

Collaboration for Unprecedented Success and Excellence (CUSE) Grant Program

Request for Proposals (RFP) for 2019 Funding Cycle

I. The Purpose of the Program

Syracuse University's Office of Research is pleased to announce the 2019 funding cycle for the CUSE Grant Program (Collaboration for Unprecedented Success and Excellence). The purpose of this intramural grant program is to enhance interdisciplinary collaborations, to grow the research enterprise and enhance scholarship at Syracuse University in order to increase extramural funding and high-quality scholarly output. The program is designed to support faculty in becoming competitive in securing external funding and sponsorship. CUSE Grants should not be viewed as funds to conduct or complete projects, but rather to seed funding for faculty to build interdisciplinary teams, to produce preliminary data, and/or to seek help to obtain extramural funding that will advance knowledge and technologies through basic, translational and applied research. The grant program will support faculty research in all disciplines that span from basic, translational and applied sciences, social sciences, physical and life sciences, engineering, liberal arts, humanities, professional schools, creative research and various forms of all scholarly activities. The expectation is for the CUSE Grant Program funded faculty members to seek extramural support that will increase the national and international recognition of the awardees, their programs, and the university.

In the 2018 round, the CUSE Grant Program funded 90 projects – 51 in the humanities, social sciences, and creative research areas and 39 in STEM research areas. For the 2019 funding cycle, the CUSE Grant Program will continue to focus on enhancing the reputation of Syracuse University and leveraging extramural funding and prestigious awards by providing four types of intramural grants: 1). the Seed Grant, 2). the Innovative and Interdisciplinary Research Grant, 3). the Good to Great Grant, and 4). the Interdisciplinary Seminar Grant.

II. Priority Areas

CUSE grants support a broad range of research areas ranging from basic, translational and applied sciences, engineering, social sciences, liberal arts, visual, fine and performing arts, humanities, to creative research and various other forms of scholarly activities. The program specifically focuses on areas that are well aligned with extramural funding, federal, state, corporate, foundations, and philanthropic funds. In particular, priority is given to strategic interdisciplinary initiatives at Syracuse University and disciplinary research areas with great potential for extramural funding **and institutional recognition**. Examples of interdisciplinary initiatives include, **but are not limited to**:

- 1) Energy and environment (e.g. global environmental change; healthy and intelligent buildings; energy conversion and storage; smart cities; topological material; studies of water; technology and knowledge for green industry; sustainability in the context of climate change; environmental humanities);
- 2) Artificial intelligence, autonomous systems, deep learning, and policy (e.g. autonomous systems and AI development, design, networks, technology, commercialization, policy, law, and compliance; cognitive, machine and deep learning);
- 3) Big data and data analytics (e.g., bioinformatics; digital humanities; genomics; business analytics; cyber security; marketing analytics; socioinformatics; sport analytics; truth in social media; impact and societal responses of, and corrective measures for proliferation of fake news; alternative facts, misinformation, and anti-science initiatives; information analytics; media informatics, etc.);).

- 4) Aging, behavioral health and neuroscience (e.g., aging studies; neuroscience; health disparities; health behavior intervention; chronic, emerging and infectious disease, biological and neurological processes, public health, substance abuse and addictions, depression and post traumatic syndrome, therapeutics research, health systems management);
- 5) Bio-enabled science and technology (e.g. drug discovery, delivery and resistance; smart materials; cell and tissue engineering, advanced imaging, optical imaging and force sensors; translational models; medicinal chemistry; mechano-biology; quantum biochemistry computation, and various other biomedical sciences and technologies);
- 6) Innovation and entrepreneurship (e.g., design thinking; data-focused innovation; marketing innovation; engineering innovation; law and policy for innovation and entrepreneurship);
- 7) Social differences, social justice and culture (e.g., diversity in media, popular culture and journalism; healthy and equitable communities; gender/sexuality advocacy, rights and justice; disability studies, policy and law; combating racism and racial justice; critical ethnic studies; culture and communication, language, expression, and discourses).

