UNE MINI-GRANT PROGRAM APPLICATION - 2027

Dear UNE Faculty,

The UFA Research and Scholarship Committee, in collaboration with the Vice President for Research and Innovation is pleased to announce the *2027 Mini-Grant program*.

The broad aim of this program, as noted in the attached Request for Applications (RFA), is *to stimulate the research/scholarship/innovation activity at the University of New England*. These competitive mini-grant awards are designed to support both junior faculty who are developing a research/scholarship/innovation program and senior faculty who are pursuing a new direction or beginning a project that has not been previously funded at any level. **If you have received funding before from this mini-grant program, it is important to clarify in your application how the previous funds were used to advance your research/scholarship/innovation and how the project proposed here differs from the earlier funded project.**

The goal of the UFA Research and Scholarship Committee is to identify the highest quality proposals regardless of discipline or purpose. However, to increase the efficiency of the review process and to better assess the merits of a given proposal, we utilize discipline-specific review groups. Applicants should identify the program category that best represents their area of research/scholarship/innovation. Faculty members of the UFA Research and Scholarship Committee, with the assistance of discipline-specific ad-hoc reviewers, review and rank the submitted proposals. These recommendations are then submitted to the Vice President for Research (VPR) who makes the award decision, funding the greatest number of highly-ranked proposals within the available budget.

If you have any questions on the application or the review process after reading this announcement in full, please contact minigrants@une.edu.

Best of luck in preparing your application for the APRS Mini-grant Awards.

Sincerely,

The UFA Research & Scholarship Committee
The Office of Research and Innovation

UNE MINI-GRANT PROGRAM APPLICATION - 2027

A. Overview:

The UNE Mini-Grant program provides intramural funding that helps support faculty research/scholarship/innovation at the University of New England. Funding for the program is provided through hard money commitments made by the university and indirect cost revenue generated by extramural grants and contracts awarded to the university.

The primary purposes of these funds are to:

1) Support the generation of scholarly works, particularly for junior faculty starting their research/scholarship/innovation programs, and pilot projects that can be incorporated into applications for external funding by federal and state agencies or private foundations;

2) Catalyze the growth in quality and quantity of scholarly activity being conducted by faculty at the University of New England, helping contribute to a culture of creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurship that positively impacts individuals and communities;

3) Facilitate the faculty member's scholarship[1] thereby raising the visibility of both the individual faculty member's project and the composite University research/scholarship/innovation programs to the outside professional and public communities. This also helps increase the likelihood of a broader positive impact on society.

B. Program Categories:

We ask that faculty select one of the five categories listed below for their application. The funding categories are defined and organized to help facilitate the review process. For each of the categories, a Review Group will be convened. Applications for funding are rigorously peer-reviewed by the Review Groups comprised of UNE faculty who serve on the UFA Research and Scholarship committee, as well as by ad-hoc reviewers who have content expertise in a discipline or field related to the proposal. Each Review Group will have its own set of reviewers who are best aligned to read and critique proposals from the disciplines and contents covered.

Please note that all applicants are welcome (and encouraged) to discuss their proposed ideas with staff members from the Office of Research and Innovation prior to submission. Discussions can be regarding project development and/or the category under which the proposal falls. Applicants are asked to self-select a category on their application cover sheet, but all applications will be checked to ensure that they are reviewed by the most appropriate Review Group. While rare, the UFA Research and Scholarship committee has the authority to move a proposal from one category to another that is deemed more appropriate.

Natural Sciences:
Disciplines covered in this category include astronomy, biology (such as might be funded by NSF, but not biomedical sciences which would be considered for NIH funding), chemistry, earth sciences (including atmospheric sciences and oceanography), material sciences, mathematics and statistics, and physics. Interdisciplinary programs that use the scientific method such as marine sciences are also included in this section. Research projects that have the potential to have a translational/clinical component, but which are still in the basic science stages of discovery and preclinical development are also included in this category.

Medicine or Biomedical Sciences:
Medicine as defined here is the science and art of maintaining or restoring health by the prevention and treatment of illness. It includes a variety of health care approaches including those practiced by osteopathic and allopathic physicians, nurses, dental hygienists and dentists, physician assistants, physical therapists, and other health practitioners. Veterinary medicine is also included in this category. This category is meant to include all clinical, laboratory and bench research that would fall under the funding domain of NIH and not NSF.

[1] Faculty scholarship is broadly defined and discipline specific. Examples include books, monographs, edited collections, peer-reviewed articles, artwork, reports, plays, commentary, innovative curriculum, etc.

