



Frequently Asked Questions – Faculty Research Awards

Who is eligible to apply?

Proposals may originate from any discipline, art, science, or administrative unit of the University of Chicago, provided humanistic knowledge and modes of inquiry are central to the pursuit, and provided at least one member of the University of Chicago faculty is engaged as a research leader. Current members of the Neubauer Collegium Advisory Board are ineligible to apply.

What is meant by “humanistic”?

Proposals to the Neubauer Collegium need not be exclusively humanistic – on the contrary, collaborations involving multiple methodologies, the exploration of differences between methodologies, or even challenges to definitions of “humanistic,” are all welcome and encouraged – but engagement with humanistic modes of inquiry must constitute a key part of the project’s pursuits. There is no single definition for the word “humanistic,” which has a long history and is itself an important topic for the Collegium’s inquiries. At an institutional level it might simply mean including practitioners from disciplines understood as “humanistic” within currently accepted classifications of Social Sciences and Humanities departments and faculties. At a methodological level, it might mean paying attention to forms of thought or representation traditionally central to many of those disciplines (such as, to pick just one example, narrative). At a metaphysical level, it might mean treating the inquirer as part of the question, and regarding the objects of knowledge as products of our human condition. But of course, a given proposal or project can suggest that, for the purposes of the questions it would like to ask, “humanistic” should be understood in a different sense, in which case that project’s argument to that effect may itself constitute its humanistic element.

Are projects required to be interdisciplinary?

Projects must be collaborative in nature, and should preferably engage faculty, knowledge, or methodologies from multiple disciplines.

How shall I decide whether to apply for a large-scale project or a seed project?

Proposals for large-scale project support are expected to present a clearly established research agenda and a well-developed plan for implementation. Seed support is intended for projects that are less developed, including (but not limited to) strengthening emerging or prospective collaborations, planning for the development of a large-scale project, applying and testing experimental methods, or exploring innovative uses of technology.

How will proposals be evaluated?

The Faculty Advisory Board of the Neubauer Collegium will evaluate proposals based on the following criteria:

- The originality and intellectual significance of the proposed research and the relevance of the collaborative approach in addressing the central research question(s)
- Whether the project advances one or more of the Neubauer Collegium’s goals: to encourage exploratory research of complex problems beyond the scope of individual scholars or disciplines; to realize the contributions humanistic research can make to vital questions; to catalyze the emergence of new approaches; and to cultivate a culture of

collaborative research

- The design and feasibility of project activities and the probability that they will lead to successful realization of the project's intellectual goals
- The reasonableness of costs in relation to anticipated results
- Whether support from the Neubauer Collegium will make a clear and distinct impact on the project

Proposals for Visiting Fellows will be evaluated on the likelihood that the visitor will strengthen or catalyze a collaborative research community on campus.

What results do the Neubauer Collegium expect from collaborative faculty research projects?

While there is no particular result or set of results the Neubauer Collegium expects from faculty research projects, every proposal should articulate the anticipated outcomes and impacts that will likely result from the proposed project activities. Outcomes can be as varied as the realization of a conference or faculty working group series; the consolidation of an emerging cross-disciplinary research group and the development of a plan for future collaborations; the development and publication of new research, datasets, or digital tools; the development and promotion of a new theory or an innovative methodological approach that is adopted in the field; testing and/or demonstration of emerging research in order to attract major support; or establishment of a new center, lab, or institute. Results should be clearly related to the project activities and reasonable in relation to the project costs.

What costs should my proposal budget include?

The budget is an opportunity to present the costs necessary to carry out the described research activities. A budget should include an itemized estimate of costs; multi-year projects should include an itemized cost estimate for each year of the project activities. A brief budget narrative may be included to describe how estimates were calculated. All budgeted costs should be necessary in order to accomplish project objectives and reasonable in relation to the anticipated outcomes. When preparing the budget, only include direct costs of project activities; do not include staff administrative support costs as part of your project budget. The Neubauer Collegium does not offer honoraria for faculty. We will consider line items for honoraria for non-faculty research partners on a case-by-case basis. Please include a description of the purpose for honoraria in your budget narrative. You can find the Neubauer Collegium Application Guidelines on our [website](#) for complete details regarding the proposal budget.

May Neubauer Collegium projects also receive support from other sources?

The Neubauer Collegium supports collaborative forms of inquiry otherwise difficult to achieve within existing models of support for humanistic and social scientific research. Projects with a history of financial support from other sources are welcome to apply to the Neubauer Collegium, and new projects are welcome to apply concurrently to the Neubauer Collegium and other sources of support. In such cases, the Neubauer Collegium expects that its support will have a clear and distinct impact on the project, for example exploring new research directions, expanding a research team to include new partners, making new data or research findings accessible to broader scholarly communities, or bringing faculty visitors for sustained collaboration.

Can postdoctoral researchers be supported jointly by Neubauer Collegium and other funds?

Projects supported by the Neubauer Collegium often benefit from the assistance of a postdoctoral researcher or other professional (non-student) research assistance. Because the Neubauer Collegium's ability to fully fund postdoctoral researchers is very limited, projects interested in hiring full-time research assistance are encouraged to explore other potential sources of support (intramural and extramural) to augment financial support from the Neubauer Collegium.

Are project activities that occur outside of the main University of Chicago campus eligible for support?

Public programming activities, such as lectures and conferences, that will occur outside of the main University of Chicago campus in Hyde Park are expected to find substantial support for those activities from another source (for example, from the Beijing Center, Paris Center, etc.).

Can project activities include teaching and other instructional activities?

The Neubauer Collegium does not provide financial or administrative support for teaching or other instructional activities.

How will Visiting Fellows be appointed?

The Neubauer Collegium will process and serve as the home department for academic appointments for Visiting Fellows. In cases where the visiting Visiting Fellow will have teaching responsibilities, the fellow will hold a secondary appointment in the relevant academic department.

May students be supported on a project?

Project budgets may include support for student research assistants to support and extend research activities directed and carried out by faculty. Student assistants may also be hired to support project coordination; projects with large faculty teams, major conferences, and groups of Visiting Fellows have often found it helpful to hire a student assistant to help coordinate logistical details.

Can an individual faculty member participate in multiple projects at the same time? There is no limit to the number of projects an individual faculty member may participate in at any given time.

Can faculty members who previously received support from the Neubauer Collegium apply again?

There is no limit to the number of times an individual faculty member may apply to the Neubauer Collegium for project support.

Are projects that previously received seed level support eligible to apply for large-scale support?

We welcome, indeed expect, applications for large-scale projects from applicants who have previously been awarded seed project support from the Neubauer Collegium. However, prior receipt of seed support from the Neubauer Collegium does not guarantee large-scale support.