While CUSE grant program encourages interdisciplinary collaborations, applications from disciplinary research areas with great potential for significant scholarship and extramural funding opportunities are encouraged as well.

CUSE reviewers are also asked to give special consideration to supporting junior faculty, as helping junior faculty to establish their research programs and succeed is of great importance to the future of Syracuse University.

III. Lead Principal Investigator (PI) Eligibility

Syracuse University encourages collaborations, particularly multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary collaborations. However, for accountability, the primary responsibility for project oversight is on the lead principal investigator (the first name on the grant). For all grant categories, Principal Investigator (PI) eligibility follows the institutional requirements set forth in the University's [Statement of Principal Investigator Eligibility](#). No submission of CUSE proposals is allowed for any individual **servicing as a PI on an active CUSE grant** (e.g., if you are a PI on a CUSE grant received in 2018, the earliest you can apply again will be 2020, as CUSE grants are two years in duration).

Each eligible applicant may submit only one proposal in a year serving as the lead PI, but can serve as Co-PI or Co-Investigator (Co-I) on as many projects as the investigator wishes. In addition, an eligible applicant may submit a second proposal serving as the lead PI provided it is an application for an "[Interdisciplinary Seminar Grant](#)" (see below under V. Types of application and Funding levels). For "[Good to Great](#)" Grant: The lead PI must have submitted an extramural grant and obtained "Outstanding", "Excellent", or "High priority for funding" reviews from an extramural grant review panel, but yet the project was not funded. The extramural grant must be led by the lead PI. If a CUSE grant was already awarded under this category for a project, the lead PI is ineligible for this funding category with the same or similar project in the future.

Collaboration with researchers outside of the University is permitted, however CUSE grant funds may not be subcontracted to other institutions.

Applicants should keep in mind that members of the Review Committee represent a variety of disciplines from across the university. Therefore, applicants must write their proposals without excessive jargon and in a style that is clear to reviewers who are not experts in the specified area. In addition, each funding category has its own set of eligibility criteria as detailed below.

IV. Project Duration

In order to provide flexibility, all CUSE grants for the approved dollar amount will be fully funded when the account is established, and are two years in duration. The PI has the flexibility within the two years to spend the approved funding. No-cost extensions are permitted, as long as a reasonable justification for extension is provided. The CUSE grant can be requested for a maximum extension period of 6 months with the approval of the Office of the Vice President for Research.

V. Types of Application and Funding Levels

- 1) Seed Grant: The funding levels of seed grants are capped at \$5,000 per Seed Grant for a period of up to two years. Applications can be individuals or teams.
- 2) Innovative and Interdisciplinary Research Grant (I²R): The funding levels of Innovative and Interdisciplinary Research Grant are capped at \$30,000 per grant for a period of up to two years. Applications can be individuals (innovative) or teams (interdisciplinary research). If individuals are applying under this category, applicants must demonstrate the competitiveness of the PI, her/his past success in extramural grants, and the potential for continued success without the need of collaboration.
- 3) Good to Great Grant (G2G): The funding levels of Good to Great grant are capped at \$30,000 per grant for a period of up to two years. The applications can be individuals or teams.
- 4) Interdisciplinary Seminar Grant: The funding levels of the Interdisciplinary seminar grant are capped at \$10,000 per grant. The applications can be individuals or teams. This grant is designed to cover the costs of the seminar itself such as refreshments, cost of space, and the invited speakers, but not for any research activities of the PI, Co-PIs or Co-Is. Cost for departmental seminars are ineligible for this program.

VI. Proposal Submission

- 1) Online application form
 - a. Go to <https://syracuse.infoready4.com>
 - b. Click on the 2019 CUSE Grant Program link in the list of competitions
 - c. On the right hand side, under Application Tools, click “Apply”
 - d. Click the Syracuse University Login and user your NetID and password to log into the Application Portal
 - e. Complete the **application details screen** (name and email will pre-fill):
 - PI title, school/college, department, center/institute (if applicable), rank, and tenure status
 - Co-PI/Co-I roles, names, emails, school/college, department, center/institute (if applicable), rank, and tenure status
 - Type of application (Seed, I²R, G2G, Seminar)
 - Proposal Title
 - Total funding request
 - Indicate if this project involves: Human subjects, Animal research, Hazardous materials, Existing (protected) IP, Potentially non-routine data management (HIPAA etc.), Export controls.
 - Indicate if this proposal has been previously submitted for CUSE funding by yourself as PI or by any named Co-PIs or Co-Is.
 - **Project Summary**: Include a summary of no more than 250 words in the text box provided.