Humanities and the Creative and Fine Arts:
This category may include anthropology, archaeology, government, linguistics, international relations, political science/theory, geography, history, law, ancient and modern languages, communications, literature, philosophy, religion, and visual and performing arts (e.g., music and theatre).

Social Sciences and Public Health:
This category includes projects which apply the scientific method to social research, and as such generally will collect data and use some amount of statistical analysis. Public health, as defined by Winslow, encompasses the science and art of preventing disease, prolonging life and promoting health through the organized efforts and informed choices of society, organizations (public and private), communities and individuals. Also included here are some versions of sociology, social psychology, education, and political science, among others.

Business:
Disciplines covered in this category include finance, marketing, accounting, management science, supply chain management, economics, sport management, outdoor business innovation, sales, sustainability, entrepreneurship, and management information systems. Business scholars use a variety of research methods, quantitative and qualitative, to address research questions related to organizations, customers, suppliers, competitors, brands, and agencies.

C. Eligibility:

All UNE regular full-time faculty, and any faculty member who is less than full-time but whose contract has stated expectations for research/scholarship may apply. Eligibility will be confirmed with the chair/supervisor of their department, center or school. If a proposal is multi-authored, the status of the designated "primary proposal author" will be used to determine funding allocation. If funded, the Principal Investigator and Co-Investigators (if applicable) should be prepared to serve as *ad hoc* reviewers to help review following years' mini-grant applications.

D. Funding Guidelines:

Funds may be used for a diverse set of purposes related to the conduct of scholarship/research. Examples of acceptable uses of grant funds include but are not limited to:

- Supplies such as software, disposable supplies, animals, test kits, or equipment costing less than $1,000
- Non-PI salaries including support for student stipends, technicians and post-doctoral fellows. Buyout of coursework or service obligations during the college's academic year is allowable under certain circumstances (see below)
- Travel funding that is necessary for the conduct of scholarly activity (e.g., field site, special collection, etc.)
- Miscellaneous expenses include animal per diem charges, funds to support human subject enrollment, consulting services such as data analysis, and fees necessary to conduct the work (e.g., telephone and postage fees not covered by departmental or college budgets)

Buy-Out and Salary: Because a typical faculty salary buy-out request would be substantially higher than what mini-grant funds can cover, funds cannot be used for the faculty member's academic year or summer salary. However, if a PI's college is willing to grant a course buy-out, mini-grant funds CAN be requested to cover the cost of an adjunct to cover their course. Additionally, salary for lab technicians, students, or other support staff can be requested as part of a mini-grant application.

Travel related to professional development or dissemination of research/scholarship/innovation is typically not funded through this grant mechanism.

Mini-grants are funded at two different levels. The most common individual awards are funded up to $5,000 for the academic year. In addition, requests can be made for higher amounts (up to $15,000) for projects that can justify the larger budgets based on the scope or nature of the project. Examples of these types of projects include interdisciplinary research/scholarship that involves multiple investigators, techniques that are expensive to perform, or projects that will have a broader impact on the university's overall research/scholarship efforts. Applications for the larger awards are expected to provide more extensive plans for follow-on research/scholarship sustainability and/or mentorship of the investigator(s). Note: these tiers have increased in response to faculty feedback. All applicants are encouraged to request only the amount of money needed for their project even if that is lower than the maximum allowed.

Applicants may not apply to both tiers of funding with essentially the same project. Due to the limited number of awards available at the $15,000 tier, these awards are expected to be extremely competitive. For both tiers, competitive applications will require a carefully planned and detailed budget and its justification as the proposed project and budget will be reviewed together. Applicants are encouraged to discuss the budget section of their proposals with the Office of Sponsored Programs well in advance of their application.

The Project Period will begin on **1 June 2027** and will extend no later than **31 August 2028**. This provides one academic year and two summer periods to complete the project. PIs do not have to use this entire period, and should propose a project period in keeping with their project scope. Final reports will be due by **31 March 2029**.

E. Application:

An electronic copy of a proposal must be submitted to minigrants@une.edu, with a visible carbon copy (cc) to the applicant's department chair, school director, or supervisor. Proposals should be single-spaced in 12 pt font with 1-inch margins. The proposal should **be understandable to persons not familiar with the specific area of scholarship/research.**

Application Format: Applicants must write a formal application using the following format (sections 2-3 combined cannot exceed 2 pages for $5,000 applications, 3 pages for $15,000 applications):

1. **Face Page**. Please use the attached Face Page (you can delete the instruction pages before submitting). The title page must include names of the applicant(s) and the applicant's immediate supervisor(s). The application is considered signed by the PI when it is submitted from the PI's UNE email address with the department chair, school director, or supervisor visibly copied. This is an entirely electronic submission.

