UWM ADVANCING RESEARCH AND CREATIVITY GRANT
CYCLE 7
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

DEADLINE: 5:00:00 PM CDT ON <mark>TUESDAY, MARCH 31, 2026</mark>

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Program Summary

The Advancing Research and Creativity (ARC) program supports research projects in all disciplines and at various stages of completion. Awards are expected to result in scholarly, scientific, or artistic outcomes. Subsequent external funding for the project is desirable, but not required. Work funded by the ARC award must be completed within 12 months.

ARC Cycle 7 Calendar

Online Application Open	Submission Deadline	Proposal Review	Award Announcement	Funds Available
By February 26	**Tuesday, March 31, 2026, by 5:00:00pm CDT** **Late applications will not be accepted**	Mid-April through May	Early June 2026	July 2026

Application Changes for Cycle 7

Composing the Narrative and the Review Process

Applicants must write with non-experts in mind.

Due to the compressed timeline for cycle 7 awards, an internal review process will be used. In general, it will not be possible to match proposals with content experts. We will match within general fields (e.g. physical science proposals will be sent to internal reviewers in the physical sciences, proposals involving human subjects will be sent to reviewers who conduct research involving human subjects, etc.).

Review Criteria

The review criteria and scoring have been revised (see p. 10)

Fewer Application Components

To simplify the application, the following components are no longer required:

- Current and Pending Support – This information will be collected when someone is on the short list for funding.
- Justification for Internal Award – This information will be collected when someone is on the short list for funding. It is also implied by the purpose and eligibility requirements for the DIG program.
- Comparison with Other Projects (was part of the Project Narrative) – This information will be collected when someone is on the short list for funding.

Program Overview

1. **Award Maximum**
   - $20,000 (excludes fringe benefit costs)

2. **Eligible Applicants**
   - Have a tenure-track or tenured faculty appointment or an academic staff appointment of at least 50% and the expectation of continuation/renewal for at least three years.
   - Have Principal Investigator (PI) status.
   - Do not have primary budget authority (i.e., chancellor, vice chancellors, deans).
   - Are not a PI on a UWM Advancing Research and Creativity (ARC) award that began July 2023 or 2024 or September 2025. Additionally, any open ARC awards must be closed before a new award will be issued.
   - Are not a PI or Co-PI on an active/open UWM Discovery and Innovation Grant (DIG) award.
   - Have satisfied the terms and conditions of previous internal awards, including submission of final reports.
   - Have less than $50,000 in uncommitted start-up funding.

3. **Limit on Number of Proposal Submissions**
   Principal Investigators may submit **only one proposal** to the Advancing Research and Creativity (ARC) program <u>or</u> to the Discovery and Innovation Grant (DIG) program (not both) in a given cycle. PIs may serve as a Co-PI on other proposals to these programs, as long as there is no overlap in the proposal topic/content and they meet the eligibility rules in Item 2 above.

4. **Limit on Proposal Resubmission**
   Proposals may be resubmitted twice (i.e., three total submissions of same proposal/topic).

5. **Limit on the Number of Awards Per Person**
   Within the same award cycle, applicants may receive two internal awards between the ARC and DIG programs, but must be Co-PI on at least one of the two:
   > 1 internal award as PI + 1 internal award as Co-PI
   > OR
   > 0 internal awards as PI + 2 internal awards as Co-PI

   Once an application is submitted, a person's role on a project cannot be changed.

6. **Minimum time commitment**
   UWM PIs and Co-PIs are expected to contribute at least 10% of their overall time to the project.

7. **Ineligible Projects**
   - Curriculum development projects, including textbook development
   - Public Service or Instruction projects

8. **Eligible Project Expenses**
   - **UWM PI/Co-PI:** Up to $10,000 in summer salary may be requested if a portion of the work will take place outside of the academic year
   - **Academic Staff or University Staff**: Partial salary support may be requested for staff needed for the project and not 100% on GPR funding.

