UNIVERSITY OF MEMPHIS
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Research Initiative Supporting Excellence in early careeR development.

(RISER)

Call for Proposals

Announcement Release Date: November 18, 2024

Application Receipt Date: December 16, 2024

Award Announcement Date: December 30, 2024

The RISER Award, funded by the Dean's Office in the School of Public Health, supports early-career faculty in launching innovative research projects. The goal is to foster scholarly productivity, including at least one publication and extramural funding proposal submission, within two years. This competitive program provides up to $7,500 in seed funding, empowering faculty to advance impactful research initiatives.

Purpose: RISER funding aims to support early-career faculty in developing innovative research projects. The goal is to enable faculty to pursue scholarly publications and secure extramural research funding opportunities.

Eligibility: Applicants must be tenure-track or research-track faculty members at the rank of Assistant Professor in the School of Public Health at the University of Memphis.

Expected outcome: Within two years of receiving this pilot seed funding, recipients are expected to submit proposals for extramural research funding and produce at least one scholarly publication.

Faculty who received the RISER Award in the past two years are ineligible to apply. Each faculty member may submit one proposal as the Principal Investigator (PI) but may participate as a Co-Investigator (Co-I) on multiple proposals, with each proposal having only one PI.

Unfunded proposals from the previous cycle may be revised and resubmitted with a one-page introduction addressing reviewers' comments and previous reviews attached. Revised proposals must clearly highlight changes made. Only one resubmission is allowed. Alternatively, faculty may submit a new proposal on a similar theme with substantial revisions.

Funds Available:
RISER projects may receive up to $7,500 for 12 months, from January 1 to December 31, 2025. Date exceptions may be granted with proper justification.

Budget Information:
Budgets must include general categories with detailed explanations. Funding amounts may be adjusted based on proposal volume and available resources. Cost sharing is not permitted.

Allowable Costs
- Stipend and fringe benefits of undergraduate and graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, and technicians are allowed.

- Project supplies
- Travel *is essential to conducting the project; a* strong justification must be provided.
- Graduate student tuition

Unallowable Costs
- Salary and fringe benefits of investigators (PI and co-Is)
- Costs in connection with faculty degree requirements
- Food (for use in research/as subject incentives)
- Travel to professional meetings

Application Procedure

1. Develop a three-page proposal narrative that provides:
   a. A brief discussion of the background and significance of the proposed idea, including its relation to the present state of knowledge in the field.
   b. A detailed narrative of the project that includes the objectives, significance of the research, the research task and expected accomplishments during the project, the specific outcomes of the project, a discussion of potential external funding sources, and a timeline.
   c. A maximum of one page should be devoted to discussing how the proposed research activity will advance the research career of the PI.
   d. Text that is single-spaced with margins not less than one-half (0.5) inch and using a font size not less than 11 pt.
   e. A cover sheet attached to the proposal (not counted in the page limit) that includes the project title, the total budget request, the PI name, Division, and e-mail address. The cover sheet also should include a summary of the proposed work.

2. Attach the following supporting documentation to the end of the proposal narrative:
   a. Bibliography (should be included as appropriate and will not be counted in the narrative page limitation).
   b. Two-page maximum biographical sketch for the PI and each co-I that includes the following sections:
      1. Education
      2. Professional experience
      3. Evidence of scholarship: most significant refereed journal articles, books, book chapters, etc.
      4. Significant accomplishments and contributions
      5. Other information as appropriate
   c. Current and pending support. Include current grant funding and pending grant funding. For each grant, provide the project title, PI, the role of the applicant, funding agency, duration, and amount.
   d. A detailed budget following UofM format and budget justification for total project costs that is consistent with the list of allowable costs shown above.
   e. Appendices are allowed if highly relevant (e.g., letters of support and external review panel comments on related proposals); however, do not use appendices to circumvent page limits.
   f. If you have received RISER funds before, you must include a brief appendix to your proposal that includes the titles and funding amounts of these awards, along with a description of the impacts of the award(s).
   g. Please submit the possible federal grant information that you intend to submit during this funding.

3. Submit the completed proposal packet as a single PDF document to mkarimi1@memphis.edu by **December 16, 2025**.

Review Process:
Eligible applications will be evaluated by an interdisciplinary research committee appointed by the Dean of SPH.

The committee will assess proposals based on the review criteria (see below) and provide a prioritized list of funding recommendations to the Dean, who will make final decisions based on these recommendations and available funds.

Review Criteria:
Research Merit:
- The proposal should present a compelling case for funding.
- The project should make a significant contribution to the investigator's field of study.

Proposal Quality:
- Project objectives must be clearly stated.
- Methodologies should be appropriate and well-justified.
- The budget should be reasonable, detailed, and supported by a realistic timeline.
- The proposal should be written in a way that is accessible to academic reviewers, including those outside the applicant's field of expertise.

Leverage:
The project should substantially enhance the likelihood of securing funding from existing sources. It should also create meaningful opportunities for obtaining funding from new sources.