

# Pitt Momentum Funds

*Teaming, Arts & Humanities Microgrants,  
and Regional Catalyst Grants*

2026 Information Sessions



# PMFs are provided by the Provost and the Senior Vice Chancellor for Research

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# Outline

- About the FY26 Pitt Momentum Funds
  - Microgrants
  - Regional Catalyst Grants (RCGs)
  - Teaming Grants
- Application process
- Review process
- Questions

# FY25 Awardees

- Scaling Awards:
  - Ghady Haidar, Paul Ohodnicki
- Teaming Awards:
  - Jennifer Iriti, Juan Jose Mendoza Arenas, Jill Demirci
- Priming Awards:
  - Andrew Dierkes, Vikas Khanna, Heeyoung Lee, Haitao Liu
- Microgrants:
  - Frances Corry, Karen Gilmer, Randall Halle, Daniel Heifetz, Lori Jakiela, Gonzalo Lamana, Irina Reyn, Xiqiao Wang

# Pitt Momentum Funds Pipeline



# Eligibility for all Momentum Funds

- **Faculty Status:** Applicants ***must be*** full-time faculty members. Eligible appointment stream faculty must have research as part of their core responsibility.
  - Applicants ***may not*** be undergraduate or graduate students, post-doctoral fellows, research associates, staff, or visiting (non-permanent) faculty members
- **Limitations:**
  - Applicants cannot be lead investigator on more than one PMF proposal (exception are the RCGs)
  - Awardees from the immediately previous funding cycle cannot apply to the same grant type for they were awarded (e.g., Microgrant awardees from FY25 are not eligible for FY26 Microgrants)

# Arts and Humanities Microgrants & Regional Catalyst Grants

# The A&H Microgrants

- Support existing projects, works-in-progress, or test the feasibility of a larger idea for faculty in the Arts & Humanities
- Funds support a wide range of individual and team projects, including workshops & symposia
- Funding must support the research capacity of the project and position the work for external recognition and funding
- \$3,000 one-year awards
  - \$2,000 supplement available from the Mascaro Center for Sustainable Innovation (for a total award of \$5,000)



# The Regional Catalyst Grants

- Specific for individuals & teams at Pitt's regional campuses
- Support high-quality research, pedagogical research, or projects that weave together teaching with research, including conferences and symposia
- **Not** intended for projects focused exclusively on curriculum development
- \$5,000 for two years of support

**New for 2026!**

# The Regional Catalyst Grants

- A goal of the RCGs is to help faculty at the Regionals be competitive for various types of appropriate follow-on funding. Examples include:
  - [Spencer Foundation – Large and Small Research Grants](#)
  - [NSF Facilitating Research at Primarily Undergraduate Institutions](#)
  - [Mellon Foundation Higher Learning](#)
  - [IES Unsolicited Grant Opportunities](#)
  - [Henry Dreyfus Teacher Scholar Awards](#)
- Regionals can utilize their student population to target larger and different grants than Oakland campus

# Application for Microgrants and RCGs

- Project statement (3-page max)
  - a statement of the broader impact the project will have on the field;
  - the methodology and workplan to be followed;
  - a brief budget justification; and
  - a description of the follow-on funding (or) to be pursued to advance the project (with specific examples).
- CV (five-page max)
- Letter of commitment from Department or Division Chair
  - Describes the in-kind or other financial commitments made by the department or division to support the success of the project
- Budget
- Due by December 3, 2025, Noon (Submit via InfoReady)

# Allowable Costs: Microgrants & RCGs

- Permissible uses include:
  - Involving undergraduate students
  - Using community-partner and community-based organizations
  - Services which aid research (e.g., translation, interpretation, journal publication fees, participant payments)
  - Research-related travel for faculty or students
  - Costs associated with hosting a project-related event
  - Purchasing equipment or lab supplies
- Funds **may not** be used for faculty salaries

# Allowable Costs: Hourly Workers

- PMFs can **ONLY** support hourly work from undergraduate students.
- Graduate students, GSRs and GSAs cannot be supported by awards from the PMFs.

