



The Graduate School at Bowie State University
Idea to Impact Grant FY2026

*Advancing Research, Innovation, and Impact for Bowie State's
R2 Future*

Request for Applications (RFA)

Release Date:

February 2nd, 2026

Application Submission Deadline:

March 8th, 2026

*Applications shall be submitted electronically in PDF format via email
to grc@bowiestate.edu.*

**PAPER, LATE, NON-PDF, OR INCOMPLETE APPLICATIONS WILL
NOT BE ACCEPTED.**

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Section A: Funding Opportunity Description

Program Overview

The Idea to Impact Graduate Research Fellowship supports high-potential graduate students conducting original summer research, creative inquiry, or applied scholarship that demonstrates clear innovation potential and meaningful scholarly, professional, or societal impact. The fellowship is designed to move promising ideas toward tangible outcomes—publications, presentations, creative works, pilot data, or externally competitive proposals.

The fellowship also serves as a leadership and professional development opportunity. Fellows will act as Graduate School Ambassadors, representing a culture of research excellence, intellectual curiosity, and interdisciplinary collaboration.

Award Details

- Award Amount: \$5,000 (summer stipend)
- Award Period: Summer term: May 21st-August 15th, 2026
- Eligible Fields: Open to graduate students across disciplines, including but not limited to STEM, Education, Counseling, Social Sciences, Humanities, and Creative Research
- Number of Awards: Competitive; contingent on available funding

Fellowship Expectations & Obligations

Recipients of the Idea to Impact Fellowship agree to the following:

1. **Conduct the proposed research during the summer award period**
2. **Present their work** at the Graduate School's *Transformative Synergies Conference* during the Fall semester
 - Presentation format may include paper, poster, performance, demonstration, or panel (as appropriate to the field)
3. **Serve as a Graduate School Ambassador** for the academic year following the award
 - Participate in selected Graduate School events, research showcases, or recruitment initiatives
 - Represent graduate research excellence to peers, prospective students, and external audiences
4. **Acknowledge the Graduate School's support** in any resulting publications, presentations, or creative works

5. If working with human subjects, applicants must obtain **IRB approval** before research can commence. Graduate students are welcome to apply prior to receiving IRB approval, but must provide the anticipated date that their submitted IRB application will be submitted for review. Please note that the funding is contingent upon receipt of official IRB approval no later than May 21st, 2026.

Failure to meet these obligations may result in partial or full forfeiture of funds.

Section B: General Provisions

Eligibility Requirements

- Be enrolled as a graduate student in good academic standing
- Applicants must have a faculty advisor/mentor who agrees to actively support the project
- Propose a project that can be meaningfully advanced during the summer award period
- Commit to presenting at the Transformative Synergies Conference

Eligible Grant Expenditures

Grants may be requested for expenses, including but not limited to:

- Travel to present research or academic projects at national professional meetings
- Travel for research (e.g., data collection, archival research, research collaborations, etc.)
- Support for research and scholarly activity including equipment, supplies, photocopying, preparation of materials, software needed for research, etc.)
- IP protection of products resulting from research (copyrights, patents, etc.)

Ineligible Grant Expenditures

- Ineligible expenses include university tuition and fees
- Personal expenditures

Applicants should contact the Graduate School if there is a question regarding eligible expenses.

Section C: Application Components

A complete application consists of **five** required components. All materials should be written for an interdisciplinary audience.

1. Research Plan (Maximum: 3 pages)

The Research Plan should clearly articulate the proposed project and include the following sections:

- Project Title
- Research Question(s) or Creative Inquiry
- Background & Context
 - Brief scholarly or professional grounding
- Methodology / Approach
 - Research methods, creative processes, or applied strategies
- Expected Outcomes
 - Publications, performances, pilot data, presentations, prototypes, curriculum tools, etc.
- Summer Timeline
 - Clear milestones demonstrating feasibility within the award period (May 21st – August 15th, 2026)

Evaluation Focus: Clarity, rigor, feasibility, and scholarly merit

2. Evidence of Innovation Potential (Maximum: 1 page)

Applicants should explain how the project demonstrates innovation, which may include:

- Novel research questions or methodologies
- Interdisciplinary approaches
- Creative or applied problem-solving
- New uses of existing tools, data, or frameworks
- Potential to disrupt conventional thinking or practice in the field

This section should answer: *What makes this project different—and why does that difference matter?*

3. Statement of Long-Term Research Goals (Maximum: 1 page)

This statement should situate the proposed project within the applicant's broader intellectual trajectory. Applicants should address:

- Long-term academic, professional, or creative goals
- How this project advances future research, practice, or doctoral aspirations
- How the fellowship positions the applicant for external funding, advanced study, or leadership

Evaluation Focus: Vision, coherence, and future impact

4. Faculty Mentor Support Statement (Maximum: 1 page)

Submitted by the faculty advisor/mentor.

