



2023-2024

ANNOUNCEMENTS OF OPPORTUNITY

spacegrant.carthage.edu

EARLY-STAGE INVESTIGATOR PROGRAM (ESI)

Summer/Academic Year 2024-2025 Research

Applications Open: November 1, 2023

Application Deadline: February 5, 2024

Award Announcement: March 29, 2024

Award Cycle: July 1, 2024-May 31, 2025

Awards*: up to \$10,000**

**One award anticipated based upon availability of funds.*

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Purpose: The Wisconsin Space Grant Consortium (WSGC) Early-Stage Investigator (ESI) award supports faculty members in the development of research capacity and/or the pursuit of initial research data for subsequent proposals to the WSGC or other funding entity. Applicants must be 1) in the first five years of their first tenure-track** appointment and 2) a full-time faculty member at a [WSGC universities and colleges](#). Proposals must show explicit alignment with the [NASA Mission Directorates](#).

Note: Full-time faculty members from colleges and universities that do not have tenure-track faculty may also apply. Applicants should include a statement regarding their faculty status and the relevant appointment policies of their institution.

Proposed projects should:

- Develop new or enhance existing lines of research
- Involve or have the potential to involve undergraduate and/or graduate students
- Quantitatively demonstrate impact (e.g., through number of students engaged, future funding opportunities pursued, or other institutional metric of faculty effectiveness)
- Initiate or enhance research opportunities in line with the NASA Mission Directorates (*For more information on NASA Directorates, see spacegrant.carthage.edu/about/mission/directorates*).

Proposal Evaluation: Successful proposals will combine a robust, relevant research project with a plan that contextualizes the proposed project within a larger strategic plan for the research. Clear and measurable outcomes that are aligned with the project activities, and a detailed budget with explicit alignment to project objectives are required.

Awards will be based on the proposal topic alignment with NASA Goals, the probability of success as measured by the coherence of the project objectives and proposed activities, the significance of the research, and the likely impact of the proposed project on the applicant's professional development.

To Apply:

- **CREATE a NASA STEM GATEWAY account** stemgateway.nasa.gov/public/s/login/ (applicants will be required to update profile information annually).
- **CREATE a WSGC account** spacegrant.carthage.edu/about/login/ (applicants will be required to update profile information annually).
- **Sign into** your WSGC account and submit an application and supporting documents to **EARLY-STAGE INVESTIGATOR PROGRAM** <https://spacegrant.carthage.edu/forms/account/login/> (applicants may apply to multiple funding programs).

Application Requirements:

- Full-time faculty members within the first five years of their first tenure-track** appointment at [WSGC Affiliate universities and colleges](#) are eligible.
- Students funded through this grant must be U.S. Citizens.
- Affiliate member institutions must have [affiliate award agreement documents on file](#) with the WSGC Program Office.
- Research initiatives must align with at least one of [NASA Mission Directorates](#).
- The Consortium especially encourages applications from women, underrepresented communities and persons with disabilities.
- Minimum 1:1 match from affiliate campus is required

***Full-time faculty members from colleges and universities that do not have tenure-track faculty may also apply. Applicants should include a statement regarding their faculty status and the relevant appointment policies of their institution.*

[Current and Past Award Winners](#)

Supporting Material Required with Application: Submit a proposal addressing each of the six elements listed below. Be sure to identify each element within the proposal clearly. Applicants will upload the proposal at the bottom of the application. The proposal should not exceed 15 pages, including figures.