# Teaming Grants

# Teaming Grants

- Support the formation of new multi-disciplinary collaborations that can pursue large-scale external funding.
- Funds support organizing strategic planning workshops, creating a working paper series, traveling to meet with potential funders' program managers, or inviting potential collaborators for campus visits.
- \$60,000 for one-year projects

# Teaming Grants Must Align With the *Plan for Pitt*

- All Teaming Grant proposals must show alignment with at least one goal from the Moonshots in the 2028 *Plan for Pitt*
- <https://www.plan.pitt.edu/pillars/its-possible-pitt>



# Eligibility: Teaming

- Applicants must be comprised of cross-disciplinary teams of faculty representing 3 different schools
  - Dietrich faculty in the Humanities, Natural Sciences, and Social Sciences divisions will be considered as separate schools
  - SOM faculty are eligible for Teaming grants
  - No 'All Dietrich' or 'All Health Sciences Division' teams will be allowed
  - One research capable co-investigator from a local organization (non-profit, State or local agency) may count towards the 3-school minimum
  - Non-Pitt MSI (non-R1) faculty may be credited in meeting these eligibility requirements on a case-by-case basis

# Allowable Costs: Teaming Grants

- Permissible uses include:
  - Hiring temporary workers
  - Travel
  - Contract with consultants or other technical support
- Funds **may not** be used for:
  - Curriculum development and student-centered projects
  - Salary support or supplement salaries for either Pitt faculty or external co-investigators
  - Organization of conferences
  - Bridge funding between projects

# Allowable Costs: Hourly Workers

- PMFs can **ONLY** support hourly work from undergraduate students.
- Graduate students, GSRs and GSAs cannot be supported by awards from the PMFs.

# Teaming: Expression of Interest (EOI)

- EOI is required for Teaming grants
- Due by October 24, 2025 at Noon ET
- Submit via InfoReady
- Include:
  - Project title
  - Brief abstract (1000 characters)
  - Explanation of alignment with the Moonshots in the *Plan for Pitt* (500 characters)
  - List of faculty investigators (no students allowed)
  - Keywords (5)

# Teaming Grant: Full Applications

- Full applications due December 3, 2025
- Submit via InfoReady
- Project statement
  - 2.5 pages of text (one additional page is allowed to only include relevant figures, images or citations)
  - Statement should include:
    - description of significance of the project, intended outcomes, and alignment with the Moonshots in the *Plan for Pitt*
    - budget justification
    - follow-on funding to be pursued
- Letter of commitment from Department Chair
  - Teaming letters require co-signatures from Chairs of all investigators
- Budget

# Finalists to Deliver Pitch Session

- Selected finalists will deliver a 5-minute pitch session to the Selection Panel in spring 2026
- Pitch session is followed by a 10-minute Q&A session
- OSVCR will provide coaching and training for sessions
- Awardees will be selected based on scores and funding allocations

# Application Considerations

# Applications: Budgets

## Creating your budget

- Use the budget template (links to FY26 fringe rates; found on InfoReady site)
- Work with your department administrator

## Work with your school

- Cost-sharing
- In-kind contributions
- Undergraduate student employment (hourly)

## What we don't allow

- Faculty salary support
- Travel costs to present results at a conference
- Support for graduate, GSRs or GSAs



# Applications: Writing Tips

Source: Porter, R. (2007). Why academics have a hard time writing good grant proposals. *The Journal of Research Administration*, 38, 161-167

## Academic Writing

Scholarly pursuit: Individual's interest

Past oriented: Describes work that has been completed

Theme-centered: Clear theory and thesis

Expository: Explains to the reader

Impersonal: Tone is objective

Lengthy: Encourages verbosity

Specialized terminology

## Grant Writing

Sponsor's goals: Adopts service attitude

Future oriented: Defines work that should/will be done

Project-centered: Clear objectives, tasks, deliverables

Persuasive: Sells to the reader

Personal: Conveys excitement

Constrained: Rewards brevity

Accessible language

# Review Process

1. Evaluation Criteria for ALL the Pitt Momentum Funds (weighted differently for each grant type)
  - a. Significance of the Project and Intended Outcomes
  - b. Proposal's Clarity of Expression
  - c. Feasibility of the Project
  - d. Follow-on Scholarship and Funding
2. Will be reviewed by a multi-disciplinary panel of reviewers
  - a. Write for a broad audience (use lay language)
3. Awardees will be announced in April 2026

# Expectations of Awardees

- Budget confirmation
- Progress reporting
- Outcomes reporting
- Serve as a reviewer for subsequent cycles
- Acknowledging PMF award in scholarly products

# Questions?

[research.pitt.edu/awards-funding/internal-funding-training/pitt-momentum-funds](https://research.pitt.edu/awards-funding/internal-funding-training/pitt-momentum-funds)

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