



CLEMSON UNIVERSITY EXTERNAL REVIEW INITIATIVE [CU EXTERNAL REVIEW] 2025–2026 CALL FOR PROPOSALS

SUMMARY

External reviewers provide valuable feedback that investigators can use to strengthen proposals prior to submission to funding agencies, increasing potential funding success. The **Clemson University External Review (CU External Review)** initiative provides funding for Clemson faculty to secure external peer reviews of grant proposals on which they are the Principal Investigators (PIs). PIs suggest external reviewers, and ORD staff coordinate the receipt of written peer reviews. The Division of Research (DoR) provides matching funds as honoraria for the reviewers. Submission of materials must adhere to the timeline outlined below. Deliverables must include a submitted proposal to an external funding agency.

Funding amount: \$300 per reviewer, split by a 1:1 (\$150:\$150) DoR/PI cost share
Deadline: Proposals accepted on a rolling basis
Funding period: Based on below timeline

ELIGIBILITY

Clemson University faculty and staff who are eligible to serve as PIs on grant proposals are eligible to participate in the External Review Initiative. A maximum of four reviews per PI in each FY funding cycle will be considered.

A maximum of two reviews will be provided for each proposal. Each review will be counted toward the maximum limit for the External Review Initiative funding cycle.

BUDGETARY INFORMATION

A total of \$300 will be provided to each reviewer as an honorarium, split evenly between the Division of Research and the investigator/department/school/college.

Cost Share

A 1:1 cash cost share is required. Matching funds must be allowable under federal and state guidelines. Unallowable matching funds are costs on another federal project or any other committed funds. Cost-share fund sources not allowable are Fund 18, Fund 20, Fund 22, and Fund 25. The cost-share funds must be available during the project period.

TIMELINE

External Review Initiative application due	At least 12 weeks before sponsor deadline
Full draft proposal to ORD	At least 8 weeks before sponsor deadline
Reviews delivered to PI	At least 4 weeks before sponsor deadline

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

InfoEd Routing

The Clemson University Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP) uses InfoEd to route and monitor faculty research funding requests. All proposal documents, including electronic signatures, must complete InfoEd routing. PIs must coordinate with their OSP Support Centers as they would normally do for an external submission. Only those proposals that have completed the InfoEd routing process and are marked as “R-Initiative Applied” by the deadline will be reviewed.

Please note that, for the submission of the final grant proposal to the sponsor, PIs should contact their college OSP Support Centers.

InfoReady Submission

The External Review Initiative is managed through the Clemson InfoReady Research Portal (<https://clemson.infoready4.com/>). Applications must be submitted through InfoReady.

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

PROPOSAL PREPARATION

InfoReady Intake Information

Enter the following information into the InfoReady text fields:

- Project title beginning with **CU External Review: [Proposal Title]**
- Name and college/department/school affiliations of the PI
- Center affiliations, if applicable
- 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) and the associated proposal processing number (PPN; found in InfoEd).
- Anticipated deliverables

Proposal

Upload the proposal in InfoReady as a single PDF using 12-point Times New Roman font, one-inch margins, single line spacing, and 8½ x 11-inch paper size. The PDF should include the following components:

A. Overview of Grant Proposal and Expected Benefits of External Review [1 page]

- Briefly describe the need, objectives/aims, approach/methods, and expected outcomes of the anticipated grant proposal.
- Include an estimate of the total budget for the grant proposal for which you are seeking external review.
- What concerns do you have about your grant proposal?

- What do you expect to gain from external peer review of your grant proposal?

B. Budget and Budget Justification

- Provide the internal budget prepared by your college's Sponsored Programs pre-award office. 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 expenditures. Specify each relevant cost-share source/chart string.

AWARD INFORMATION

Funding Initiation and Close-Out

An individual project account will be established by the Division of Research using the PI's department number. The account will be set up and managed in the college while the Division of Research will provide coordinating oversight. The PI will work with his/her department/school/college to transfer the cost-share funds (if applicable) to the individual project accounts at the beginning of the project. Funds will be available once cost-share funds (if applicable) are transferred.

Any residual funds at the end of the project will be returned to the original source (either those providing cost-share funds or the Division of Research.) In the event the PI leaves Clemson during the life of the project, unspent funds will be returned to the Division of Research, and the project will be closed.

Expenditure of Funds

Expenditure of R-Initiative award funds must follow state procurement guidelines. State money cannot be used for personal gain (i.e., books, recordings [CDs, DVDs, etc.]) by which the author receives ANY portion of funds directly.

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 relevant reviewers for future R-Initiative competitions.

Project Income Policy

All income received from sales is considered Clemson University revenue, unless assignment of rights to the faculty member is granted by the Senior Vice President for Research, Scholarship, and Creative Endeavors, and the Clemson University Research Foundation (CURF). Guidelines surrounding royalties can be found in the Clemson University Intellectual Property Policy and should be followed accordingly.

No-Cost Extensions

No-cost extensions will only be considered in extraordinary circumstances.



DELIVERABLES AND FINAL REPORT

A two-page final report must be submitted via the Clemson InfoReady Research Portal (<https://clemson.infoready4.com/>) within one month after grant proposal submission to the sponsor. The final report will be assigned to PIs via InfoReady prior to the end of the award period. The report should detail how participation in the External Review Initiative impacted the grant proposal and the proposal development process. A copy of the submitted grant proposal should be included with the report.

CONFIDENTIALITY DISCLAIMER

The scientific content of the grant proposal will be sent to the identified reviewers. The Division of Research cannot guarantee confidentiality of this information or non-disclosure by the reviewers. By participating in this initiative, the PI understands and accepts this risk.

QUESTIONS

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