- 1. Introduction/Summary:** Summarize the project in one page or less. Important issues to address here and in the body of the proposal are why the topic is of interest to NASA and how this project will enhance applicant's research agenda or lead to the development of a larger proposal effort to NASA or another government agency. Detail how this project aligns with the goals of one or more [NASA Directorates or Centers](#). **Because the WSGC is required to demonstrate the alignment of each of our projects with NASA Directorate or Center goals, proposals that do not demonstrate such alignment will not receive funding.** Provide references of related work. Be aware that not all of the WSGC review panel members are likely to be experts in this area, so make sure to provide fundamental information on the project topic.
- 2. Background:** Summarize current and previous research on the topic. Provide context for the proposed project that clearly situates the proposed work in the larger scope of published work on the topic. Demonstrates the significance and potential impact of the proposed work. Provide a brief overview of the proposer's background and employment status demonstrating alignment with the requirements of the ESI program.
- 3. Proposed Activities:** Describe the research objectives, methods and expected outcomes. Each objective should have one or more measurable indicators of success associated with it. These measures should be detailed sufficiently to allow objective evaluation of the project in the Final Report. Indicate types of presentations and/or papers, which will be a byproduct of this project. Identify and assign specific roles to all students/collaborators proposed to take part in the work, whether funded or not.
- 5. Timeline/Schedule:** Please provide dates indicating when the project start and finish date, as well as any important milestones. Applicants will be required to submit an Interim Report and a Final Report. Periods of performance must align with the award cycle provided within the Announcement of Opportunity. Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit a proposal that will not require a no cost extension.

6. **Budget/Use of Funds:** Provide a budget summary using the [Grant Budget Proposal and Invoice Reporting Template Form](#). The proposal shall include a budget detail explaining the use of allowable [funds](#) for the proposed project including labor (Name/position, number of hours, hourly rate, and fringe calculation rates), travel (location, transportation costs, hotel costs, meal costs), participant support costs, materials and supplies, and any other costs (with equivalent detail). Indirect charges are limited to matching funds.
- a. Budget proposals shall include a quarterly spend-down plan to demonstrate grant funds will be fully expended within the Summer or Academic Year Award Cycle.
 - b. The Early-Stage Investigator Program will normally provide funding for labor, including collaborators and students.
 - c. WSGC financially supports travel to and from the Wisconsin Space Conference if expenses are included in the budget proposal. Travel details should include purpose, location and duration. (*NOTE: A conference presentation is required for this award).
 - d. Travel will be considered if it is fundamentally important to the project.
 - e. Foreign travel is generally not allowable.
 - f. A minimum 1:1 cost-share commitment is required.
 - g. WSGC will not fund overhead; however, the organization's 1:1 project match may include overhead cost-share.
 - h. NASA (WSGC is a NASA-funded organization) does not accept the purchase of capital items as reasonable use of funds for this program. Consult the applicant's institutional policies on what constitutes a capital purchase.
 - i. Given budget limitations, we will likely not support any amount for equipment or rental of facilities.
 - j. Laptops require pre-approval and must demonstrate use solely for the funded grant.

7. **CV/Personnel*:** Please include an updated two page CV. **Note: This grant only allows one Principal Investigator to be listed on the application.* Include brief qualifications for any personnel included in projects. WSGC requires a list of all students receiving funds through this grant to be submitted as outlined in the Award Agreement Letter. Students register on the WSGC application website under **PROFESSIONAL PROGRAM STUDENT PARTICIPATION**.

Award Acceptance Requirements: As part of the award acceptance, awardees will present their project at the Annual Wisconsin Space Conference as outlined in the award agreement and submit the following documents on the WSGC application website under Program Applications/Your Applications:

- Award Agreement Letter
- Institution W9
- One-Paragraph Biography
- PI Professional Photo
- Quarterly Invoices/Cost-Share Report with Supporting Documentation
- Office of Education Survey
- Interim Report (if period of performance is greater than 6 months)
- Summary/Final Report (due 30 days after the project end date)
- Present project at the Annual Wisconsin Space Conference
- 2-3 project photos featuring faculty/students/program participants
- Alumni Story

Please direct questions about the Early-Stage Investigator Program to:

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This funding opportunity is made available for the pursuit of space-related research and/or activities through the National Space Grant College and Fellowship Program: NASA Educational Cooperative Agreement #80NSSC20M0123. Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number for this award is 43.008. Award recipients are subject to the terms of this award.

All awards are fully competitive awards of opportunity in which applications are reviewed by the WSGC Technical Advisory Panel and other experts as needed. Awards are made by the Assistant Director based on recommendations from the Associate Director.

Please follow us on     for program updates