2. **Background, Design, Intellectual Merit, and Significance**. Please provide a narrative that addresses the following:
    a. What is the scholarly or scientific background and literature that led you to this project? For projects outside of the sciences, describe the proposed project's evolution and its significance with respect to the faculty member's research/scholarship/innovation, to the university, and/or to the greater external community.
    b. What is the goal of this project and why is it significant and innovative?
    c. What specific aim(s)/question(s) or hypothesis will be addressed with this project?
    d. What critical approach or methodology will be used?
    e. What are the potential pitfalls or risks to success with the project and how could these be addressed if they were to occur? What could go wrong and what would you do if it did?
    f. What is the time frame of the project and how will you accommodate possible delays?
    g. How will you assess the success or completion of this project? In other words, by what discipline specific measure (e.g. submission or acceptance of publication, application for external funding) will you know that you've achieved the goals outlined under item b above? If the proposed project is part of a larger venture, how will you distinguish the success or completion of this phase from the culmination of the larger project?
    h. Please review what you have written to be sure it is understandable to faculty who are outside of your field of expertise. While every attempt is made to find reviewers within your field, there will be faculty reviewing your submission from other fields and other colleges within the institution, so your audience is quite broad.

3. **Future plans for Research/Scholarship/Innovation.** All applicants must provide information on what steps they are taking to build a vibrant and sustainable program of research/scholarship at the University of New England. Specifically for all applicants, how are the funds from the mini-grant to be employed to generate research data or scholarly products for the purpose of securing independent funding from sources outside of UNE. New Assistant Professors should include a summary of the mentoring plan put in place with help from their department, school or college. More established research/scholarship engaged faculty should include information on progress made to date (including use of start-up funds or previous mini-grants). The applicant(s) should also describe funding sources they have identified and will be pursuing for additional support of the research/scholarship described. Please note that the Office of Sponsored Programs is available to help with developing this section of the proposal (please contact minigrants@une.edu to set up an initial meeting to discuss your needs).

4. **Budget**. Please use the enclosed budget form as part of this application.

5. **Budget Justification**. Provide a narrative for each major component of the budget request, including enough detail that reviewers understand your calculations and where the numbers on the budget page come from. Matching funds, though not

required, are encouraged and will strengthen applications. Matching funds can come from a variety of sources including start-up funding packages, Departments, Schools, Divisions, Dean's offices and UNE's Centers for Excellence. The applicant should have initial discussions with these groups early in the application process and ask for brief letters of support that describe the match commitments. Matching funds can be in-kind, cash, or a combination of the two. PI salaries cannot be paid out of mini-grant funds, although, if the applicant's Dean will provide a course release, the applicant may request the cost of an adjunct to cover that course (see Section D Funding Guidelines, above, for more detail on this).

6. **Prior Funding**. Indicate previously received funding in the last 5 years (UNE and external) and what the research/scholarly outcomes were for those funds. For those who have not received extramural funding, please list any unfunded applications made to external funding agencies. While there is no page limit on this section, please keep outcomes to one paragraph each.

7. **Mentoring**. (200 words) If formal mentoring of the PI by a more senior faculty member is proposed in this project, please include a short description of the nature of this mentoring. Who is the mentor and who the mentee? How will the mentoring take place? What topics will the mentoring cover (will it address, for example, all aspects of running a research project, only the statistical analysis, or how to work with a particular piece of equipment)? What is the time commitment of the mentor?

8. **Multiple PI/Team/Interprofessional Education Projects**. (200 words) Please describe how multiple people in leadership of this project will interact. How will decisions be made? Are individuals directing specific parts or sharing direction of all parts? How will disagreements be solved? When will different people be involved? How will future work be shared (future applications for funding, papers, presentations, scholarly works, etc.)?

9. **PI Time.** (200 words per PI) Please describe how much time the PI will commit to this project. Academic year? Summer? You can also indicate how you have calculated this time commitment. If this is a multiple PI project, please describe PI time separately for each PI.

10. **Literature Cited**. No more than 10 references.

11. **Letters from Collaborators and Mentors**. Letters should describe the role that the person commits to the project and/or on the faculty member's mentoring plan. Mentor plans should be described in section 7, above.

12. **Letters of Support**. Letters should indicate commitment for matching funds or other support for the project (i.e., departmental, school, or Dean's office or Center funding). In cases where release time from coursework or service is involved, a letter from a Dean or authorized Associate Dean is required.

