

## Texas A&M University System Research Excellence Fund (REF)

### Collaborative Discovery Grants

The Texas A&M University System REF Collaborative Discovery Grants support transformative, multi-system member research collaborations that have the potential to achieve major scientific breakthroughs and secure large-scale external funding from federal, state, or private sponsors. Proposals must include at least two A&M System member institutions as substantive partners to the lead institution. The lead principal investigator (PI) and other PIs and co-PIs must be PI-eligible and hold a full-time faculty or research staff appointment at an A&M System member university or agency. Proposals may request up to \$250,000 (no less than \$100,000) over 12 months. The program limits submission to three lead proposals per A&M System member university submitted by the Vice President for Research (VPR). Detailed program requirements and application instructions can be found on the final page below.

### Texas A&M University (TAMU) Internal Selection Process

1. Eligible PI uploads their proposals (with the required elements) to [InfoReady](#) by February 20, 2026.
2. The VPR Office is notified and reviews the proposals for compliance check (if any issues, the proposal will be declined).
3. VPR assigns proposals from each college/unit to their respective URC Dean (i.e., Associate Dean for Research or equivalent) for college/unit-level review and selection.
4. After completing their reviews, each college/unit (URC Dean or equivalent) will need to:
  - Log in to InfoReady and click the “Reviews” link in the top header
  - Search for the proposals they want to approve and click the application title link
  - Select “I Approve” and click the Submit Review button

**Only** approve the recommended number of proposals (up to 2 for colleges/units with  $\geq 250$  Tenured/Tenure Track faculty and 1 for  $< 250$  Tenured/Tenure Track faculty) by March 6, 2026, for further consideration by the VPR. *Note: No need to select “I do not approve” for those internal applications not moving forward.*
5. VPR organizes a review committee for the proposals based on the review criteria. The review committee may include representatives of University Research Council (URC), Council of Principal Investigators (CPI), as well as faculty experts.
6. Based on the review committee’s recommendation, VPR prepares a Memo of Support for the three selected proposals based on the draft Memo of Support prepared by the PI.
7. VPR creates a single PDF version for each selected proposal for submission to the System via email ([ref@tamus.edu](mailto:ref@tamus.edu)) by April 1, 2026.
8. For proposals not selected for submission to the System, InfoReady will notify the relevant URC Deans and PIs of the status of the proposals.
9. For proposals submitted to the System, VPR will notify the relevant URC Deans and PIs of the outcome of the proposals as soon as a notification is received from the System.

### Important Deadlines:

- February 20, 2026: Deadline for Eligible PIs to Submit their Proposal to InfoReady.
- March 6, 2026: Deadline for URC Deans to Review, Select, and Approve the recommended number of proposals for their college/unit, for further consideration by the VPR.
- April 1, 2026: Deadline for Submission of Proposals (by VPR) to the System.

**Texas A&M University System Research Excellence Fund (REF)**  
**Collaborative Discovery Grants - Application Portal**

The following information will be requested in InfoReady.

**Collaborative Discovery Grants - Page 1**

- PI First Name
- PI Last Name
- PI Primary Title
- PI Email Address
- PI Primary Organization
- PI Department
- Co-PI Information (Name, College, Department, University)

**Collaborative Discovery Grants - Page 2 ([See RFP for Additional Details](#))**

- Application Title
- Cover Page (*1 page - Word File Only*)
- Project Summary (*1 page - Word File Only*)
- Project Description (*up to 5 pages - Word File Only*)
- Collaboration Plan (*1 page - Word File Only*)
- Milestones and Deliverables (*1 page - Word File Only*)
- Budget and Budget Justification (*1 page - Word File Only*)
- Biographical Sketches (PIs and co-PIs - PDF Only)
- Letters of Commitment (*5 letters, 1 page each - Word or PDF*)
  - A maximum of 5 letters may be submitted, each limited to 1 page, from collaborating A&M System member institutions.
- Draft Memo of Support from VPR (*1 page - Word File Only, to be drafted by PI*)