2) Upload Files

All uploaded files should conform to the following requirements: Margin - 1 inch: top, bottom, left, and right; Minimum font size - 12 points; Single-spaced, single-sided 8.5 x 11 inch pages, numbered. With the exception of the BUDGET (item 2F) all files must be uploaded as a single PDF document, named by subsections headers a through f below (e.g. PROJECT NARRATIVE.pdf, KEY PERSONNEL.pdf, CURRICULUM VITAE.pdf, etc.).

A. PROJECT NARRATIVE –Limited to a maximum of:

- Seed Grants and Interdisciplinary Seminar Grants – Three (3) single-spaced pages.
- Interdisciplinary Research Grants and Good to Great Grants – Six (6) single-spaced pages, including figures and tables.
- Page limits will be strictly enforced to ensure fair and equitable competition. Reviewers will be instructed to disregard pages submitted that extend beyond stated maximums.

The Project Narrative should include the following information:

- i. ***Introduction.*** The introduction should include a clear statement of the research question/problem, long-term goal(s), and supporting objectives or research questions of the proposed project. Summarize the body of knowledge or other past activities that substantiate the need for the proposed project. Describe ongoing or recently completed significant activities related to the proposed project including the work of key project personnel. Include preliminary data/information pertinent to the proposed research or activity. All works cited should be referenced (see item 2C References Cited of this section). This is the section to set the stage for your project to answer a significant question or to resolve a significant problem.
- ii. ***Rationale, Significance, and Broader Impact.*** Concisely present the rationale behind the proposed project; the specific relationship of the project's objectives to one or more of the particular program priorities; the potential long-term and broader impact; and the potential of this project to enhance future extramural grant applications, or to produce significant scholarship. Broader impacts can be defined as the greater potential societal benefit, but also the broader impact within Syracuse University, within your field, as well as within the local community. In this section, explain why your project should be funded.
- iii. ***Approach.*** The activities proposed or problems being addressed must be clearly stated and the approaches being applied clearly described. Specifically, this section must include: a description of the activities proposed and the sequence in which the activities are to be performed; methods to be used in carrying out the proposed project, including the feasibility of the methods; considerations of alternative methods and if the proposed method is state of the art; expected outcomes; means by which results will be analyzed, assessed, or interpreted; how results or products will be used; pitfalls that may be encountered and alternative approaches to compensate for pitfalls; limitations to proposed procedures; a full explanation of any materials, procedures, situations, or activities related to the project that may be hazardous to personnel, along with an outline of precautions to be exercised to avoid or mitigate the effects of such hazards. Include a brief timeline of the proposed project.
- iv. ***Intent to Leverage CUSE Funding.*** Indicate how you will leverage CUSE funding to further pursue extramural grant funding, including listing what funding agencies and specific programs may be targeted, and how CUSE funding will be impactful on those applications. Demonstrate how you will show impact from this grant external to the institution. For disciplines where external funding is limited, describe how the CUSE grant will enable you to leverage success through the creation of new scholarship, educational programs or collaborations.

B. KEY PERSONNEL – Limited to one (1) single-spaced page.

Clearly describe the roles and responsibilities of the PI, Co-PIs and Co-Is. This may be indicated in paragraph or tabular form. Biographical sketches for key personnel should be attached, as noted in Section 2.H. below.

C. REFERENCES CITED – No page limit.

All work cited in the Project Narrative, including that of key personnel, should be referenced in this section of the application. References must be complete, including titles and all co-authors in a professional journal format, alphabetically, using last name of the first author, or list by number in the order of citation.

