



Request For Applications

Vermont Space Grant and
Vermont NASA EPSCoR

2024 Faculty Research Grant Program



Released: January 4, 2024

Application Deadline: March 21, 2024 at 11:59 PM

BACKGROUND: A major goal of the Vermont Space Grant Consortium (VTSGC) and Vermont NASA EPSCoR is to build research infrastructure and help Vermont's academic faculty establish ties to NASA and become nationally competitive for external research funding. To support these goals, the VTSGC and Vermont NASA EPSCoR invite applications for Research Pilot Grants (up to \$13,000) and Small-Scale Research Grants (up to \$30,000). Proposed projects must be strongly aligned with new or ongoing NASA research priorities or technology needs and should have the potential to link Vermont faculty to NASA colleagues at NASA Centers. The number of these awards is subject to the availability of NASA funding. These grants require a 1:1 funding match.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE: Eligible principal investigators are those persons who are full-time faculty members at any of Vermont's higher educational institutions. Support from VTSGC-based funding is restricted to US citizens, both faculty and any involved students; NASA EPSCoR funding does not carry this restriction. Standard restrictions on any ITAR-related research still apply.

AREAS OF INTEREST AND NASA LINKAGE: Proposed research projects must be in an area that is strongly aligned with a new or continuing NASA research priority or technology need, and the grant application must make an explicit connection with NASA along these lines. The application should also detail plans for establishing and/or strengthening links with NASA researchers. If contact has been established with a NASA Center or Mission Directorate, a letter or email of support for the project from a NASA contact will significantly strengthen the case for funding. For Small-Scale Grants, a significant degree of NASA contact is expected and should be described in the application.

TYPES OF GRANTS AVAILABLE: Support may be requested for the following funding mechanisms:

- **Research Pilot Grants (VTSGC and Vermont NASA EPSCoR).** Awards of up to \$13,000 will provide seed money to explore a new research project in an area aligned with a new or continuing NASA research priority. A Research Pilot Grant may be used to fund travel by the faculty member to visit a NASA Center for the purpose of forming or solidifying research collaborations.

- **Small-Scale Research Grants (VTSGC and Vermont NASA EPSCoR).** For more established research projects, the VTSGC and VT NASA EPSCoR Programs offer Small-Scale Grants up to \$30,000. Small-Scale Grants may include funding for project components such as, but not limited to, summer support of faculty, graduate and undergraduate student research support; supplies and non-capital equipment; domestic conference travel and travel funds to visit collaborators at a NASA Center. Small-Scale Grant applicants must have an existing NASA contact/collaborator who will provide a letter of support for the project.

Funding awarded in this competition cannot be used to purchase general-purpose equipment, such as computers, and cannot be used to purchase items classified as capital equipment (i.e., exceeding \$5,000, including shipping). NASA funds may not be used for foreign travel.

The number of these awards is subject to the availability of NASA funding. At the time of release of this Call for Applications, it is expected that funding will be available to support up to 10 awards.

OBLIGATIONS WITH AWARDS: All awardees will be required to provide a final report within 30 days of the end of the award period. Additional research progress update(s) may be requested during the award period to address NASA reporting requirements.

REVIEW CRITERIA: Selected projects will be in research areas that strongly align with NASA research priorities and technology needs, will translate into expansion of research capabilities, and will have a strong potential to become nationally competitive for follow-on extramural funding. Successful proposals will have a clearly described plan to establish or strengthen links with potential NASA collaborators.

Priority consideration will be given to meritorious proposals that:

- Budget support for undergraduate or graduate student involvement and/or
- Are submitted by junior tenure-track faculty, and/or
- Are submitted by investigators who have not previously received support under Vermont NASA programs.

Applications responsive to this call will be reviewed by a panel of faculty experts, who will assess the strengths and weaknesses of the application in each of the following domains: overall impact, scientific/technical merit, innovation, approach, alignment with NASA, and investigators. Applicants will receive written critiques. The final selections will be made by the VTSGC Director in consultation with the VTSGC/Vermont NASA EPSCoR Board of Advisors.

BUDGET AND MATCHING FUNDS: A detailed budget and narrative must be part of the application package. All budget items should be fully explained, with detailed breakdowns. The budget request should contain only direct costs.

For projects that propose graduate student support, the salary rates must mirror the current guidelines set by the institution and account for any fringe costs. Similarly, undergraduate research support must follow institutional salary guidelines and account for fringe costs (if applicable).

Matching funds are required for proposals to be eligible for this competition. Funding requested from the VTSGC and Vermont NASA EPSCoR must be matched 1:1 by non-federal sources.

Common sources of matching funds include in-kind cost-sharing, such as designated research effort during the academic year. Waived or differential tuition may not be used as cost share.

INSTITUTIONAL AUTHORIZATION: All applications must be approved by an authorizing official at the institution of origin. University of Vermont applicants must coordinate with their departmental representative from Sponsored Project Administration (SPA) and route applications through UVMClick. All other applicants must coordinate with the SPA equivalent at their institution and submit a subrecipient monitoring form. This form can be found at:

<https://www.uvm.edu/sites/default/files/Sponsored-Project-Administration/subrecipientcommitmentform.pdf>

APPLICATION PACKET: The completed application packet must include the following items:

1. Cover page (using template provided)
2. Project narrative (limit: 5 pages for *Small-Scale Research Grant*; 3 pages for *Research Pilot Grant*, exclusive of references)
3. NASA alignment (limit: 1 page)
4. Biosketches for the principal investigator and co-investigators (limit: 2 pages each)
5. Budget detail and narrative, including matching plan
6. Letters of support (e-mail is acceptable) from NASA collaborators (required for small-scale grant applications)
7. A signed letter of commitment from the appropriate institution or other official responsible for the source of matching funds

Items 2–5 must be typed and single-spaced using at least a 12-point font size. Applications that do not adhere to this requirement will not be considered.

ELECTRONIC APPLICATION PROCEDURE: All applications must be submitted electronically to the VTSGC/Vermont NASA EPSCoR Office no later than 11:59 PM on March 21, 2024. The application packet must be saved as a single PDF file and emailed to SG.Director@uvm.edu using the subject line “2024 Faculty Research Grant Application”.

CONTACT: Please contact Bernard F. Cole, Director of VTSGC/VT NASA EPSCoR, (802-656-0054 or bfc@uvm.edu) with any questions regarding this research grant program.