions require approval from the OVPR. Funds that are not expended by the end of the project year must be returned unless an extension for the project has been granted by the OVPR and RPC.

Post-Award Progress Reports

At the end of one year of performance (June 30, 2026), PIs must submit a report to the RPC and OVPR detailing progress and research products related to the funding received. In

addition, recipients are required to complete brief annual reports to the RPC and OVPR that document any external funding, publications, or presentations directly related to the support received from this award for three (3) years following the project end date. Failure to comply with reporting requirements may impact consideration for future internal funding opportunities.

No-Cost Extensions (NCEs)

Extensions of funding into a second year of funding are only permitted under exceptional circumstances and must be submitted 30 days before the end of the original performance period of June 30, 2026. Extensions rarely exceed six months from the original end date. Criteria for an extension should include evidence of productivity as well as data that support the likelihood of extramural funding once the project is brought to completion. Requests for no-cost extensions must be made in writing and will be reviewed by the Vice President for Research (OVPR) and the RPC co-chairs.

Awardee Peer Review Service Requirement

All awardees of PRF funds agree to serve as peer reviewers for the PRF awards for the next three application cycles.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- **Can I submit more than one application as a PI or MPI?** PIs and MPIs may submit only one application as a PI or MPI per submission period.

- **If I am a CoI on another PRF application, may I also submit an application as a PI or MPI?** CoIs may serve on multiple PRFs per cycle but may submit only one application as a PI or MPI per submission period. Each project must be scientifically different (i.e., different aims, goals, and objectives).

- **If I am not funded, how many times may I resubmit the same application for consideration?** Applicants may resubmit an application an unlimited number of times.