D. RESPONSE TO PREVIOUS REVIEW

- *Response to Previous CUSE Review* – Limited to one (1) single-spaced page.

Required for all previously submitted Seed, I²R or Seminar proposals. Provide a response to the previous review panel summary, including how the proposal has changed since the previous submission.

- *Response to Extramural Reviews* – Limited to four (4) single-spaced pages.

Required for G2G proposals only. Include: 1) The PIs response to extramural grant reviews, including how the G2G proposal will help make a subsequent extramural submission more competitive; 2) A statement of assessment of the competitiveness of the G2G application from the Associate Dean for Research of the college/school; 3) A copy of the external agency review (not subject to page limitations for this section). Compile these three documents into one PDF attachment. *If neither of these sections are applicable, do not upload a document.*

E. FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT – Limited to two (2) single-spaced pages.

Describe the landscape of facilities, materials, equipment and other resources not budgeted for in this proposal but available to you at Syracuse University to conduct your project. For example, describe any existing computer equipment or software, performance or meeting facilities, special collections or scanning and recording devices, etc. available for you to conduct the activities proposed. For Interdisciplinary projects, note any additional resources leveraged by the entire collaboration. If your project does not require any facilities. Materials, equipment or other resources apart from what is requested in the proposal budget, please state this in the attachment.

F. BUDGET – Please download and use the CUSE budget form provided on the Application Portal. Provide complete budget details for each year of the two-year project period. Please note that the CUSE Budget Form is a derivative of the OSP Budget Template and functions in the same way. Enter budget data into the ‘Personnel Yr 1’, ‘Personnel Yr 2’, and ‘Non-personnel’ worksheets accordingly. Additional guidance is provided in the ‘Instructions’ tab of the CUSE Grant Program Budget Template.

Funds can be requested for the following allowable costs:

- *Salaries & Wages for PIs, Co-PI's, and Co-Is* – PI, Co-PI and Co-I salaries are limited to one (1) month.
- *Other Salaries & Wages* – For I²R and G2G proposals, budget requests can be made for technical or postdoctoral salary support, graduate research assistantships, undergraduate research support, and essential staff. The CUSE grant program recognizes the importance of graduate and undergraduate training and encourages PIs to involve graduate and undergraduate students in research.
- *Fringe Benefits* – Fringe benefits must be included for all salaries as appropriate. The budget template will assign current fringe benefits corresponding to the salary line(s) used.

- *Equipment* – Total is limited to \$5,000 for I²R and G2G grants.
- *Travel* – Must be directly related to CUSE grant project activities.
- *Other Direct Costs* – Materials and Supplies (such as meeting supplies and books), Consultant Costs, Purchased Services (such as transcription or translation costs), Rental of Off-site Facilities, Human Subject payments, and Other Relevant Expenses (such as food and beverages for all-day meetings or archive fees) are allowable. Please note that funds requested for consultants must equal no more than 25% of budgeted costs.

The following items are unallowable costs on a CUSE grant:

- *Subcontracts to external institutions* – As CUSE grants are intended to internally advance research and scholarship, no funds may be subcontracted to other institutions.
- *Office Supplies, Cell Phones, Internet service, Memberships/subscriptions* - Funds cannot be requested for items generally regarded as parts of indirect costs such as office supplies, phones, cell phones, internet service, subscriptions, memberships, laptop computers, iPads, software, desktop computers, or computer peripherals (e.g. printers, data storage, etc.). Project-specific specific computers and/or project-specific software package(s) are allowed if predominately used for the project, but a detailed justification must be provided.
- *Indirect costs*

G. BUDGET JUSTIFICATION – Limited to three (3) single-spaced pages.

Provide a detailed justification for each item of the budget request, thoroughly explaining what budget allocations are needed and why they are important to complete the goals and objectives of your project. A template is provided on the Application Portal.

