Vertically Integrated Projects (VIP) Program
vip@fau.edu
www.fau.edu/vip

VIP Catalyst Seed Grant Opportunity: Call for Proposals
Deadline: Friday, May 29th 2026, 5:00pm.

Please review this RFP for program details. The application form and required uploads are completed within the SurveyMonkey Apply system.

What is VIP?

The Vertically Integrated Projects (VIP) Program engages students across all disciplines in long-term, large-scale, multidisciplinary research project teams led by faculty. **The program prioritizes early engagement in research through the participation of degree-seeking, lower division students in VIP Teams.** The VIP Program uses a model that has been developed and refined at more than 50 U.S. and international institutions. We are soliciting teams of cross-disciplinary faculty to submit seed funding proposals to establish VIP Teams within cutting-edge, cross disciplinary research themes, and engage students in leveraging Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies and Data Science principles within their projects.

Eligibility

Faculty VIP Teams should comprise at least two full-time faculty working in collaboration across multiple Colleges and disciplines. *Faculty teams from different colleges and disciplines are required.* Up to four VIP Teams will be selected.

Submission Instructions

All applications must be submitted through SurveyMonkey Apply here:
ouri-fau.smapply.io/prog/vip_catalytic_seed_funding_opportunity_call_for_proposals

This RFP is provided as a reference, and applications should not be submitted by email.

Seed Funding

Faculty VIP Teams will be eligible for up to $46,500 in one-time seed funding for a one-year period to establish a cross-disciplinary VIP Team.

Evaluation Criteria

- Sustainability of a VIP Team for many years beyond the Year 1 seed funding
- Feasibility
- Artificial Intelligence/Data Science research integration
- Cross-college collaboration towards convergent research
- Long-term scope of project
- Large scale of the research team
- Vertical integration of people, processes, or products
- Minimum of 5 to 7 NEW degree-seeking FTIC Freshmen or Sophomores involved in the VIP Team
- Budget funding directed towards student support

VIP Informational Webinars and RSVP Links

- **Friday, March 27 from 10-11:30 am**
- **Tuesday, April 28 from 10-11:30 am**

*Projects that are selected cannot begin until research compliance approvals have been obtained. The full amount of seed funding will be housed and managed by the **Lead Faculty Mentor's (i.e. PI) College.***

Application Components

VIP Faculty Leadership Information

1. VIP Lead Faculty Mentor's (PI) Information:
    a. Lead Faculty Mentor's Name:
    b. Lead Faculty Mentor's Rank:
    c. Lead Faculty Mentor's Email:
    d. Lead Faculty Mentor's College:
    e. Lead Faculty Mentor's Primary Department:
2. VIP Faculty (co-PI) Mentor 2:
    a. Faculty Mentor 2 Name:
    b. Faculty Mentor 2 Rank:
    c. Faculty Mentor 2 Email:
    d. Faculty Mentor 2 College:
    e. Faculty Mentor 2 Department:
⭐ 3. VIP Faculty (co-PI) Mentor 3:
    a. Faculty Mentor 3 Name:
    b. Faculty Mentor 3 Rank:
    c. Faculty Mentor 3 Email:
    d. Faculty Mentor 3 College:
    e. Faculty Mentor 3 Department:
4. Additional mentors or external collaborators

VIP Team Project Proposal

5. **VIP Project Title** (30 words or less)
6. **Cross-disciplinary convergent research themes** your VIP Team is related to. Check all that apply.
    ☐ Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias/Falls
    ☐ Artificial Intelligence/Data Science
    ☐ Cancer
    ☐ Coastal Resilience
    ☐ Criminal Justice/ Forensics
    ☐ Cybersecurity
    ☐ Education/Workforce Development
    ☐ Entrepreneurship
    ☐ Environment/Ecology
    ☐ Futuristic Healthcare Delivery
    ☐ IoT and Smart Cities
    ☐ Neuroscience
    ☐ Quantum
    ☐ Substance Use/Abuse
    ☐ Transportation
    ☐ Other: if you checked other, please identify a cutting-edge, cross-disciplinary theme your VIP fits into.
7. Provide 5 **keywords** that summarize your team's disciplinary foci, areas of interest, branches of inquiry, etc.,
8. **VIP Project Overview** (300 words, max.): Please describe for a student audience unfamiliar with your work, your team's purpose, what will be investigated and or research questions/design/objectives in a few paragraphs.