13. **Curriculum Vitae**. Provide an abbreviated CV for each professional who is significantly involved in the project. Each CV should be limited to 2 pages, and contain the following sections:
    a. Professional Positions
    b. Relevant Publications, presentations, exhibitions, performances or other documentation of scholarly achievements

14. **Appendix**. Applicants may provide no more than two of the following items in an appendix. Each may be no larger than one standard (8.5x11) page. These should be described in the narrative. If captioned, no more than 100 words each may be included and must fit on the same page. Items which may be included under this appendix include figures, tables, illustrations, artworks (or images of artworks), or diagrams. Appendix items should be visual in nature and should not be used to circumvent page limits of the narrative.

F. Important Dates

1. **Fall 2026**: Invitation to faculty from UNE Office of Research and Innovation for mini-grant proposals
2. **January 14th, 2027** by 11:59 PM EST: Proposals due (submitted to minigrants@une.edu)

3. **March 12th 2027**: UFA Research and Scholarship Committee provides recommendations to the Vice President for Research and Innovation.
4. **April 16th, 2027**: Office of Research and Innovation announces grant-funding decisions.
5. **June 1st, 2027**: Grant funds are released.
6. **August 31st, 2028**: Grant period ends. Grant accounts closed.
7. **March 31st, 2029:** Final report due (submitted to minigrants@une.edu).

G. Proposal Review:

The University Faculty Assembly Research and Scholarship Committee (RSC) will review Mini-Grant proposals using separate Review Groups, as defined in Section B. Applicants may suggest up to two University faculty members with appropriate expertise as *ad hoc* reviewers (who do not have appreciable conflict of interest with the application). Any RSC members with direct interest in a proposal will recuse themselves from consideration of that proposal to avoid a real or perceived conflict. An applicant may submit name(s) of RSC member(s) who may be in conflict and request that they be excluded from the review of their proposal. The Chair of the RSC will request *ad hoc* members for the RSC if additional reviewers or expertise are needed. Applications requiring Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) or Institutional Review Board (IRB) oversight will be reviewed without final approval; however, funding will not be released without a written final approval (or exemption) from the appropriate oversight group. All proposals will be reviewed and ranked using a Review Criteria rubric (requests for the review sheet should be made to minigrants@une.edu).

The RSC will forward a scored list of all proposals to the Office of Research and Innovation. Proposals that are deemed non-meritorious or inappropriate for this funding mechanism will not be funded, regardless of funds available. All proposals will receive written feedback from the RSC, reflecting the evaluation of the proposal. Final decisions are made, based on review ranking from faculty reviews, by the VP Research based on both review ranking and funds available.

Other Contributing Criteria
The following criteria are not required, but inclusion of some of these elements into the application can strengthen the submission. Please be clear in the application which elements are included and how they strengthen your project:

- Matching funds. As stated in section E.5., funds can be in-kind and/or cash. While matching funds are not required, having other institutional support identified for this project will be viewed as a significant strength.
- Collaboration (including multiple-PI, team proposals, and Interprofessional Education (IPE)) proposals. Designing a project involving collaboration is desirable for a number of reasons. These types of projects are typically better at addressing complex and challenging issues facing society. They help break down traditional academic silos, maximize resources, and are viewed more favorably by external funding agencies.
- Mentor. Identifying a qualified and engaged mentor for applicants at the beginning stages of their career, or who are senior faculty members pursuing a new avenue of research/scholarship, will be viewed as a significant strength.
- Follow-on funding. As these mini-grants are typically intended to be seed monies, proposals will be strengthened by the inclusion of appropriate and well-researched options for funding applications once the mini-grant period has concluded.
- Student engagement. Including students in a faculty member's research/scholarship is highly encouraged, and will be viewed as a strength if it is appropriate for the project.

I. Final Report and Presentation:

Grantees must submit a final written report to minigrants@une.edu, no later than March 31st of the fiscal year following the award (i.e., 03/31/2029). Final report overviews and total budget amount will be published to the UNE community. This report should include:

1. **Overview**. A description of the project.
2. **Goals**. A description of the project outcomes and how the objectives stated were met.
3. **Student involvement.** Engagement of both UNE undergraduates and graduate students, and potential research/scholarly outcomes for those students (e.g. bachelor thesis, subsequent SURE Fellowship, poster/paper presentation, publication, etc.)
4. **Dissemination**. State how results will be disseminated. Dissemination must include sharing results with the faculty of the University through a seminar or similar presentation, and/or through the use of DUNE (i.e., DigitalUNE) as a centralized digital repository for the research/scholarly findings.
5. **Future Funding**. Provide plans for seeking means to sustain the scholarly activities, including specific funding sources.