H. CURRICULUM VITAE – Limited to five (5) single-spaced pages for each investigator. Provide a CV/biographical sketch in any extramural agency format (e.g. NIH, NSF, DOD) for each PI/Co-PI/Co-I, *limited to academic & research credentials*. Templates for a standard NSF and a hybrid NSF/NEH biographical sketch are provided on the Application Portal for reference. Do not list meetings attended, seminars given, or personal data. If not utilizing an extramural agency format, please include the following information:

- Brief summary of investigator's qualifications for proposed project
- Brief summary of teaching, scholarship and research expertise
- Education history (degrees) and relevant employment history
- Relevant honors and awards (limit to five)
- Relevant products, including: Peer reviewed publications, books, book chapters, or other academic/ artistic outputs consistent w/discipline, such as scores, films, productions, performances or artworks.

I. CURRENT AND PENDING SUPPORT – No page limitation.

Download and complete the Current and Pending form provided on the Application Portal.

Provide a listing of all proposals that are Pending, Awarded, or Planned for Submission.

The Form is required for the PI of the CUSE Grant only. Please note: Current and Pending Support may be used by the review committee to illustrate how CUSE funding may complement, enhance, or in some cases compete with existing awards.

J. CONFLICT OF INTEREST – No page limitation.

Download and complete the Conflict of Interest spreadsheet from the Application Portal. **This form is required for the PI and all Co-PIs of the CUSE Grant, but not for Co-Is or other project personnel.** This form is intended to minimize potential conflicts of interest in the review process. Include the following information:

- Co-authors on publications within the past three (3) years, including pending publications and submissions;
- All collaborators on projects within the past three (3) years, including current and planned collaborations.
- All thesis or postdoctoral advisees/advisors

No additional materials, appendices, or supplementary documentation will be accepted.

VII. Proposal Submission

- Must be submitted by **5:00pm January 31, 2019**
- Submit electronically at <https://Syracuse.infoready4.com>
- An email acknowledgment of receipt will be sent once the CUSE Grant application is received

VIII. Proposal Review and Evaluation

- 1) **Each application will be evaluated in a two-part process.** First, each application will be screened to ensure that it meets the administrative requirements as set forth in the CUSE Grant Program. **Applications that do not meet the guidelines as stated in the RFP will be eliminated from the competition and will be returned to the applicant without review.** Second, a review panel composed of Syracuse University faculty will technically evaluate applications that meet these requirements. In addition to the review panel, written comments may be solicited from *ad hoc* reviewers. Prior to recommending an application for funding, the peer review panel and *ad hoc* reviewer comments, if applicable, will be presented and discussed.
- 2) **Review Panel Selection and Evaluation Process:** A Review Panel will be selected with a goal of representing expertise across research areas including, but not limited to, expertise in STEM areas, arts, humanities, social sciences, and creative research areas. This review panel may include Associate Deans for Research, members of the Senate Research Committee, Distinguished Professors or University Professors, or faculty members at large who have had at least one extramural grant with the exception of certain disciplinary areas where extramural funding is rare. In all cases, the review panel members must not submit a proposal in the CUSE grant program in the year when she/he serves on the panel. The Review Panel will meet, discuss, evaluate, rank, and make recommendations for funding.
- 3) **Evaluation Criteria:** The peer reviewers and the review panel will be asked to take the following factors into account:
 - A. *Overall merit of the application*, including comments on: novelty, uniqueness, and originality; conceptual adequacy of the hypothesis, research question, or problem(s) to be addressed; clarity and delineation of objectives; adequacy of the description of the undertaking and suitability and feasibility of methodology; and probability of success of project. (**25% weight**)
 - B. *Qualifications of proposed project personnel and adequacy of facilities*. Qualifications of proposed project personnel include: research productivity and quality as measured by peer-reviewed publications in high-quality professional journals or other forms of high-quality scholarly output, patents awarded, products developed as reflected in the biosketch; experience, track record, and training; and adequacy of available or obtainable support personnel, facilities, materials, equipment and other relevant resources. If the applicant is a junior faculty member, the

Review Panel will be instructed to weight qualifications based on the level of scholarly activity in relation to the applicant's length of time in the field, and the potential of the grant for positively impacting the trajectory of success for the applicant. (**25% weight**)