- **Students:** Students (graduate or undergraduate) may be hired on hourly appointments. A one-semester Research Assistant appointment is also available. It is highly recommended that you already have students in mind when including an RA request in your budget.
- **Non-UWM Personnel:** The combined costs of external Co-PIs and consultants are limited to 50% of the budget. We do not issue subawards for this program. Consult your Divisional Finance Officer for the best payment option for external personnel included in the budget.
- **Other Expenses:** Examples include materials and supplies, travel to conduct research, user fees, purchase of services

9. **RAMP Record**

   A RAMP record is NOT required. A list of proposals within their respective units will be sent to deans and chairs for their approval.

11. **Funding Decisions**

   All funding decisions are final; appeals are not allowed.

12. **Progress Reports**

   Progress reports on outcomes of the funding are required for up to three years post-award

Secure Online Application System

ARC applications must be prepared and submitted in the online application system. The application sections in the system may be completed in any order, but all sections need to be marked "Complete" before you will be able to submit the application. The PI must complete the application; completion by proxy is not allowed and will invalidate the application. To assist the PI, support staff may familiarize themselves with the online system by creating their own sample application.

- [ARC cycle 7 online application](#)

It is HIGHLY recommended that you log into the online submission system and familiarize yourself with the application tasks and forms at least one week before the submission deadline.

Required Application Sections

In addition to the project narrative, there are other application components that need to be completed. You should allow a few hours for collecting the information needed. You should also allow at least an hour for uploading and entering information in the online app.

The following chart summarizes the application sections and the process for developing the sections in the online submission portal. All sections are required unless otherwise noted. Detailed instructions for each section are provided in the "Application Instructions" section below.

Application Section/Task	How to complete
Terms and Conditions	You must review and accept the application terms and conditions before the rest of the sections will be displayed.
Number of Co-PIs	The first task also asks about Co-PIs on the project. An affirmative answer on Co-PIs will allow relevant application sections to be displayed later.
Cover Page	Enter text in online application.
Project Summary	Upload as PDF file.
Project Narrative	Upload as PDF file.

Budget	
A. Budget Planning Template	A. You MUST use the provided template. Download template, save, complete and upload.
B. Budget Justification	B. Enter text in online application.
PI biosketch	Upload as PDF file.
Co-PI biosketch(es) *Multi-investigator applications only*.	Upload as PDF files.
Supporting Documents (*Optional*)	Upload documents.
Do not contact list (*Optional*)	Enter text in online application portal.

Application Instructions

Initial Task

A. Application Terms and Conditions

You must agree to the following to continue with the application process

I acknowledge and understand that my proposal will not be reviewed

- If it is submitted after the stated deadline.
- If it does not meet all requirements stated in the program guidelines, including proposal development (formatting) and the use of current forms and templates.

I acknowledge and understand that

- I am responsible for the accuracy and completeness of the application and all its components.
- I meet the eligibility criteria.
- Application sections that exceed the stated word or page limits will be truncated at the limit. Reviewers will only see the truncated version.
- Once submitted, the application is final and I cannot make any changes, nor request that any changes be made on my behalf.
- Funding decisions are final and cannot be appealed.

B. Co-PIs

Answer the question about Co-PIs on the project. If you answer either "YES - UWM ONLY - I will have only UWM Co-PIs" or "YES – EXTERNAL ONLY – I will have only External Co-PIs", you must also enter the number of Co-PIs you will have (maximum of two).

If you initially answer "No, I will not have any Co-PIs" and later change your mind (before submission), you must edit the answer to this question. A positive response to the question is required to display other relevant fields later in the application.

1. **Cover Page (Enter the following information into the online application portal)**
   - **Project Title**
   - **Principal Investigator:** Name, UWM email address, school/college, department, position title (e.g., Associate Professor, Scientist I)

- **UWM Co-PIs (if applicable):** Name, UWM email address, school/college, and department of UWM Co-PIs. (To see the Co-PI fields, you must answer "yes" to the Co-PI question in the initial task.) NOTE: There is a limit of two Co-PIs <u>total</u> between UWM and Non-UWM personnel.

