

Research & Creative Activities Program (RCAP)

Frequently Asked Questions

I. General

May I submit more than one proposal?

- Applicants are limited to one RCAP application submission as Principal Investigator per funding cycle, but individuals may serve as a Co-Investigator on multiple projects.

Can I serve as a Principal Investigator (PI) and as Co-Investigator on several different projects?

- Yes. However, applicants are limited to one RCAP application submission as Principal Investigator per funding cycle but may serve as a Co-Investigator on multiple projects.

Are there any restrictions for applying for an RCAP grant in sequential years?

- Yes. Principal Investigators that received funding in the previous application cycle (FY23) are not eligible to apply during this cycle, but may apply again in the next funding cycle. PIs that received funding in the previous application cycle are eligible to serve as a Co-Investigator during this cycle.

In addition, PI's who have received RCAP I grants previously and have not completed their deliverables are not eligible to apply as PI's for this cycle.

Will there be more than one submission deadline throughout the academic year?

- Proposals will be accepted annually during the spring semester. An announcement will be made via email and on the Office of Sponsored Programs' website regarding the submission deadline.

Can I view a copy of a funded RCAP proposal to serve as an example for my own proposal?

- Lists of RCAP recipients from prior competitions can be found at: https://www.wku.edu/sponsoredprograms/rcap_past-awardees.php. The lists include the awardees' names, colleges, departments, and project titles. It is recommended that you contact one or more of these recipients to ask if they would share their proposals.

When will I be notified of my funding status?

- Applicants will notified of funding decisions. Please do not contact the Office of Research & Creative Activity prior to this date to inquire about the status of your proposal. **Project spending prior to the start date will not be reimbursed.**

II. Application

I am using a Mac product, and my budget is not auto-calculating the total. What should I do?

- The application may not open/operate correctly with Mac software, such as *Preview*. Please make sure that you open the application with *Adobe Acrobat Pro* or *Adobe Acrobat Reader*.

In the section titled “Application Instructions,” can you clarify what “references” refers to?

- “References” refers to a bibliography or list of “works cited” in the narrative portion of your proposal. This does not refer to letters of reference or letters of support.

What is “current and pending support”?

- All ongoing or proposed projects and activities supported by an outside entity or by internal grant funds should be identified in your biosketch. Any proposed projects and all other activities requiring a portion of time should be included.

The top of the application Cover Sheet asks for my Dean. Does this mean the Dean of my college or a designee (such as an Assistant or Associate Dean) who approves RCAP applications for my college?

- Please list your college’s Dean on the top of the application form. See section *III. Approvals*, for more information regarding the designated RCAP approver for your college.

Are there any summer salary/stipends available under the RCAP program, or can the funds be used to support a course buy-out?

- No, faculty/staff/investigator salary and fringe benefits are unallowable costs.

On the application form, what is the Project Type used for?

- After reviewing the definitions for each project type, select the one that most-closely describes the proposed project. Project type data is used to report on institutional support for research and is not used to score applications.

Can you describe each Project Type?

Research

Research includes those activities intended to produce one or more research outcomes, including the creation of knowledge, the organization of knowledge, and the application of knowledge.

Basic Research - Research undertaken primarily to acquire new knowledge without any particular application or use in mind.

Applied Research - Research conducted to gain the knowledge or understanding to meet a specific, recognized need.

Developmental Research - The systematic use of the knowledge or understanding gained from research directed toward the production of useful materials, devices, systems, or methods, including the design and development of prototypes and processes.

- **Public Service** - Public Service includes those program elements established to make available to the public the various unique resources and capabilities of the institution for the specific purpose of responding to a community need or solving a community problem.
- **Student Services** - Student Service includes those activities carried out with the objective of contributing to the emotional and physical well-being of the students, as well as to their intellectual, cultural, and social development outside the context of the institution's formal Instruction program.
- **Instruction** - Instruction includes those activities carried out for the expressed purpose of eliciting some measure of educational change in a learner or group of learners.

