Emerging Technologies (ET) Mini Grant Category: How to Apply

Emerging Technologies (ET) Mini-Grant Category funding is a separate category with a spring deadline. ET funded projects will develop and/or implement innovative tools and/or functionality for libraries’ customers, including proposals that support research discovery and scholarly collaboration. Applicants should avoid applying for projects which have already been implemented by several other academic libraries. Projects in a “post Library 2.0” world that use existing, evolving and/or mobile technologies in new ways, for practical application to library services, fit well in this category.

1. The ET Mini Grant Category is an annual library grant writing competition. It offers funding for creative and innovative programs and services that enhance and support the mission and goals of the Smathers Libraries. All proposal submissions will be reviewed and scored by members of the Grants Management Committee (GMC). Proposals endorsed by the GMC will be reviewed by the Dean of Libraries, who will ultimately determine if funding is approved. To create a strong proposal, applicants should closely follow the requirements stated here and should familiarize themselves with the “Judging Criteria” (below).

2. Rules of Eligibility: This competition is open to all library staff (except OPS). Please note: individuals, regardless of previous grant-writing experience, or those who have previously received a Mini Grant award as a principal investigator on a project are eligible to be the PI on future ET Mini Grant applications.

3. Collaboration on grant proposals is encouraged; however, one person must be designated as the principal investigator (PI) for the grant.

4. Awards will have a maximum dollar limit of $10,000.

5. The duration of the award period is a maximum of 12 months from date of award.

6. Use of library resources: Please follow instructions on the cover sheet and application form for use of library resources.

7. There is a 10% cost share requirement for the ET Category. Principal investigators on a project cannot use their own salaried time towards the 10% cost share match, to ensure proposals are collaborative.

8. There will be no indirect cost (overhead expenses) obligation.

9. Proposals with strong letters of support are more likely to be awarded than those without. Applicants are encouraged to ask other librarians, researchers, or teaching faculty to write in support of their proposed project.

10. As with all external proposals, applicants are required to work in partnership with the Library Grants Manager prior to preparing the application.

Allowable expenses:
Travel essential to project goals (not funded by other means)
Outside Professional Services provided by consultants or student employees
Equipment

Other information:
For proposed projects or services intended to continue beyond the 12-month grant period, applicants should explain in the narrative how the project will be sustained after grant funds are expended. Applicants may wish to frame their proposals as “seed grant” proposals—projects with a limited scope, worthwhile in themselves, that also have the potential to attract more funding or to develop into major projects.

In cases where applicants are requesting travel funds, they should first investigate whether these funds can be obtained as part of official library business or as part of the library’s development initiative. Grant budgets should include travel expenses only if the travel is an essential part of a project and can not be funded by other means.

Judging Criteria:
The judging panel will consist of the membership of the Grants Management Committee. Each proposal will be evaluated according to the same criteria:
1. The proposal’s support for library professional activities that enhance access to and academic use of information, or that support the instructional, research and public service endeavors of the libraries and the university; and, the degree to which the proposal justifies a specific need for the project.

2. The presentation and completeness of the proposal and how well the budget request matches with specific activities proposed (including costs for equipment, supplies, personnel, etc.).

3. The potential for long-term benefit to the library and university (including the potential to attract additional funding), such as: new directions of investigation, enhancement of services and activities, improved access to information, or professional development.

4. The degree to which the proposed project is innovative in terms of being the first or one of the first such projects in the country. Emphasis will be given to evidence which compares the proposed project to other similar projects at other academic libraries.

Approval Process:
Each proposal is reviewed by members of the Grants Management Committee (GMC) based on criteria listed above. Members will develop a list of questions for applicants to clarify within about a week of submission. The GMC Chair and Library Grants Manager will meet with applicants to review questions and obtain responses that will then inform GMC’s funding recommendations to the Dean of the Libraries, who makes the final determination of awards and declinations.