- C. *Relevance of the project and alignment of the project with current and future research trends, extramural funding priorities, or with national and international awards for recognition, and how such alignments will lead to extramural funding external recognition of the awardees, their programs, and the university.* (**25% weight**)
- D. *Efforts and success for extramural funding, and compliance with federal reporting requirements:* Justification of how the project will help extramural grant applications in relation to specific funding sources and potential projects; for researchers who were previously funded through CUSE grant funds, demonstrated efforts of extramural funding applications are required before eligible again for CUSE grant funding (see above under "Eligibility"). Success and the level of success in extramural funding from all sources (e.g., federal, regional, state, industry, foundations, private, etc.) will be a key factor for consideration of additional CUSE grant funding. Timely and satisfactory reports as required. (**25% weight**)

Ad hoc reviewers (if relevant), as well as, the review panel for each proposal will provide comments and a rating for each factor, where the ratings are excellent, very good, good, fair, and poor. The ratings for each of these factors will be weighted equally and combined into an overall score using these point values:

Rating	Points
Excellent	5 points
Very Good	4 points
Good	3 points
Fair	2 points
Poor	0 points

For “Good to Great” Grant Project, the following additional criteria will also be considered:

- E. The reviews and rankings of the proposal from extramural funding sources;
- F. The commitment of the departments and colleges as reflected in cost share, if any, and the statement from the associate dean(s) for research;
- G. The budget of the extramural grant application, i.e., large extramural grant will be given priority.

Guided by the overall score, comments on factors, and the additional criteria for the “Good to Great” proposals, the review panel will sort proposals into categories of must fund, high priority for funding, medium priority for funding, lower medium priority for funding, low priority for funding, and do not fund. Funding decisions and funding levels will be determined based on the evaluation ranking in consideration of the availability of funds. Final funding decisions will be approved by the Vice President for Research. A panel summary, along with reviews, will be sent to the lead PI upon completion of the funding cycle evaluations.

IX. Award Notice

Upon the completion of funding decisions, the lead PI will be notified. For all grant categories, the funding decision will be copied to the Dean and Associate Dean for Research or Associate Dean. Award announcements will include the following: (a) Title of project; (b) Project period; (c) Total dollar amount.

X. Requirements for Approved Projects for Release of Funds

Prior to the commencement of research the PI must provide copies of all relevant IACUC (Institutional Animal care and Use Committee), IRB (Institutional Review Board) and IBC (Institutional Biosafety Committee) approvals to the OVPR (Office of the Vice President for Research), as appropriate. It is the lead PI's responsibility to be in compliance with federal and state regulations concerning human subjects, animal welfare, recombinant DNA, financial conflict of interest, export control, and any hazardous materials, and that the PI complies with all of the reporting requirements for the CUSE Grant Program.

The Office of the Vice President for Research reserves the right to redistribute or retract monies if problems arise relative to satisfactory progress or compliance of all terms as set with this RFP, or due to economic necessity of the university. An annual progress report and a termination report are required, and should be made by thirty days after the anniversary date of the award.

XI. Additional Information:

Applications containing proprietary information will be evaluated with due consideration for protection of this information to the extent permitted by law provided such information is clearly identified by inclusion of the Proprietary Information Disclosure Statement.

XII. Timetable Summary:

November 13, 2018	RFP release date
January 31, 2019	Proposals due
February 1-28, 2019	Proposals compiled and submitted to reviewers for desk review
March 1-15, 2019	Review Panel meets and recommends projects for approval and funding
March 18-29, 2019	VPR Office will finalize and approve funding decisions
April 5, 2019	Awards announcements emailed to lead PIs, Deans and ADRs of lead PI. It is the lead PI's responsibility to notify her/his Co-PIs and Co-Is.
April 15, 2019	PI completion of requirements for release of funding
May 1, 2019	Projects start
May 31, 2019	2018 CUSE Grant annual reports due
May 31, 2020	2018 and 2019 CUSE Grant annual or final report due, as appropriate
May 31, 2021	2019 CUSE Grant final report due