



ACCESS R-INITIATIVE

2026–2027 CALL FOR PROPOSALS

SUMMARY

ACCESS awards allow faculty credits to utilize Core Facilities and their services (*credits* encompass the rates, costs, and time associated with use of each facility's equipment. Credits do not represent actual funds and cannot be adjusted once the award has been issued. Credits cannot be applied toward expenses associated with the purchase of consumable goods, animal models, or animal housing per diem.). Deliverables include submission of a grant proposal to an external sponsor.

Clemson University's Core Facilities offer equipment and services to the university community, including cutting-edge technologies, high-end instrumentation, technical support, and education. Core Facilities levy user fees to recover costs associated with instrumentation use and service contracts. The facilities include:

- Clemson Light Imaging Facility (CLIF), <https://www.clemson.edu/centers-institutes/light-imaging/>
- Clemson Electron Microscope Facility (EMF), <https://www.clemson.edu/centers-institutes/cuadvancedmaterialscenter/electron-microscope/>
- Godley-Snell Research Center (GSRC), <https://www.clemson.edu/research/godley-snell.html>
- Aquatic Animal Research Laboratory (AARL), <https://www.clemson.edu/research/services/facilities.html>

Round 1 deadline: Wednesday, November 11, 2026 at 4:30 PM

Round 2 deadline: Wednesday, March 31, 2027 at 4:30 PM

Funding period: One year from the award date

Allowable Activities

- Generating preliminary data needed to obtain funding from federal agencies, foundations, corporate consortia, or other external sponsors
- Acquiring data in multiple facilities
- Acquiring data for **NEW** grant applications

R-Initiative Eligibility

Tenured or tenure-track faculty and research faculty are eligible to serve as PIs on proposals. Postdocs, staff, and emeritus, adjunct, or visiting faculty are not eligible to serve as PIs on proposals but may be included in research teams.

Past recipients of R-Initiative funding who did not comply with the terms of funding are ineligible.

BUDGETARY INFORMATION

Allowable Costs

Core Facility technical staff expenses

Unallowable Costs

Facilities and administrative (F&A) costs

Cost Share

This initiative provides free access to the Core Facilities but not cash funding for materials and supplies.

All materials (including, but not limited to, animal models) required for the completion of the proposed experimental procedures should be included as cost share in the budget. Fund 18, Fund 20, Fund 22, and Fund 25 funds cannot be used for sharing costs. The cost-share funds must be available during the project period.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

It is highly recommended that you discuss your proposal with the Core Facility Director prior to submitting your request.

PIs must submit their applications to the Clemson InfoReady Research Portal (<https://clemson.infoready4.com/>) by 4:30 p.m. on Wednesday, November 11, 2026.

PROPOSAL PREPARATION

InfoReady Intake Information

Enter the following information into the InfoReady text fields:

- Project title beginning with **CU-CIA: [Proposal Title]**
- Name, email, % credit allocation, and college/department/school affiliations of the PI
- Center affiliations, if applicable
- PI CUID
- Name and email address of departmental fiscal officer
- Total Division of Research (DoR) budget request amount
- Total cost share
- Total overall budget amount (DoR + cost share)
- Prior R-Initiative funding. If the PI has prior R-I funding awards, provide the year of funding and the initiative (e.g., 2020 CU Fellows)
- Anticipated deliverables
- Incentive account balance and obligations
- Start-up package information (for PIs within their first three years of employment at Clemson; if the PI does not have start-up funds, please state this)
 - Total amount
 - Duration
 - Current balance
 - Number of graduate assistantship(s)

- Travel funds
- Supplies
- Equipment
- Other/discretionary funds provided as part of the hiring agreement
- Current and pending support information
 - Project title
 - Funding agency
 - Project duration (mm/dd/yyyy–mm/dd/yyyy)
 - Total direct costs, total indirect costs, and total amount of the award
 - Role in project

Proposal Format and Components

Submit the proposal documents in InfoReady as PDFs. The project description should be formatted using 12-point Times New Roman font, one-inch margins, single line spacing, and 8½ x 11-inch paper size. The proposal includes the following components:

Project Description [4 pages]

