UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL MISSOURI®
ALUMNI • FOUNDATION

Opportunity Grant Program
Fiscal Year 2027 Application Guide
Application Due to Alumni Foundation February 6, 2026

The UCM Alumni Foundation's Mission

The UCM Alumni Foundation's mission is to cultivate, manage, and distribute resources in support of the University of Central Missouri. In keeping with that mission, the Alumni Foundation established the Opportunity Grant Program in 2013 to support employees who have ideas but insufficient funding. Through a competitive process, the Opportunity Grant program provides funding for projects that advance the University's strategic plan and result in significant outcomes.

Purpose

The UCM Alumni Foundation Opportunity Grant Program aims to provide one-time seed funding for innovative, student-centered ideas from University of Central Missouri faculty and staff, enhancing the learning environment and students' academic experiences. All university faculty and staff, across disciplines and programs, are encouraged to submit proposals. Grants are available for up to a maximum of $20,000 per proposal during the fiscal year spanning from July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2027. The review committee prioritizes _innovation_ and _sustainability_ in proposals. Funded proposals will be announced in May 2026.

Eligibility

Applicants are limited to submitting a single unique proposal per year. Projects that have previously received Opportunity Grant funding are ineligible for re-application. Failure to meet these eligibility requirements will lead to disqualification.

If your proposal involves requests for technology or software, please reach out to the Technology Support Center at 660-543-4357 or tsc@ucmo.edu before submitting your application. This consultation is crucial to ensure compatibility with UCM systems.

**Compliance disclosure:** Proposals involving human subjects, non-human animal subjects, biohazardous agents, recombinant DNA molecules, ionizing radiation, and/or biologically derived toxins must obtain the necessary approvals before funding can be awarded. If approval is pending at the time of application, it must be obtained by July 1, 2026. Failure to secure the appropriate approval may lead to the withdrawal of the grant.

For questions regarding eligibility or allowable expenses, contact the Alumni Foundation by phone at 660-543-8000, or by email at giving@ucmo.edu.

Allowable & Non-Allowable Expenses

Examples of allowable expenses <u>may</u> include, but are not limited to:

- Equipment
- Hardware and/or software
- Programming supplies
- Research that involves or benefits UCM students
- Service projects

Types of non-allowable expenses include:

- Employee-related travel/food/conference fees
- Release time
- Salaries/wages of any kind (to include assistantships)
- Apparel
- Underwriting of expenses that would otherwise be paid by a UCM budget

Application Requirements

Applications must include the following:

1. **Cover Page** *(to be completed via the online portal)*: Faculty applicants require signatures of the applicant, co-applicants (if relevant), chair, and college dean. Staff applicants require signatures of the applicant, co-applicants (if relevant), and immediate supervisor.

2. **Project Proposal** *(typed, two-page limit)*: Must be described in easily understood words for those serving on the review committee who are not experts within the applicant's field. The following areas must be addressed completely:

    a. **What:** Provide a clear description of your project.

        i. **Objectives:** State goals for the proposed project, expected significance, and relation to past work in the area.

        ii. **Need of the Applicant:** Provide a clear and concise explanation of the specific issue or challenge you aim to address with this grant.

        iii. **Outcomes:** Outline the expected impact of the project on students, the learning environment, and the broader university community. What positive changes or improvements do you anticipate?

    b. **Who:** The number of UCM students/faculty/staff likely to be impacted by the project.

    c. **Why:** Explain how the project is <u>innovative</u> and how it aligns with and supports the six values of UCM:

        1. Community
        2. Diversity
        3. Excellence
        4. Learning
        5. Opportunity
        6. Service

    d. **When:** Brief 12-month calendar timeline of project

e. **Where:** Location of project

3. **Detailed Budget**:
   a. Total requested grant amount (not to exceed $20,000)
   b. Itemized breakdown of grant utilization
      i. <u>List items in priority order in case of a partial grant award</u>
   c. All other anticipated funding sources (internal and external)
   d. Lack of clarity may impact the review committee's decision

<u>Submission</u>

Completed and signed proposals, including all required items listed above, must be submitted by 12:00 pm on February 6, 2026, via the online portal at www.ucmfoundation.org/opportunity-grants. Proposals submitted after the deadline or those not adhering to submission guidelines, University policies, and Board of Governors procedures will not be accepted.

Failure to complete all requirements will impact the decision of the review committee and may lead to disqualification.

<u>Review Procedures</u>

The UCM Alumni Foundation will convene a review committee comprised of alumni volunteers, university administrators, and members of its Board of Directors. Proposals will be evaluated using the criteria below and assigned a global score. Grants will be based on proposals receiving the highest scores, with approval from the UCM Alumni Foundation Board of Directors.

Proposals will be assessed on a 100-point scale in the three primary areas listed below and awarded up to 20 bonus points for *innovation* and *sustainability*, as outlined below.

Review Criteria

Significant relevance to the University's Mission and Values.	45 points
Clear demonstration of achievable project goals and educational impact for UCM students. Project enriches educational experiences by adding significant value to the academic experience and learning environment.	35 points
Project requires funding for implementation and has a high probability of completion within 12 months.	20 points

Bonus points

The committee can award up to 10 bonus points for projects that are uniquely innovative.	10 points
The committee can award up to 10 bonus points for projects that could convert to long-term programming (Example: Campus Cupboard).	10 points

Funded Proposals

Grants are awarded through a reimbursement process; therefore, as the project is implemented, the recipient will pay expenses from a University FOAPAL. Once expended, requests for reimbursement must be submitted with the name of the grant and all documentation supporting each expense. Distributions will be made using university-approved procedures and chargebacks, coordinated by Peggy Shaul, Director of Foundation Financial Operations, at the UCM Alumni Foundation.

Grant recipients are required to include the following statement in all published materials:

> **"Funding was provided by the UCM Alumni Foundation Opportunity Grant Program."**

Final Report Requirement

Grant recipients are required to submit a report at the conclusion of their project. This report is an essential component of the UCM Alumni Foundation Opportunity Grants program and will be shared with donors and Alumni Foundation Board members. The report helps demonstrate the impact of the grant and provide a breakdown of the use of the grant funds.

Failure to submit an acceptable final report will result in ineligibility for further support under the UCM Alumni Foundation Opportunity Grants program.

The final report must be submitted by **June 30, 2027**, via email to giving@ucmo.edu. Please ensure you provide the following:

- Project Outcomes: Provide a summary of the project's achievements and objectives met.
- Research Findings *(if applicable)*: Include any significant findings from your research.
- Financial Summary: Outline how the grant funds were expended.
- Collateral Material: Attach examples of any advertisements, posters, news releases, etc.
- Donor Acknowledgment: Include a thank you letter for donors and board members, highlighting the impact of their support.