

University Research Council

February 15, 2022

4:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Approved

Present: Becki Battista, Elaine Berry, Megen Culpepper, Karen Fletcher, Soo Goh, Christine Hendren, Marie Hoepfl, Charna Howson, Alecia Jackson, Ann Kaplan, Ece Karatan, Gary McCullough, Deb Paxton, Abhi Ramalingam, Jenny Tonsing, Heather Waldroup, John Wiswell, Rebecca Witter

Excused: Adam Hege, Mina Min

Staff: Kate Hoffman

Absent: Andrew Caldwell, Christopher Holden, Twila Wingrove

- Ece Karatan calls the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m.

NEW BUSINESS

- There is no quorum at time of the vote for the approval of the minutes from the [January 18, 2022 meeting](#).

Information on URC grants - Karen Fletcher

Karen Fletcher asks the membership to review their panel assignments and shares her screen with the list. Please let Karen know if you are applying for a URC grant and need to be recused. A member of the STEM panel has difficulty understanding some of the proposals. Karen states that the proposals should be written to a general audience and be read from a generalist perspective. Others within the STEM panel may be able to explain the proposals. The method section is technical, but the other sections should be understandable. The proposal might be weak if its author is not able to convey the research concisely to a broad audience.

Is extending the review beyond the URC membership an option? Part of the URC's major duties is to review proposals. Does the URC as a whole need to be bigger? There are specific representatives in each college and it is difficult to cover every field in which a proposal is submitted. A proposal reviewer video by Katie Shoaf is shared with reviewers each semester. At the beginning of next year's URC meeting there will be a refresher of reviewing panels and reviews of proposals.

There is a final box for constructive criticism and positive feedback by panel members. Please utilize it. People do read these. Weigh the significance and conceptualization of the project. Is it logistically possible? Reach out to grs@appstate.edu for allowable budget questions. Department chairs are asked to acknowledge the proposals. If there is a “no” selected by the department chair, this needs to be discussed.

Thank you for all of your efforts to serve on the panels and review the proposals. Reviewers are anonymous to submitters. Notifications of awards and declinations are sent 3 to 4 days after the URC decision meeting. The award funding vote by the membership is a recommendation to the vice provost for research (VPR). It is the VPR’s decision to agree to the funding. When can we talk to submitters? Ask them if they have received communication about the decision. Karen advises the membership to wait until award announcements are completely public.

Working Groups Continued

[Group I: Grant Management Support](#) attendees: Becki Battista, Elaine Berry, Megen Culpepper, Karen Fletcher (facilitator), Soo Goh, Christine Hendren, Charna Howson, Deb Paxton, Abhi Ramalingam

[Group II: URC Grant](#) attendees: Adam Hege, Christopher Holden, Gary McCullough (facilitator), Jenny Tonsing, Heather Waldroup, John Wiswell

Report out from the URC grant structure working group - Gary McCullough

There is discussion of using external reviewers. It is not unheard of to pull in other people as additional reviewers in other competitions. More complete reviewer training is needed. An additional \$50,000 can provide funding tiers of the grants. One to three for \$15,000, then fund the rest at \$7,500 and \$3,000 levels. Usually everyone asks for \$5,000 and sometimes people are not spending the money. Is a \$7,500 level needed? Categories of funding separating early from late career could be added. Also, scholarly/creative activity could be separated from research.

URC applications are really short applications. Increase the application’s four pages at double spaced or convert it to single space? A member says that single space is harder to read. However, they are fine with expanding its length. Another member is conflicted between the application being concisely written and extending its length. Is a word limit instead of a page limit more useful? It is difficult to fit it into four pages double spaced. However, it is a way to get people to focus and be concise. How much of a problem is this?

Ece responds that reviewer training can be adjusted. We should look at numbers of applications for scholarly activity versus research projects, and for early and late career faculty in order to determine if these separate categories are needed. The funding of \$100,000 is facilities and administrative costs from previous year's external grant award expenditures. Let's discuss a tiered approach to see if the membership is interested.

Several members express that they are interested in a tiered approach. It is especially helpful for music submissions. It will encourage new people to apply and help them to gain confidence. It may spread the money out further and reduce monies not being spent. Will the labor expectation be reduced if the funding is in the \$3,000 range? Ece responds by saying let's rethink this and compile feedback into reviewable information.

[Group III: URC Daylighting](#) attendees: Marie Hoepfl, Ann Kaplan, Ece Karatan (facilitator), Twila Wingrove, Rebecca Witter

[Group IV: Communication](#) attendees: Adam Hege, Christopher Holden, Gary McCullough (facilitator), Jenny Tonsing, Heather Waldroup, John Wiswell

Announcements

Ece thanks John Wiswell for the additional publishing information regarding Open Access publishing at no cost. John states that beginning this year, the author is asked regarding open access when an original research or review article with the exception of a book review, gets accepted. There are 700 total available slots shared between the participating institutions.

Marie Hoepfl sent a call for nominations for faculty and graduate student research and thesis awards. It was posted on the [research list serve](#). Please nominate by February 23rd.

Karen Fletcher shares that the Chancellor and Provost Awards for Excellence in Research and Creative Activities [nomination portal](#) is open with a due date of March 9th. Please share that out.

Ece shares that there is an information session on intellectual property, technology transfer and entrepreneurship this Friday, February 18th at 12 pm in 387 John Thomas Hall.

Christine Hendren shares information about a [workshop](#) titled Climate Change and Health in Rural Mountain Environments: A Collaborative Workshop on April 8th from 10 am until 4 pm that is a result of Maggie Sugg's NSF career award with a panel of speakers. This is the first of a series of five.

Adjournment (Fletcher, Waldroup) at 5:29 pm.