Q: Can I apply for support for any kind of scholarly activity?

A: Yes, but you must submit your request under one of the three categories of grant support:

**Opportunity Grants:** Intends to support research, scholarly and creative activities **with the potential to attract future external funding.** Submissions may propose investing in the success of an established program, as well as supporting new projects through funding for a pilot project, establishing or enhancing partnerships, or other activities that significantly advance the University’s scholarly enterprise.

**Facilitation Grants:** Intends to facilitate high quality research, scholarly and creative activities by faculty members working in areas where extramural support for such endeavors is extremely limited. Generally, these areas may include, but are not limited to, the visual and performing arts, the humanities, and multidisciplinary efforts in the social sciences that have humanistic content and employ humanistic methods.

**Completion Grants:** Intends to provide funding to faculty who require additional support to complete an active research, creative, or scholarly project of professional significance. There must be a discrete outcome or deliverable target in the application. Moreover, the identified goal must be achievable within the scope of the proposed budget and timeline. **Preference will be given to externally supported projects that demonstrate the need for additional funding to complete an identified deliverable.**

Q: If I am a tenured faculty member and I received and R&A grant last year (2014-2015), can I apply again this year?

A: No, tenured faculty who received an award in 2015 are not eligible for 2016 funds.

Q: If I am an untenured faculty member and I received an R&A award in 2015, can I apply again this year?

A: Yes, as long as you were not funded in 2013-2014 and 2014-2015. Untenured faculty can receive funding in two consecutive years.

Q: If I am an untenured faculty member, but I am submitting my paperwork for tenure this fall, am I still considered as a member of Group 1?

A: No, only applicants who may be awarded tenure only after fall 2016 will be considered in the Group 1, untenured applicant pool.
Q: If I already have summer support, or for other reasons do not wish to include salary funding in my budget, can I still ask for the full amount of available funding (i.e., $15,000 for Opportunity Grants and $10,000 for Facilitation and Completion Grants)?

A: Yes.

Q: If I am applying for a Facilitation Grant do I need to clarify whether my area of study provides extremely limited funding to support projects like mine?

A: Yes, to do so contact Dr. Jerry Blazey @ gblazey@niu.edu.

Q: If I am applying for a Facilitation Grant will I be penalized if I list the few small grants or awards that I have been able to pursue successfully?

A: No. Whereas you are not required to report any history of extramural funding, you will not be penalized for demonstrating success at obtaining funding from the limited sources available to your discipline.

Q: Can I include appendices or letters of support with my application?

A: No, proposals that include additional such materials will not be reviewed by the committee. However, attachments confirming the commitment of external collaborators are allowed.

Q: How do I get a list of previous grants I have submitted in the past three years?

A: Call Sponsored Programs Administration (753-1581) and request that this information be sent to you.

Q. Can I collaborate with colleagues on a proposal and also submit another as the PI?

A: You can be the lead PI on no more than one proposal and a key participant on no more than two proposals (regardless of category). Only one month of summer salary may be requested by an individual.

Q. Can you provide examples of how proposals should be classified in each of the three categories?

A: Below are a few examples that should be relevant to the scholarly work done in the College of Business. If any faculty members have questions about the potential for funding in their research area, they can request guidance from the Office of Sponsored Projects.

**Research & Artistry Opportunity Grants:** A marketing faculty member seeks funding to create a database relevant to a research questions about a particular industry cluster. Creation of the database represents one of the initial steps in a long range plan to establish a consortium where private partners pay to have access to raw and/or analyzed data. The formed partnerships and associated investment sustain the scholarly effort over time through the provision of resources and the generation of new research questions.

**Research & Artistry Facilitation Grants:** A faculty member plans to use qualitative research methods to study how workflows influence employee attitudes in hierarchical organizations.
Research & Artistry Completion Grants: A faculty member requests summer salary to allow him/her to complete a manuscript that is currently under revision. Completion, submission and publication of the manuscript are identified as intended deliverables in the application for funding.

Q. Will applicants receive feedback from the external reviews?
A. Yes, applicants will receive feedback.

Q. Does the new review process include departmental and college review?
A. No.

Q. What role will the Executive Council play in the review of proposals?
A. The Executive Council will be selected from among members of the faculty actively involved in research activities. The selection of Council members will reflect the disciplines represented among the submissions.

The Vice President for Research will select external reviewers based on the recommendations provided by the applicants and, where necessary, from their own knowledge of the field. Each proposal will be reviewed and scored by at least one external reviewer, as well as by relevant experts on the Executive Council. The Executive Council will review the reviewer feedback received for each submission. Award recipients will be selected on the basis of the reviewer scores, as well as these additional criteria: 1) The relevance of the project to the research, instruction and public service missions of NIU; 2) The potential scholarly outcomes of the project (i.e., new grant proposal, publications, artistic products, student engagement opportunities etc.); and 3) The track-record and future potential of the applicant. The external reviewer comments and a summary of the Executive Council evaluation will be shared with the applicants at the end of the process.

Q. The RFP say that we should “Provide the names, addresses, and e-mail addresses of three to five persons outside NIU who are not collaborators, and who would be qualified to serve as external reviewers for your proposal.” What exactly is meant by “not collaborators,” does this mean anybody I’ve ever collaborated with on anything? Does it include my thesis advisor and committee members? What if I can’t come up with 3 names? What if there are people in my field that I don’t want to have review my material?

A. The definition of a collaborator generally follows the model provided by the National Science Foundation: persons “who have been collaborators or co-authors with the individual on a project, book, article, report, abstract or paper during the 48 months preceding the submission of the proposal. Also include those individuals who are currently or have been co-editors of a journal, compendium, or conference proceedings during the 24 months preceding the submission of the proposal” (Grant Proposal Guide II-11 NSF 11-1). For recent graduates, collaborators would include an individual’s dissertation or thesis advisor, but not members of their committee. The intent is to have your work reviewed by individuals who are sufficiently knowledgeable in the field to be able to judge its merit.
If you are having trouble identifying three possible reviewers, check with your Chair for suggestions. If you cannot provide three names, please provide as many as you can. If there is a person or persons whom you would not like to review your proposal, please indicate that as well.

Q. What criteria should I use in selecting up to five external reviewers?

A. Think of external reviewers like faculty who serve on funding agency panels or journal editorial boards. You should select reviewers who are senior scholars in your field, individuals who will be knowledgeable in your area of research, and who are likely to provide you with valuable feedback. They should also be individuals who can judge your work fairly, therefore, as specified in the guidance, they should not be individuals with whom you are currently collaborating or with whom you have recently collaborated. Nor should they have served as your thesis advisor or otherwise be someone with whom you have a personal relationship.

Q. If I have concerns about sharing intellectual property in my proposal, what should I do?

A. There is language regarding confidentiality in the guidance, and reviewers are asked to keep materials provided to them confidential. If, however, you have additional concerns, please contact Dr. Jerry Blazey, Interim Vice President for Research and Innovation Partnerships at gblazey@niu.edu.