



**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
NSF-STRIVE STaRS Grant
Program
19 River Rd South
Putney, Vermont 05346
(802) 387-6841**



NSF-STRIVE STaRS (Science and Technology Research Seed) Grant Program is a collaborative initiative supported by Landmark College, Bennington College, the Community College of Vermont and Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation and is funded by the U.S. National Science Foundation (NSF) through the EPSCoR program.

Program Objective

The STaRS Grant Program supports research that advances Vermont’s science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) ecosystem. Funding is intended to provide historically underfunded educational institutions with the necessary resources to pursue preliminary work that enhances their ability to secure external research funding from federal agencies or other major funders.

Applicants are expected to submit a full proposal to a major funding agency upon completion of the proposed activities.

Eligibility

Researchers, faculty or academic staff members from any Vermont college or university are welcome to apply. Proposals are also welcomed from independent organizations conducting research aligned with Vermont’s STEM priorities, as well as from small businesses seeking to carry out proof-of-concept research. Applicants are limited to one proposal per cycle, and all proposed work must be conducted primarily within Vermont.

Funding Parameters

- **Maximum Award:** \$15,000
- **Anticipated Awards:** 3–5 per year
- **Funding Period:** Up to 12 months from start date
- **Allowable Costs:**
 - Field or archival research
 - Data collection or compilation
 - Travel to research collaborators or institutions (funding may not be used to support international travel)
 - Laboratory equipment and supplies (cannot total more than \$5,000)
 - Workforce development activities within STEM courses

- Student research internships

Please note that indirect costs and faculty salary support or time compensation are not allowable costs for STaRS funding.

Additionally International students may be employed as student workers on the project; however, they are not eligible to be supported as project participants. NSF funds allocated under the participant support cost category cannot be used to provide direct support to international students.

Deadlines

- **Cycle 1:** October 15
- **Cycle 2:** April 15

Start Date: No earlier than one month after the proposal deadline.

End Date: No later than 12 months after proposal deadline.

Proposal Requirements

Proposals must include the following components in a single PDF or Word document (max 3 pages, not including budget):

- 1. Project Cover Sheet with Project Title** (See Template)
- 2. Abstract** (250 words)
- 3. Research Question(s) and Objectives**
- 4. Project Description:**
 - Context in scholarly or scientific literature
 - Planned activities and methodology
 - Timeline for completion of work
- 5. Justification for Seed Funding**
 - How project is situated with a framework or theory
 - Why seed funding is necessary
 - Relevance to current STEM debates or workforce needs
 - Anticipated submission target external funders and funder types (e.g., NSF, NIH, USDA, DOE, Mellon, SSRC, private foundation, state or local funding)

Note STRIVE prioritizes strong research that addresses VT STEM economic priorities, creates student opportunities and/or builds infrastructure across regional partnerships.

- 6. Budget** – must indicate actual dollar values for each line item (attached separately using STRIVE template)

Submission Instructions

- Submit proposals by email to: admin@strivevt.org

- Attach proposal and budget documents as PDFs or Word files
 - Include subject line: “STRIVE Seed Grant Proposal – [Your Last Name]”
 - CC your Sponsored Programs Office or relevant point of contact at your institution
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Review Process

Proposals will be reviewed by a panel of researchers and STRIVE administrators from the partner institutions. Funding decisions will be communicated within one month of each deadline. Feedback will be provided, and revised submissions are welcome.

Reporting Requirements

All funded projects must submit a brief final report within 60 days of project completion. The report should outline project outcomes and indicate the status of external funding submissions.

Information Sessions

A virtual information session is available on our website strivevt.org. Additional support is available by contacting the STRIVE team at admin@strivevt.org.

Federal Funding Guidelines

This award is issued under an NSF-funded project and must comply with all applicable requirements of the NSF Proposal & Award Policies and Procedures Guide (PAPPG) and 2 CFR §200. The awardee affirms that project activities adhere to NSF project-management requirements, including appropriate oversight of project performance, meeting performance goals and timelines, and ensuring that all work aligns with the approved project scope and methods.

Furthermore, when submitting invoices to NSF-STRIVE for reimbursement, the awardee certifies that their organization is in good standing (i.e. cannot be debarred for any reason) and all costs are accurate, allowable, allocable, reasonable, and incurred within the approved project period in accordance with Federal cost principles, and that adequate documentation is maintained for all charges.