- Identify the Core Facility/Facilities, pieces of equipment, and services to be utilized.
- Present the experimental methodology and specify who will carry out the work.
- Describe the research and training activities that will be possible upon utilization of the facility/facilities and services. Specify the number of students (graduate and undergraduate) who will be involved.
- Describe how Core Facility use will increase the competitiveness of a proposal to a targeted extramural funding opportunity. Provide the funding opportunity sponsor, title, number, and URL. Include the date for the planned submission. If the targeted external funding opportunity requires an internal or external pre-selection (e.g., pre-proposal competition by the funding agency, limited submission through Clemson) in order to submit a full proposal, include alternative funding opportunities the team will target should the initial proposal not be selected for full proposal submission.
- Describe the potential for the proposed work to generate significant impact aligned with Clemson's strategic priorities.
- Explain the need for ACCESS funding.
- References [not included in page limit]

Budget and Budget Justification

- Provide a budget using the internal budget form template. This budget will include cost share, if applicable. If cost share is included, provide a clear breakdown of the cost-share funds and sources. Specify each cost-share source/chart string.
- Provide a line-item budget justification for requested expenses using the budget justification template.

Documentation of Cost Share [No page limit]

Provide commitment emails or letters for the cost-share funds, if included.

Biosketch (Page limit determined by format)

Submit a biosketch for each PI, Co-PI, and senior personnel. Allowable formats include the R-Initiative Biosketch Template, NSF, or NIH.

Letters of Support (No page limit)

Only letters of support from external collaborators or consultants may be included.

REVIEW PROCESS AND CRITERIA

Proposals that do not comply with the solicitation guidelines will be returned without review.

A review committee of faculty peers and staff will evaluate compliant proposals based on the following criteria:

- Clear, concise experimental plan for the generation of preliminary data using the requested Core Facility/Facilities and services
- Probability of increased extramural funding resulting from the data generated through the use of the Core Facility/Facilities and services
- Lack of current funding necessary to use Core Facility/Facilities and services to generate preliminary data required for the proposed grant application(s)
- Potential for significant impact in keeping with Clemson's strategic priorities
- Submission of an external grant proposal
- Demonstrated need for ACCESS funding

Funding decisions will be announced within six weeks of proposal submission.

AWARD INFORMATION**Credit Initiation and Expiration**

After awards are made, the relevant Core Facility/Facilities will receive a summary of allowable credits from the Division of Research in the awardee's name to track all aspects of the award, including equipment usage hours, technical assistance, and/or training for the grant personnel.

The grant period is 12 months from the award date, and award credits must be used within that period. At the end of the grant period, all remaining credits will expire.

Research Compliance Requirements

All applications selected for an award must receive the required approvals from the Office of Research Compliance before the award can be activated.

Reviewer Requirement

Awardees will be called upon to serve as reviewers for future R-Initiative competitions.

No-Cost Extensions

No-cost extensions will not be considered.

DELIVERABLES AND FINAL REPORT

A final report must be submitted via the Clemson InfoReady Research Portal (<https://clemson.infoready4.com/>) within one year of the funding end date. The final report will be assigned to PIs via InfoReady two months prior to the end of the award period. A copy of all deliverables will be requested with the final report.

Teams who fail to submit final reports will be ineligible for future R-Initiative funding.

If the PI leaves Clemson during the award period, the team must request a change of PI before the PI's departure. In the event that the PI leaves Clemson during the reporting period, the reporting requirement will fall on the project team.

Should R-Initiative funding result in publication(s), PIs must acknowledge that the project was funded in part by Clemson University's R-Initiatives.

QUESTIONS

Applicants are highly encouraged to contact the appropriate Core Facility director(s) listed below for assistance in determining the instrumentation, training, technical assistance, materials, and budget required to complete their proposed projects.

Clemson Light Imaging Facility

Director – Dr. Terri F. Bruce; terri@clemson.edu; 656-1264

Clemson Electron Microscope Facility

Director – Dr. Laxmikant Saraf; lsaraf@clemson.edu; 656-7535

Godley-Snell Research Center

Associate Director – Heather Holliday, hmarti2@clemson.edu; 656-0908

Aquatic Animal Research Lab

Manager – Heather Holliday; hmarti2@clemson.edu; 656-0908

Other questions about this opportunity should be directed to rifunds@clemson.edu.