Are other endorsements or letters allowed?

- No. Documents not specifically requested in the application guidelines will not be considered in review.

III. Approvals

Do I need department or college approval to submit an RCAP application?

- Yes. Your Department Head and Dean (or designee)* will review your application, may provide feedback, and must approve your application prior to submission. The approval section is located at the bottom of the application Cover Sheet. Please see the Submission Deadlines outlined in the application guidelines for submission dates for Department Head and Dean (or designee) review.

*The following list was provided by the Research and Creative Activities Council to convey the approver for each college (the approver may be the Dean or a designee). This list is provided as a courtesy; it is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that all approvals are obtained and the application is submitted before the deadline.

CEBS	Dr. Jenni Redifer
CHHS	Dr. Ritchie Taylor
GFCB	Dr. Lily Zhuhadar
Libraries	Dr. Anthony Paganelli
OCSE	Dr. Cathleen Webb
PCAL	Dr. Jeffrey Budziak

If there are two or more individuals serving as Co-Investigators on an RCAP proposal and the individuals are from different departments and/or colleges, which Department Head(s) or Dean(s) should electronically sign the proposal?

- The primary PI should have his/her Department Head and Dean (or designee) provide electronic signature approval for the entire project. However, the PI should make sure each Co-I's Department Head and Dean are made aware of the Co-I's involvement on the project by copying the other Department Heads and Deans on the application submission.

If a RCAP proposal largely impacts or involves a WKU-affiliated institute/center outside of the PI's home department should the institute/center electronically sign the proposal?

- The primary PI should have his/her Department Head and Dean provide electronic signature approval for the entire project. However, the PI is responsible for ensuring that all institutes/centers involved in the project are aware and agree to participate as described in the proposal. The appropriate institute/center representative should be copied on the application submission.

IV. Review Process

Who serves on the RCAP Review Committee?

- The committee is comprised of faculty representatives from across the WKU's colleges. An initial reviewer pool includes faculty interested serving on the RCAP Review Committee. Following the application deadline, RCAP Review Committee members will be selected from the reviewer pool based upon the number and types of proposals received. Additionally, administrative ex-officio representatives from the Office of Sponsored Programs serve on the committee.

Can you explain the review process and how funding decisions are made?

- RCAP proposal review is conducted by the RCAP Review Committee. Members of the review committee will be assigned to review and score a set number of applications based on the Review Criteria outlined in the program guidelines. The review committee then provides RCAP personnel with a ranked list of applicants to be funded. The scores (ranging 1-Low to 10-high) are aggregated and normalized.

Do I need to attend the RCAP Review Committee meeting or make a brief presentation about my proposal?

- No, applicants do not present information about their proposals to the review committee.

How can I become a RCAP Review Committee member?

- Email internal.grants@wku.edu with your interest in being added to the reviewer pool. Following the application deadline, RCAP Review Committee members will be selected from the reviewer pool based upon the number and types of proposals received.

V. Tips for Preparing an Application

- Review the Application Instructions and Review Criteria carefully as you draft your narrative to ensure that your application is responsive to the guidelines.
- We recommend that you have someone outside of your field review your narrative prior to submission, as reviewers may not be familiar with your field/topic. Your narrative should be easily understood by faculty peers across disciplines, and technical jargon should be limited.
- If you are including undergraduate or graduate students in your budget, you also need to include fringe benefits. For assistance calculating fringe benefits or any other budget items, please email internal.grants@wku.edu.
- Once your budget is complete, double check your calculations. Make sure that all costs are allowable.
- In the Budget Narrative, following the same order as the budget form, (i.e. Personnel, Fringe Benefits, Materials and Supplies, etc.) may be helpful for reviewers.
- Only include allowed Supplementary Documents.
- It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure all approvals are obtained and the final application is emailed as a single PDF file attachment to internal.grants@wku.edu by the deadline.
- For assistance compiling all documents into a single PDF, please contact internal.grants@wku.edu.