- **Non-UWM (External) Co-PIs (if applicable):** Name, email address, and institution/organization name of eternal Co-PIs. (To see the Co-PI fields, you must answer "yes" to the Co-PI question in the initial task.) NOTE: There is a limit of two Co-PIs <u>total</u> between UWM and Non-UWM personnel.

- **Keywords/Search terms**: Enter at least three and up to six words or phrases not included in the project title that can be used to search for similar types of projects or for people who have appropriate review expertise. Including the name of your subdiscipline and the type of methodology (if applicable) used in the project would be helpful, e.g., "gravitation" (vs. "physics"); "sedimentology" (vs. "geosciences"); methods: quantitative, qualitative, ethnographic, etc.).

  After you enter the first three keywords or phrases, an additional blank field will appear (up to six).

- **Project Budget Total:** Enter Total Direct Costs from the completed ARC budget planning template.

- **Sabbatical**: Indicate whether you will be requesting sabbatical leave during the funding period.

- **Resubmission:** Indicate whether you have submitted this proposal before to the DIG or ARC programs (under this or another title), and, if so, in what year(s).

2. Project Summary - 1 page maximum; upload as a PDF file; must include these sections, using these required headings:

1. Overview/Abstract.
2. Project Significance.
3. Impact of Project Results on the Field.

3. Project Narrative - *Upload as a PDF file*

For cycle 7, the narrative should not assume knowledge of disciplinary-specific vocabulary or methods. Although some reviewers may represent applicants' fields, the composition of the overall review panel will not have the breadth of expertise to be conversant with the content of specific subfields. **Applicants should write with non-experts in mind.**

The Project Narrative consists of seven components. With the exception of Section 7, start each component on a new page:

Required Components	Maximum Page Limit
1. Project Description	7 pages maximum
2. References Cited	No page limit; as needed in support of project description
3. Project Personnel Roles and Responsibilities	1 page maximum
4. Facilities and Physical or Intellectual Resources Needed	1 page maximum
5. Project Timeline	1 page maximum
6. Project Results (other than grants and publications)	Section 6 & 7 – maximum of 1 page combined
7. Dissemination Plan	Section 6 & 7 – maximum of 1 page combined

PROJECT NARRATIVE FORMAT REQUIREMENTS

- The Project Narrative must be single-spaced, and all margins (top, bottom, sides) must be at least one inch.
- Pages must be numbered continuously throughout the Project Narrative.
- Each section must begin on a new page, except for Sections 6 and 7, which combined will be one page.
- Allowable fonts are Arial, Georgia, Helvetica, Palatino Linotype, Times New Roman, Computer Modern; minimum font size is 11 points.
- The Project Narrative must be self-contained. Inclusion of URLs are not allowed.
- Figures, tables, graphs, and diagrams may be included and are subject to the page limit. Smaller text in figures, graphs, and diagrams is acceptable as long as it is legible when the page is viewed onscreen at 100%.

PROJECT NARRATIVE COMPONENTS

3.1 Project Description – 7 pages maximum; any additional pages will be deleted. Use the headings given below in the following order:

3.1.1. Project title

Begin the narrative with your project title.

3.1.2. Research Question and Objectives

Explain the ideas, problems, or questions to be explored, hypotheses to be tested, and/or creative product to be developed; include specific aims and objectives as appropriate. Be sufficiently ambitious, but realistic about what you can accomplish with the available resources during project period.

3.1.3. Background and Significance of Topic

Provide relevant background information, including gaps in knowledge that support the need for the proposed project, and theoretical framework as applicable.

3.1.4. Significance and Innovation of Project

Describe the significance and innovative features of the proposed project. How will it complement, challenge, or expand relevant works, studies, or theories in the field? How will it contribute to a program of research beyond the ARC support period? How will results or products be used and by whom? Describe the extent to which outcomes are anticipated to improve the state-of-the-art in your field.

