



**Accelerating Research Translation
Seed Translational Research Projects
Call for Proposals**

George Mason University's **Office of Research, Innovation, and Economic Impact (ORIEI)** is inviting faculty to submit proposals for **Seed Translational Research Projects (STRP)**. These projects aim to turn research into real-world solutions that make a difference by applying and scaling research outcomes in practical ways. This can include:

- Developing tools, services, or programs that solve real problems;
- Partnering with high-impact organizations or businesses to co-design and/or implement solutions;
- Creating university programs that offer data, science-based services or training to communities, organizations, or individuals;
- Starting a business or nonprofit.

Both market-oriented (e.g., commercial products, social ventures) and non-market-oriented (e.g., community programs, high-impact partnerships) translation projects are welcome.

Funding for this program is provided through George Mason University's cooperative agreement with the National Science Foundation's Accelerating Research Translation (ART) program.

Who Can Apply?

Proposals may only be submitted by a George Mason University faculty member with one of the following appointments:

1. Tenured
2. Tenure-track
3. Full-time, fixed-term instructional, research, or clinical faculty

Submitting faculty are *strongly encouraged* to include students on their team.

To Apply:

Faculty interested in participating in the STRP must submit their application materials via email to Jessica Zelt (jzelt@gmu.edu) with the subject-line 'STRP Application' by **November 17, 2025**.

Proposal Priorities

High quality proposals that align with **George Mason's [Grand Challenge Initiative \(GCI\)](#) Solutions** will be given priority. However, proposals **must also align with the National Science Foundation's (NSF) [funding priorities](#) and [focus-areas](#)**.

Award Types

Faculty may apply for one of two types of awards: Type 1 Testing and Improving a Solution; or Type 2 Growing and Expanding the Impact of a Solution.

Type 1 STRP Awards: Testing and Improving a Solution

Type 1 awards are designed to help researchers take the first steps in turning their research outcomes into real-world solutions. These awards support work that helps researchers:

- Determine who will benefit from their solution (such as users, customers, or partners);
- Test and improve their solution with feedback from those users or partners;
- Develop a strategy to bring their solution into use on a larger scale.

Type 1 proposals must include a project description (up to 5 pages – 12-point font, single-spaced, 1-inch margins) that discusses:

1. **The problem.** What challenge are you aiming to solve? Why does it matter and to whom?
2. **The solution or innovation.** Describe the product, service, program, or other idea that you've developed from your research outcomes;
3. **Readiness.** How far along is the solution in its development? How were potential users of the solution involved in co-designing, testing, or improving the solution?
4. **Target users or beneficiaries.** How will target users, beneficiaries, or customers be identified? Discuss how they will be involved in defining value and refining the solution.

5. **Methods.** What methods will be used to evaluate and refine the solution or innovation? How will value and success be measured or demonstrated?
6. **Goals.** Provide clear goals for all of the proposed activities.
7. **Workplan.** Provide a detailed workplan and timeline with clear milestones and deliverables. **Work on type 1 awards must be completed within 12 months of the award start date.**

Type 2 STRP Awards: Growing and Expanding the Impact of the Solution

Type 2 awards are for researchers who are ready to grow and expand the impact of their solution or innovation. These awards support work that helps faculty:

- Assess the market and/or ecosystem for their solution;
- Identify and reduce translation risks through pilot or demonstration projects;
- Develop and validate a plan (e.g. a business or sustainability plan) to support increased implementation of the solution and continued impact;
- Develop partnerships essential to scale impact; and/or
- Secure additional funding to grow and sustain the venture or effort.

Type 2 proposals must include a project description (up to 5 pages – 12-point font, single-spaced, 1-inch margins) that discusses:

1. **The solution or innovation.** Describe the product, service, program, or idea you've developed from your research outcomes. What problem does it solve? What value does your solution or innovation provide and to whom? How is your solution better or different from what already exists?
2. **Readiness.** How ready is your solution for implementation? How have you determined a clear need exists for your solution? How have you tested the effectiveness of your solution? How have you engaged potential users or beneficiaries in co-designing, testing, and/or refining your solution?
4. **Growth plan.** Describe your strategy for expanding the reach and impact of your solution. What will scaled, sustained impact ultimately look like? What steps will you take to achieve this scaled impact? Discuss what resources and/or key partnerships will be needed to implement and/or scale your solution.
5. **Project Goals.** Provide clear goals for all the proposed activities and explain how the proposed activities will contribute to moving your growth plan forward?
6. **Methods.** Describe what specific activities will be completed with support from this award. How will success be demonstrated or measured?

- 7. Plan and timeline.** Provide a detailed workplan and timeline with clear milestones and deliverables. **All work on type 2 awards must be completed within 12 to 18 months of the award start date.**

Requirements for all Proposals (Type 1 and Type 2):

1. Budget and Budget Justification

- Proposals can request up to **\$25,000 for direct project expenses**.
- Use the Office of Sponsored Projects [budget tool](#) to prepare your budget and submit it as an Excel file.
- Include a 1-page explanation of how the money will be used.
- Submitting faculty are strongly encouraged to include students on their team.
- Funds may be used for faculty summer salary, within the limits allowed by NSF policy.

2. Biographical Statements

- Include a brief biological statement for all individuals named in the proposal (up to 200 words for each person).

Project Mentoring

Awarded teams will have the opportunity to work with a research impact mentor for up to 15 hours during the period of performance of their project. These mentors can provide advice, guidance, and feedback on the project's research translation activities.

Project Reporting Requirements

To ensure the ART team can meet the reporting and evaluative requirements of the NSF cooperative agreement, STRP awardees must:

- Meet with the ART PI on a quarterly basis throughout the project's period of performance to discuss project progress;
- Provide a brief interim report that provides summative information about the project's activities and accomplishments to date in October or November 2026 (for inclusion in the ART Team's annual report to the NSF) and a brief final report at the conclusion of the project that provides summative information about the activities, accomplishments, and outcomes of the project.
- Engage with the ART project's external evaluator and/or respond to additional requests for information from the ART PI as needed.

Review Criteria

For both types of proposals, reviewers will be asked to assess proposals using the following criteria:

Significance and Impact: Does the proposed innovation address a clearly defined problem or unmet need? What is the potential impact of proposed innovation on the targeted field, industry, or community? What is the growth potential of the proposed innovation to scale to a broader audience?

Feasibility and readiness: Are the proposed research translation activities to be undertaken with awarded funds clearly defined? How well will the proposed activities advance the innovation and project team toward achieving scaled impact? Is the proposed innovation sufficiently mature or at an appropriate readiness level for the proposed activities?