The statement must confirm the mentor's willingness to support the student and should address:

- The mentor's relationship to the project
- The student's preparedness to carry out the proposed work
- The mentor's plan for guidance during the summer
- The project's scholarly or professional significance

5. Applicant Information & Certificates

Applicants must include:

- Program, department, and degree level
- Faculty mentor name and affiliation
- Applicant CV (max 2 pages)
- Confirmation of availability during the summer award period
- Agreement to all fellowship obligations, including conference presentation and ambassador role
- IRB approval (if applicable)

Section D: Selection Criteria

Applications will be evaluated competitively using the following criteria:

1. Intellectual Merit & Rigor
2. Innovation Potential
3. Feasibility & Summer Scope
4. Alignment with Long-Term Research Goals
5. Strength of Faculty Mentorship
6. Potential Contribution to Graduate School Research Culture

Rubric

Idea to Impact Graduate Research Fellowship : Reviewer Scoring Rubric

5 – Exceptional 4 – Strong 3 – Adequate 2 – Weak 1 – Poor

Idea to Impact Grant Research Fellowship Rubric

Award Amount: \$5,000

Review Model: External fellowship-style, merit-based, interdisciplinary review

Scoring Scale: 1–5 per category (Maximum Score: 30)

5 – Exceptional 4 – Strong 3 – Adequate 2 – Weak 1 – Poor

Criteria	Exceptional	Strong	Adequate	Weak	Poor
Intellectual Merit & Scholarly Rigor	Research question is clear, compelling, and grounded in strong scholarly or professional context; methods are rigorous and appropriate	Well-defined project with solid grounding and appropriate methodology	Project is clear but lacks depth, refinement, or strong contextualization	Vague or underdeveloped research focus or methods	Unclear purpose; insufficient scholarly grounding
Innovation Potential	Demonstrates clear originality, interdisciplinarity, or novel application with strong transformative potential	Shows meaningful innovation within the field	Incremental or modest innovation	Limited originality	No discernible innovation
Feasibility & Summer Scope	Project is highly feasible with a clear, realistic summer timeline	Feasible with minor logistical concerns	Feasibility unclear but possible	Significant concerns about timeline or scope	Not feasible within summer period
Long-Term Research Trajectory	Project clearly advances long-term academic, professional, or creative goals and positions student for future funding or impact	Strong alignment with future goals	General alignment stated	Weak or unclear connection	No evident long-term vision
Faculty Mentor Support & Project Readiness	Mentor demonstrates strong engagement; student is clearly prepared	Mentor support is clear and adequate	Support stated but minimally detailed	Limited evidence of mentorship	Mentor support insufficient or absent
Contribution to Graduate School Research Culture	Project enhances research visibility, interdisciplinarity, or public impact	Positive contribution anticipated	Neutral contribution	Limited relevance	No discernible contribution
Overall Score					

Section E: Submission Instructions

To be considered for the **Idea to Impact Graduate Research Fellowship**, applicants must submit **one complete PDF** containing **all five (5) required application components** as outlined in this RFA.

Submission Steps:

1. Compile all required application materials into a **single PDF document** in the order listed in the RFA.
2. Review the PDF to ensure all sections are complete, legible, and properly formatted.
3. Email the **single PDF attachment** to grc@bowiestate.edu by the stated application deadline.
4. Use the subject line: **Idea to Impact Grant Fellowship Application – [Applicant Name]**.

Important Submission Policies:

- **Multiple attachments will not be accepted.**
- **Late submissions will not be reviewed.**
- **Incomplete applications will not be considered.**
- **If stated page limits are exceeded, the application will not be considered.**
- **Human subjects research without IRB approval will not be considered.**
- Applications submitted in formats other than PDF will not be accepted.

It is the applicant's responsibility to confirm that all required materials are included and submitted by the deadline.