3.1.5. Approach

Describe the activities of the proposed work and explain how/why the proposed approach is feasible and optimal to address the research question(s) and/or specific aims. Include a description of the metrics you will use to determine project success. Content should be appropriate to the standards of your field. Examples include:

- Methods to be used in carrying out the proposed project; as applicable, specify qualitative, quantitative, historical, critical, mixed methods, etc.
- Process for data collection.
- Sample sizes with substantiation (e.g., power analysis).
- Survey design and summary of content.
- Limitations of proposed procedures and considerations of alternative methods.
- Means/metrics by which results will be analyzed, assessed, or interpreted.
- Chapter outlines.
- Definition of concepts.

- A short description of any preliminary work already performed.

3.2 References Cited - *Start a new page; no page limit*
Include as needed in support of the Project Narrative.

3.3 Project Personnel Roles and Responsibilities – *Start a new page; 1 page maximum*
Describe the contribution, roles, and responsibilities of all project personnel, including graduate and undergraduate students and post-docs.

3.4 Facilities and Physical or Intellectual Resources Needed – *Start a new page; 1 page maximum*
Describe any <u>specialized</u> equipment or software or other resources necessary to complete this project (e.g., archives, collections, sites, institutions) and how you have, or will obtain, access to them.

3.5 Project Timeline – *Start a new page; 1 page maximum*
Provide a timeline for the major steps toward completion (tabular or bulleted format preferred). If other portions of project have been or will be completed outside of the ARC funding period, clarify the part(s) of the project that will be supported by the award.

3.6 Project results other than publications and grants – *Start a new page; 3.6 and 3.7 – maximum of 1 page combined*
Describe any anticipated outcomes or products of the project other than publications and grants. Examples include:

- Artistic works
- Data sets
- Evaluation/Assessment tools
- Licenses
- Patents
- Prototypes
- Spin-off companies

3.7 Dissemination Plan *3.6 and 3.7 – maximum of 1 page combined*
Describe how the project outcomes will be communicated to academic or non-academic audiences. Examples include:

- Books/book chapters
- Journal articles (name *anticipated* journals for article submission)
- Presentations (name specific venue/event)
- Social media
- Websites
- Other means of sharing results (e.g., with project participants or user groups)

4. ARC Budget

4.A. Budget Planning Template (Download the template provided in the application, save to your computer; open in Excel, complete and save the form, upload)

- You MUST use the template provided through the application site, as it is customized for the current year of the ARC program.

- Detailed instructions are on the second worksheet of the template.

- Save the file in the .xlsx format.

4.A.1 Eligible Expenses

- UWM Personnel
    - o UWM PI/Co-PIs may request up to $10,000 in summer salary if a portion of the work will take place outside of the academic year. Universities of Wisconsin policy regarding summer payments applies.
    - o University Staff or Academic Staff (pays a portion of an existing employee's time if they are less than 100% on GPR funds) or LTEs.
    - o One-semester Research Assistant. It is highly recommended that you already have a student in mind when including an RA request in your budget.
    - o Student hourly help (enter hours per week, number of weeks, and hourly rate for each student).

- External Co-PIs

    Enter total amount (if any) for services of external Co-PIs. The combined line items for external Co-PIs and consultants cannot exceed 50% of the total budget. We do not issue subawards for internal programs. If an ARC award is received, consult your Divisional Finance Officer for the best payment option for external personnel included in the budget.

- Materials and supplies. Most supplies should be purchased within the first three months of the project start date.

- Non-capitalized equipment (items that cost less than $5,000 per unit or system).

Note that:
o Equipment purchased with the award must be used solely for the project for the life of the award. After the project ends, the equipment may be made available to others.
o Equipment should be purchased within three months of the project start date.
o All equipment purchased with university funds is property of UWM.

- Purchase of services needed for the project (e.g., lab or other user fees, interpretive or translation services, survey design)

- Consultants (The line items for external Co-PIs and consultants combined cannot exceed 50% of direct costs.) If an ARC award is received, consult your Divisional Finance Officer for the best payment option for external personnel included in the budget.

- Travel to conduct the project (travel to lab, archive, field collection site, etc.).