6. **Acknowledgement**. All presentations, publications, etc. resulting from this work should include the following acknowledgement: "This work was supported in part by a grant from the University of New England Office of Research and Innovation"

J. Application Checklist:

Please be sure all of the following are completed and included in your application in the following order. **Please create one single document with all of these components**.

- ☐ Face Page (please use attached format)
- ☐ Narrative (Sections 2-3 combined cannot exceed 2 pages for $5,000 applications, 3 pages for $15,000 applications)
- ☐ Budget sheet
- ☐ Budget Justification (cannot exceed 1 page), including matching funds information.
- ☐ Recent (past 5 years) prior funding (include title, funding source and amount, and a brief description of each project)
- ☐ Mentoring Plan, if applicable
- ☐ Multiple PI/Team/IPE description, if applicable
- ☐ PI Time description
- ☐ Literature Cited (10 references limit)
- ☐ Letters from collaborators or mentors (if applicable)[2]
- ☐ Letters of Support (if applicable)
- ☐ Curriculum Vitae (limited to 2 pages for each professional involved in the project)
- ☐ Appendix (2 item on 2 pages limit)

Please be sure all submitted materials are understandable to a wide academic audience, not limited to your field.

[2] In cases where release time from coursework or service is involved, a letter from the applicant's Dean or Associate Dean is required.

2027 UNE Mini-Grants FACEPAGE

Title of Project:

Principal Investigator Information:	**Co-Investigator(s) Information (if applicable):**
Name:	Name of First Co-Investigator
Title:	Title:
Department/School:	Department/School and College:
College:	Name of Second Co-Investigator:
Campus:	Title:
Phone:	Department/School and College:

Project Information:		
Human Subject Research ☐ Yes ☐ No	Animal Subject Research ☐ Yes ☐ No	Please select one area under which you are applying: ☐ Natural Sciences ☐ Medicine and Biomedical Sciences (Lab Research) ☐ Humanities and Creative and Fine Arts ☐ Social Sciences and Public Health ☐ Business
Funding Tier Applying For: ☐ Up to $15,000 ☐ Up to $5,000		
Project Start Date:	Project End Date:	

Space Requirements Does your project require any renovations to current space or require any new space or require changes in how space is used? ☐ Yes ☐ No	**Suggested Reviewers** If there are faculty at UNE who are not connected with your submission and whom you feel are qualified to review it, you can put their names here. We cannot guarantee their participation in this review, however. Please avoid any conflict of interest.
If yes, you must discuss with spaceusecommittee@une.edu. Please provide the date you contacted them:	

Investigators and Supervisors
Type names below. If funded, PI (and Co-Investigators) should be prepared to serve as an ad hoc member of the UFA Research and Scholarship Committee to help review future applications.

Principal Investigator		Co-Investigator (if applicable)
PI Department Chair, School Director, or Supervisor		Co-Investigator (if applicable)

Application will be considered signed when it is submitted from the PI's UNE email address. Department Chair, School Director, or Supervisor MUST be copied (cc'd) on submission to serve as notification in lieu of signature.
Please submit the application electronically in one single PDF document to minigrants@une.edu.

2027 UNE Mini-Grants BUDGET FORM

Title of Project:		Principal Investigator
	Mini-Grant Request	Matching or other source
Personnel		
Salaries	n/a	See section on PI Time Commitment
Fringe (*See below)	n/a	
Students		
Fringe (*See below)		
Adjunct for course-release		
Consultants		
Name:		
Name:		
Supplies (please identify each line)		
Travel		
Mileage		
Flights		
Hotels, food, etc.		
Contractual costs		
Name:		
Name:		
TOTAL:	**$**	**$**

Instructions: Put the dollar amount requested under the mini-grant in that column. Other monies you have secured (either already or for future use) you should identify under the "matching or other source" column, which may include any outside funder (Federal or foundation) or any internal funder (such as departmental funds, Dean's award, or other). For consultants and contractual costs, please identify the name of the person or organization. On a separate sheet, please justify all costs identified here, including details about how many hours (or days, or percent effort) are include both under consultants and students as well as the rate you intend to pay students. Include also details about travel (where, for what, how long, etc.), and other details explaining any other requested portion of the budget. Please also explain any "matching or other source" amounts and what restrictions may be on those monies.

*** Fringe benefits.** These have changed and UNE now has several rates. Please use the rate which applies to the effort you are paying for:

- Benefits-eligible employees: 34%
- Non-benefits-eligible employees (including faculty off-contract, such as summer): 10.5%
- Students: 1.5%