

# Internal Grant Opportunities Policy Document - University College MT-IGO Program

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## Overview

The UC MT-IGO (University College Middle Tennessee Internal Grant Opportunities) provides initial or seed funding for research programs, scholarly initiatives, or creative scholarship projects.

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## Timeline and Key Dates

**There are two solicitation periods for applications (Fall and Spring).**

- **Due Date:** The Fall application deadline is September 1, and the Spring application deadline is March 15. Late or incomplete proposals will not be accepted.
  - **Proposal Review Period:** One month from the application deadline.
  - The project period will be from July to May within the same fiscal year. Funding will begin July 1st and end May 31st. All funds must be expended within the project period they are awarded. No-cost extensions are not permitted.
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## Eligibility

UC tenured or tenure-track faculty authorized to serve as a Principal Investigator (PI) and those who did not receive UC internal funding in the previous year are eligible to apply.

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## Opportunity

The UC MT-IGO may award the entirety of its budget to one applicant or split funds among projects based on proposal quality, need, and prior funding.

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## Proposal Requirements

A 2-page document will be required as part of the submission via dynamic forms. The submission should not be longer than 2 pages, including references. An additional page with the budget explanation should be attached.

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## Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria below. See the rubric and its details on the final page of this document.

- Potential benefits to student success (35%)
  - Potential benefits to the larger academic and/or professional community or to the public (25%)
  - Potential impact on the programs and perceptions of the department, college, and/or university (20%)
  - How funding will lead to tangible product generation (15%)
  - Previous PI performance with internal funds or project management (If no history exists, please include a statement to this effect) (5%)
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## Budget

Provide a simple description of the utilization of funds (e.g., personnel, equipment, travel, and operational costs).

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## Deliverable

Describe how the project will produce at least one of the following outcomes:

- Proposal submission to an external agency or foundation.
- Presentation or peer-reviewed publication.
- Evidence describing how seed funding led or will lead to future external funding.

- Evidence describing how seed funding led or will lead to a community engagement project or student success project.

### **Regulations**

Projects requiring IRB or IACUC review must receive approval before fund distribution but not prior to proposal submission.

### **Budget Notes**

- **Unallowable Expenses:**
  - Salary for an external collaborator.
  - Subcontracts.
  - Items covered under indirect costs.
  - Reassign time
  - Membership dues to organizations/societies
  - Honoraria/Travel expenses for visiting lecturers
- Hourly student workers, both undergraduate and graduate, are allowable expenses. Only currently enrolled UC students are eligible.
- Materials and supplies include expendable items with a useful life of less than one year.
- PIs must expend funds during the award year; carry-forward into the following year is not available (i.e., no-cost extensions are not available).
- Research expenses are allowed under MTSU and state guidelines.
- Summer salary for up to 1/32 (or 0.03125%) of 9-month salary is allowed for the PI. Summer salary may not be used in combination with summer release time from start-up funding or release time from another funding mechanism.

### **Proposal Notes**

- PIs may include research methodology but must remain within the two-page limit.
- References, though not required, may be included but must remain within the two-page limit.
- Proposals not chosen for funding will receive feedback.

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### **Submission Process**

UC will post the advertisement for the MT-IGO on the college website and proposals will be solicited via email each funding cycle. Proposals must be submitted through the dynamic forms system. It will be routed to the department chair, University College Dean, and the UC Selection Committee.

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### **UC Selection Committee**

The selection committee will be comprised of at least three (3) tenured or tenure-track faculty from University College.

**Note:** University College, in cooperation with Middle Tennessee State University's Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (<https://research.mtsu.edu/>), may require additional documentation to verify compliance of Federal, State, local and University laws, guidelines and regulations.

### Proposal Evaluation Rubric

Criteria	Score	Justification
Potential benefits to student success	0-35: _____	
Potential benefits to the larger academic and/or professional community or to the public	0-25: _____	
Potential impact on the programs and perceptions of the department, college, and/or university	0-20: _____	
How funding will lead to tangible product generation	0-15: _____	
Previous PI performance with internal funds or project management (If no history exists, please include a statement to this effect)	0-5: _____	

Total: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Potential benefits to student success (35%):

- **Excellent (31-35 points):** The proposal clearly outlines significant, measurable benefits to student success. Evidence-based strategies or innovative approaches are included, with a strong likelihood of improving student learning outcomes, engagement, or retention.
- **Good (26-30 points):** The proposal outlines measurable benefits to student success with clear plans, though details or evidence supporting their effectiveness may be limited.
- **Satisfactory (18-25 points):** Benefits to student success are mentioned, but the connection to outcomes is unclear or lacks detail.
- **Needs Improvement (0-17 points):** Minimal or no consideration of student success benefits is evident.

#### Potential benefits to the larger academic and/or professional community or to the public (25%):

- **Excellent (22-25 points):** The proposal has a strong potential to contribute meaningfully to the academic field, professional community, or public good. Clear dissemination or application plans are provided.
- **Good (19-21 points):** The proposal shows moderate potential to benefit the academic or professional community, with general plans for application or dissemination.
- **Satisfactory (13-18 points):** Benefits are mentioned but not well-developed or specific.
- **Needs Improvement (0-12 points):** The proposal does not address or has minimal impact on broader academic, professional, or public communities.

#### Potential Impact on Programs and Perceptions of the Department, College, and/or University (20%)

- **Excellent (18-20 points):** The proposal clearly aligns with and enhances the department, college, or university's mission, reputation, or strategic goals.

- **Good (15-17 points):** The proposal aligns with the institution's goals and may have a positive impact, though specifics are less robust.
- **Satisfactory (11-14 points):** Potential impact is mentioned but is vague or lacks alignment with institutional priorities.
- **Needs Improvement (0-10 points):** Minimal or no potential impact on the institution is addressed.

#### **How Funding Will Lead to Tangible Product Generation (15%)**

- **Excellent (13-15 points):** The proposal provides a detailed, realistic plan for producing tangible results, such as publications, prototypes, or measurable deliverables.
- **Good (10-12 points):** The proposal outlines plans for tangible results but lacks detail or certainty.
- **Satisfactory (7-9 points):** Tangible product generation is mentioned but is not well-articulated or lacks feasibility.
- **Needs Improvement (0-6 points):** The proposal does not clearly describe how funding will result in tangible outcomes.

#### **Previous PI Performance with Internal Funds (5%)**

- **Excellent (5 points):** The applicant has demonstrated excellent performance with previous internal funding, with timely completion and high-quality results.
- **Good (4 points):** The applicant has a solid record of performance with minor issues, such as slight delays or less impactful outcomes.
- **Satisfactory (3 points):** The applicant has mixed performance with significant issues or no internal funding history but provides a statement addressing the lack of history.
- **Needs Improvement (0-2 points):** No internal funding history with no statement provided.