- Other (miscellaneous expenses not covered in categories above, exclusive of conference travel and journal fees).

4.A.2 Ineligible Expenses

Direct salary payments to non-UWM employees, except for other UW System personnel.

4.B. Budget Justification (Enter in application, 1200-word limit. Save a copy to upload to the WISPER record)

4.B.1 Provide description of and rationale for <u>each</u> item requested in your budget.

4.B.2 <u>Specific details</u> are required for certain items as follows:

4.B.2.1 Supplies and Equipment

Specify for which tasks the requested supplies or equipment will be used.

4.B.2.2 Electronic Equipment (e.g., computers, iPads, tablets, cell phones, etc.)

Describe how the equipment will be used and why the project cannot be completed without this equipment.

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5. PI Biosketch *(Upload to application as PDF file)*

You may format that is typical for your discipline; however, each biosketch must include professional preparation (undergraduate, graduate, and any post-doctoral degrees), all appointments since your terminal degree, and publications that are representative of your research.

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6. Co-PI Biosketch(es) *(Multi-investigator applications only; upload to application as PDF file(s),)*

Same instructions as Item 5, above. This field will not display unless you have answered **Yes** to the Co-PI question in the initial task of the application.

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7. Supporting Documents *(Optional, upload to application as PDF files)*

Supporting documentation for the application may be uploaded but should not be used to bypass the stated page limits. General letters of support from colleagues or potential business partners are not allowed and will be deleted by the ARC Program Officer.

Examples of acceptable documents include:

- Letters from collaborators documenting their tangible contribution to the project (e.g., data, access to space or equipment, access to patient populations).
- Letters confirming access to facilities/sites/equipment during the period indicated in the application. A published statement indicating the respective laboratory or collection will be accessible to researchers during the period requested (e.g., from a webpage) is acceptable.
- Vendor quotes.
- Letters of interest or invitation from publishers or exhibit or production sponsors.
- Publishing or other contracts.

Examples of **unacceptable** documents include:

- Copies of articles.
- Copies of surveys/assessment tools/questionnaires. Provide a brief description of key survey items in the narrative instead.
- Description of all facilities/equipment available to you. Summarize equipment and facilities required for the project in one page as part of the project narrative instead; see Section 3.4 above.
- Support letters for other grants.

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8. Do Not Contact List *(Optional; Enter in application)*

The Office of Research may have to go "off list" to find a sufficient number of reviewers. You may list names of individuals at UWM whom you do NOT want us to use as reviewers.

Application Submission Process

Submission Deadline: Tuesday, March 31, 2026, by 5:00:00pm CDT

Late applications and incomplete applications will not be accepted. Application sections that exceed the specified page or word limits will be truncated at the stated limit and reviewers will receive the truncated version.

It is HIGHLY recommended that you log into the online submission system and familiarize yourself with the application tasks and forms at least one week before the submission deadline.

In addition to the project narrative, there are other application components that need to be completed. You should allow at least an hour for uploading and entering information in the online app.

To submit your proposal:

1. **In the online application system**, when all required tasks are complete, you will see options to review or submit. Please choose "review" and check your application for completeness, accuracy, and compliance with format requirements. Make any needed corrections, then submit.
   - You can change any component of the application until it is submitted.
   - To make changes at the applicant review stage, you must return to the application by clicking the **Back to Application** arrow in the upper-left portion of the screen, and then edit the relevant tasks.
   - When finished, click **Submit Your Application**. **Once submitted, no changes are allowed, even if it is before the deadline.**

   You will receive an e-mail confirming the submission.

   A RAMP record is NOT required for the ARC program.

ARC Review Process

The ARC program employs a four-stage review and selection process.

Stage 1: Administrative Review
Applications will be screened for completion and compliance with formatting requirements. Late, incomplete and/or non-compliant applications will not be accepted.

