REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
2025 – 2026 VERMONT EPSCoR
PILOT RESEARCH GRANT PROGRAM

Application due by web submission on February 21, 2025 by 5:00 p.m.
Web submission available on October 23, 2024

Vermont EPSCoR (Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research) has supported research at Vermont's colleges and universities with funds from the National Science Foundation and local sources since 1986. Vermont EPSCoR will once again provide the opportunity for Vermont researchers to compete for awards that support research aligned with Vermont EPSCoR priorities.

Program Overview

The goal of the 2025–2026 Vermont EPSCoR Pilot Research Grant Program is to support innovative projects that align with Vermont's current Research Infrastructure Improvement (RII) Track-1 grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF). This RII Track-1 grant, "Harnessing the Data Revolution for Vermont: The Science of Online Corpora, Knowledge, and Stories (SOCKS)," advances initiatives grounded in principled methods through the quantitative measurement of sentiment and stories across a diverse portfolio of corpora. It seeks to provide new insights into the power and use of stories and narratives across a broad array of social, economic and health domains through integrated data and teams. Areas of alignment with SOCKS include data science and data visualization, healthcare communications, and equity and social justice. More information about SOCKS can be found at https://www.uvm.edu/socks/.

The Vermont EPSCoR Office seeks applications that propose novel, innovative scientific research aligning with SOCKS and having the potential to advance Vermont's research strengths in areas related to SOCKS. Applications that propose early-stage, proof-of-concept projects are appropriate as are applications that propose projects seeking to complement or build upon existing SOCKS research activities.

Eligibility

Eligible principal investigators are faculty members holding a full-time appointment at a Vermont institution of higher education and who are not already supported by Vermont EPSCoR RII Track-1 funding.

Amount and Period of Support

The maximum amount of each award is $15,000. The anticipated period of support is May 1, 2025 – April 30, 2026. All awards are contingent on the availability of funding.

Funding Obligations and Restrictions

Vermont EPSCoR Pilot Grant awards include the following obligations and restrictions on the expenditure of funds:

- Awardees will provide annual progress updates as requested by the Vermont EPSCoR office through May 31, 2028. All reports must be electronically submitted.

- A final financial report is due to the Vermont EPSCoR office within thirty (30) days of the end of the funding period.

- Awardees will attend the Vermont EPSCoR annual meeting to present their progress as requested through May 31, 2028.

- Vermont EPSCoR awards may not be used to support international travel.

- The primary work location must be in Vermont. Vermont EPSCoR awards may not be used to support work in non-EPSCoR jurisdictions.

- Undergraduate students, graduate students, and post-doctoral associates supported by Vermont EPSCoR Pilot Grant funding must complete an approved course in Scientific Integrity as required by the National Science Foundation.

Cost Sharing

Cost sharing is neither requested nor required under this grant program. Voluntary cost sharing is permitted, including in-kind cost matching. Examples of in-kind cost matching include personnel effort, materials, and supplies that are paid for by the applicant using funds from non-federal sources.

Application Information

Applications must be single-spaced using a page size of 8.5 by 11 inches with 1-inch margins on all sides. Text must appear in an easily readable, 12-point type face. The application materials must be combined into a single PDF file with bookmarks for the components listed below. Applications that do not adhere to these requirements will not be considered.

The application should include the following components:

- Cover page (1 page maximum)

  Provide the project title, abstract, and up to three keywords. List key personnel (name, title and affiliation). The abstract should describe the project using non-technical language.

- Research project description (4 pages maximum)

  Describe the problem the proposal is addressing and the research plan in sufficient detail to allow for evaluation by reviewers. Include a description of the project goals, research design and methods, and the expected outcomes. If appropriate, provide a summary of preliminary studies and results.

- SOCKS relevance (1 page maximum)

Provide a narrative summary of the SOCKS relevance of the proposed research, including evidence that the proposed research is aligned with a SOCKS focus area or complements an existing SOCKS research activity. Letters/emails of support from a SOCKS investigator may be included.

- Resources available (1 page maximum)

Provide a summary of the resources that are available and necessary for the proposed project.

- References cited (additional pages as needed)

- Budget and justification (additional pages as needed)

Provide a budget table listing items and amounts as appropriate, including personnel effort (FTE and funds requested), supplies, travel, and other costs. Include a narrative justification of each cost estimate.

- Current resumes for key personnel (1 page per person)

- Letters of support (additional pages as needed)

Include a letter of support from collaborators who are not listed as key personnel or who will be providing resources in support of the project. Each letter should specify the nature and extent of commitment.

- List of Suggested Reviewers (Optional, 1 page maximum)

Provide a list of independent reviewers who are especially well qualified to review the application. For each suggested reviewer, include name and contact information. You may also designate individuals you would prefer to be excluded as reviewers owing to a conflict of interest.

- Applications from principal investigators who are not affiliated with the University of Vermont must include a completed subrecipient form (additional pages as needed)

The subrecipient form may be accessed using the link below

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

Additional Requirements for Human Subjects Research or Animal Research

If your project involves research on human subjects (e.g., work with human tissue, interviews or medical trials with human subjects, and collection or analysis of data and medical records, etc.), live vertebrate animals, or recombinant DNA, then your work must meet federal requirements for review and approval of these regulated activities. Please check details about protocol submission requirements and additional information at http://www.uvm.edu/rpo/. If you have questions about regulations regarding work involving human subjects, contact the Research Protections Office at (802) 656-5040.

Submission Information

Applications must be submitted electronically. Beginning October 23, 2024, you can access

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440 College Street. University of Vermont. Burlington, VT 05405
(802) 656-1914. epscor@uvm.edu www.uvm.edu/EPSCoR
A Partnership of Higher Education, Private Industry and State Government

the application-submission web portal at http://www.uvm.edu/EPSCoR/redir/pilot. You are encouraged to submit early to avoid any potential submission complications. Applications are due February 21, 2025 by 5:00 p.m.

Evaluation Criteria

A panel of local scientists and engineers representing Vermont's business, academic, and government sectors will be assembled to evaluate the proposals based on the topic areas of the proposals submitted. The following domains will be evaluated:

- Significance and innovation of the proposed research

- Appropriateness of the methodological approach

- Strength of the SOCKS alignment

- Qualifications and experience of the investigative team

- Suitability of facilities

- Overall impact (potential to advance Vermont's research strengths)

The panel will evaluate each proposal in terms of the strengths and limitations within each of the above domains. The overall impact domain will be the main consideration driving selection for funding.

Intellectual Property Considerations

The Vermont EPSCoR Office will publish the following information for each award: principal investigator name and affiliation, title of project, amount awarded, dates of award, project abstract.

All results of supported research under this grant program remain the property of the awardee institution. The title to any invention developed with EPSCoR support is retained by the awardee. However, certain government use provisions and disclosures will apply pursuant to regulations regarding the use of federal funding. Specifically, awardees are required to disclose inventions to the Vermont EPSCoR Office to fulfill required disclosures to the federal sponsor. While the inventor retains full ownership of their intellectual property, the federal government retains the right to a non-exclusive license to practice inventions which result from federal funding.

For More Information

For more information regarding this grant opportunity, please contact:

Bernard F. Cole, PhD
Director, Vermont EPSCoR
University of Vermont
bfcole@uvm.edu

Lillian Gamache
Program Manager, Vermont EPSCoR
University of Vermont
lillian.gamache@uvm.edu

For general questions about Vermont EPSCoR, please email epscor@uvm.edu.