

2025 Postdoctoral Research Development Grants (PRDG)

Support postdocs in the development of *independent* research skills to advance their *career goals*.

Eligibility: Applicants must:

- (a) be no more than 7 years since earning a doctoral degree (e.g., PhD, MD),
- (b) have a Postdoctoral Research Associate (PRA) appointment or other acceptable position at the UofA* at the time the application is submitted,
- (c) apply for only one PRDG per cycle and may be awarded only one PRDG while at UArizona.

**If you have questions about your appointment, contact Fiona Bailey (ebailey@arizona.edu)*

New Project PRDG: Designed to promote independence of postdoctoral scholars by providing funds to conduct a small research project that is not financially supported by the primary postdoctoral mentor or the current postdoctoral stipend. (Funds up to \$2000 provided.)

Example: Funding for a small study not directly related to mentor's work, led by the postdoc. It could include undergraduate students.

Budget could cover: Software or hardware, short-term hourly student wages, participant fees, supplies, small equipment, etc.

Collaborations: Proposals that include collaborations between two or more postdocs from different disciplines are encouraged. When two or more postdocs apply for a PRDG, they submit a single application with all names listed, all biosketches included, and letters from all mentors included. The narrative and budget are written together.

New Skills Training PRDG: Designed to promote independence of postdoctoral scholars by providing funds to obtain additional research training or experience that is outside the scope of their current postdoctoral appointments. Requests to cover costs of attending and presenting research at annual meetings will not generally be eligible. (Funds up to \$1500 provided.)

Examples: Funding for a workshop or webinar to gain additional training in use of a measurement or analysis technique, training that is not available on campus; funding to visit another institution to learn new research approach.

Budget could cover: Workshop registration fee, travel expenses (airfare, lodging, meals), associated materials (software, books, small instruments), etc.

Expected Outcomes: Award recipients are expected to provide a summary (250 word maximum) of their accomplishments associated with PRDG funding. This is due within a month after the project/training is completed.

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APPLICATION MATERIALS

(due to Arizona Cultivate on March 26, 2025 at 5:00 pm)

(1) Narrative (500-word maximum) that contains the following sections (if you include a reference list and/or a figure, this will not be included in the word count):

Career Goal(s): A short description of your career goal(s);

Description of Project / Training: Describe the proposed research project or training (nature, duration, logistics, etc.) that the funds will be used to support. **Note that this must be written for a nonspecialist audience**, as the reviewers of the proposal will represent a diverse range of disciplines. Proposals written for a specialist audience are unlikely to be understood and hence will be disadvantaged for funding;

Advancement Potential: State how the research project or training will (a) enhance your research skills, (b) increase your independence, and (c) advance your career.

(2) Biosketch (NSF, NIH, or agency style suitable to your area of research)

(3) Budget (up to \$2000 for Project PRDG and up to \$1500 for Training PRDG) Itemized budget along with budget justification using the Excel template provided in the application.

(4) Letter of support from primary UA postdoctoral mentor: The letter should address how the proposed project or training will enhance the applicant's independence and express strong support of the applicant and their career goal(s). The letter must also include a statement that the applicant's appointment will extend into the next year (after July 1, 2025) and makes the case that the proposed project/activity lies outside the scope of the mentor's research.

POINTERS FOR CREATING A SUCCESSFUL APPLICATION

Pointers for Strong Narrative

- Assume the reviewers have **no knowledge of your discipline**
- Begin by painting the broad picture and communicating the importance of the project/training
- Avoid technical terms or, if you must use them, define them in simple language
- Use short words instead of long words whenever possible (use/utilize; end/terminate; send/transmit; start/initiate; next/subsequent)
- Be sure to emphasize how this advances your independence and career goals
- Ask people outside your discipline to read and critique your proposal before submitting it
- Use exact headings listed in the instructions (e.g., Career Goal, Description of Project or Description of Training, Advancement Potential)
- Stay within the 500-word limit (any reference list that follows the Narrative is not included in this word limit)
- If two or more postdocs are submitting the PRDG together, there is still only one narrative and budget submitted.

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Pointers for Strong Biosketch

- No special format required; can be NIH, NSF, etc.
- Include a “Personal Statement”, such as that in the NIH Biosketch
- If two or more postdocs are submitting a PRDG as Co-PI’s or as a PI and Co-investigator, each postdoc will need to submit their own biosketch.

Pointers for a Supportive Mentor’s Letter

- Letter should discuss how this project/training will enhance your independence
- Letter should express support for you and your career goal(s)
- Letter must state that: (a) the project/training is outside the scope of the mentor’s research and funding; and (b) your postdoc appointment is expected to extend into the next fiscal year (after July 1, 2025)
- If two or more postdocs are submitting a PRDG as Co-PI’s or as a PI and Co-investigator, each postdoc will need to have their mentor submit a letter. If they both have the same mentor, the letter must contain the required information for both/all postdocs

Pointers for Budget

- Ask for what you need (not more, not less)
- Provide a justification for each budget item requested
- Provide a well-researched estimate of the cost of each budget item
- Do not exceed the maximum budget request (\$2000 for New Project; \$1500 for New Training)
- Use the Excel file provided in Arizona Cultivate
- Your department/unit’s business manager will need to review, approve, and sign your budget
- Funds are awarded for the period July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2025

PRDG REVIEW PROCESS

Reviews are based primarily on:

- Strength and clarity of the research or training plan
- Strength of proposal for advancing the applicant’s *independence* and *career goals*
- Strength of the mentor’s letter

Reviewers

- Review teams are made up of postdocs and faculty
- Reviewers are *rarely* in your discipline
- Examples of review committees:
 - Faculty Mech Engineering, Postdoc Public Health, Faculty Anthro, Postdoc Math
 - Faculty Nutritional Sciences, Postdoc EEB, Faculty Neurology, Postdoc Psychology

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PRDG AWARDS

Decisions are made and recipients notified usually by mid-May or earlier

Funding rate depends on number of applications and amount requested (the total funds provided by for this grant are fixed at \$20,000). Funding rates (for partial or full funding) have been:

2019 – 54%

2020 – 40%

2021 – 63%

2022 – 73%

2023 – 85%

2024 – 40% (New Project) 50% New Skills