Stage 2: Merit Review
All applications are externally reviewed for scientific/scholarly merit according to the following criteria:

Criterion	Expectations
Importance of the Research (Significance and Innovation)	• The project is placed within the context of broader themes or issues in relevant fields • Questions/issues/ideas to be explored are clearly defined • The project works to address an important problem or barrier to progress in the field • A convincing argument for conducting the project has been made • The proposed work applies novel concepts, methods or technologies or uses existing concepts, methods, technologies in novel ways, to enhance the overall impact of the project or improve the state-of-the-art
Feasibility and Rigor	• The aims, research plan, and anticipated outcomes of the project are clear. • The concepts, design, methods, and analyses are adequately developed and described, well-integrated, and appropriate to the aims of the project. • The research design choices are explained/justified. • The approach is feasible and will be effective in achieving the stated outcomes.

Criterion	Expectations
	• The timeline is feasible. • Potential problems, alternative strategies, and benchmarks for success are included. • The investigators have access to resources required for successful completion. • Roles of all personnel are clearly identified.
Dissemination of results	• Plan for disseminating results is appropriate and includes communication avenues for non-specialists

A single 1-9 score will be given by each reviewer based on how well the proposal fulfills the listed expectations overall. Scores from assigned reviewers will be averaged in determining the final score.

Rating Scale:

9: Excellent	Very Strong with few or no minor (easily addressed) weaknesses; reserved for proposals of the highest quality
8	
7: Very Good	Strong, with several, minor weaknesses
6	
5: Good	Strong, with moderate weakness
4	
3: Fair	Some strengths, with at least one major weakness
2	
1: Poor	Very few strengths and several major weaknesses

Stage 3: Meetings with potential awardees

The ARC program director will meet with all potential awardees to assess current commitments and readiness for beginning the project, discuss the award budget and other potential funding sources for the project (including start-up funds), and request additional information if needed.

Stage 4: Award Decision

Funding decisions are made by Office of Research leadership based on final ratings, review comments, meetings with the potential awardees, and performance on meeting the deliverables of previous internal awards. Additional considerations:

- Proposed projects that significantly overlap any of the PI's externally supported projects will not be funded.
- Awards will not be given to applicants who are on notice of non-retention or who have accepted offers at other institutions.
- In deciding among proposals with equivalent ratings near the funding cutoff, consideration will be given to a balanced award portfolio across disciplines.
- Budgets may be adjusted by the Office of Research.

Terms and Conditions of ARC Awards

The PI agrees to

1. Execute the project in compliance with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations and institutional policies, including but not limited to those concerning:
   - Rules and regulations governing research involving human subjects under the federal Common Rule (45 CFR 46) and U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations (21 CFR 50, 56, 312, 600, and 812)
   - Animal care and use
   - The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA)
   - Use of toxic, infectious, or carcinogenic/mutagenic materials, recombinant DNA, radioactive materials
   - Environmental impacts
   - Scuba diving
   - Travel
   - Purchasing
   - Hiring

2. Contribute at least 10% time to the project. (Also applies to UWM Co-PIs)

3. Complete Outside Activities Reporting and all mandatory training (e.g., Information Security Awareness, Responsible Conduct of Research) by the deadline date(s).

4. Acknowledge the "UWM Advancing Research and Creativity grant" in all publications resulting from the award.

5. Use any electronic equipment purchased with ARC funds solely for the funded project for the duration of the award.

6. Follow Universities of Wisconsin policy with regard to of all intellectual property conceived or reduced to practice as a result of an ARC award (applies to all project personnel).

7. Notify Research Development Services (or-osp-propdev@uwm.edu) of impending departure from the university during the performance period. (The Office of Research reserves the right to determine the disposition of any remaining project funds.)

8. Prepare a brief report for the Office of Research that describes the project activities during the award period, and outcomes attributable to the funding.

9. Retain the research records for three years beyond the conclusion of the project. ("Records" include the raw data, as well as any tables or schedules derived from the data; any video, or audio recording tape; any project-related source documents; and any reports or publications resulting from the project.).

10. Upon invitation, serve as an internal reviewer for award or professional development programs or as a presenter for workshops or training programs in the future.

Contact Us

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