⭐ **New question field this year**

9. **Artificial Intelligence/Data Science**: Describe how your project engages students with Artificial Intelligence/Data Science within the research. (300 words, max.)
10. ⭐ **Leveraging Institutional Research Resources**: As appropriate, please describe how your VIP research project(s) intends to leverage existing institutional research resources and areas of expertise. Have these connections already been made? (300 words, max.)

Structure of VIP Team

How many students will be on your VIP Team? Please enter numeric values for each category in the spaces below.

11. **Please complete the tables below**

	New Students		Existing Team Members
Freshmen & Sophomores (minimum 5 to 7)		Freshmen & Sophomores (minimum 5 to 7)	
Juniors		Juniors	
Seniors		Seniors	
Graduate		Graduate	
Total number of new students		Total number of existing Team members	

12. Faculty mentors are encouraged to make their VIP Teams as accessible as possible to multiple disciplines—most VIP Teams are open to all majors. From what disciplines will you recruit students and involve students?
13. **How will your project empower long-term and vertical integration of people**, process, and/or product development? (300 words, max) Consider the following questions:
    a. How will you bring new students and students from different disciplines/backgrounds to your VIP Team as students graduate?
    b. How will you manage/leverage existing students who are working on the project to contribute for more than one semester, and mentor new students coming in?
    c. Will there be different project phases (e.g. lit review, discourse analysis, data analysis, implementation) for VIP Team members from different disciplinary backgrounds to engage with?
    d. How will you support long-term student engagement in your VIP Team?
14. ⭐ **Hours Commitments from Students**: What is the minimum number of hours per week, starting in Spring 2027, that you would expect an individual student to commit to your VIP Team?
15. ⭐ **Team Modality**
16. ⭐ **Team Location**

⭐ **New question field this year**

VIP Sustainability and Feasibility

17. **Sustainability**: Funding from the Vertically Integrated Projects Program for establishing a VIP Team is only available for the first year. Describe your plan for seeking extramural funding from additional sources for sustaining this project for years 2 through 5. Your plan should list extramural grants, community funding, and industry funding opportunities you intend to pursue **each year (Years 1 through 5)** in support of sustaining your VIP Team beyond the seed funding period and contributing to FAU's R1 status. Please include a clear timeline of intended grant submissions or partnership initiations for Years 1 through 5. Include details on the grant program titles and dates, and ensure the grant program is still active at the time of submitting this application.
    (750 words, max.)

⭐ 18. **Compliance Feasibility** (select all that apply)
    a. Environmental Health & Safety
    b. Institutional Biosafety Committee
    c. Institutional Review Board
    d. Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee
    e. Include any relevant compliance protocols

Budget and Justification

Please use the attached Excel spreadsheet to describe how the funds will be utilized in support of the VIP Team research project and VIP students. Additional budget support for students is *strongly encouraged*.

Budget Spreadsheet (click to download)

Funding Category	Allowable Expenses
Startup Funding and Summer Stipend ($31,500)	• Additional summer student fellowships • Consumables and supplies • Instruments/equipment • Graduate student stipend (fringe must be included) • Postdoctoral stipend (fringe must be included) • Undergraduate academic year student stipend (fringe must be included) • VIP Faculty mentor(s) stipend (fringe must be included)
Summer Scholars ($12,000) - fixed	• Two UGR Summer Scholars at $4,000 each • One Graduate Scholar at $4,000
Travel and Publication Costs ($3,000)	• Faculty to attend VIP Consortium Meeting at GA Tech (registration, travel, and hotel; ***REQUIRED***) • Conference presentation - faculty (registration, travel and hotel) • Conference presentation - graduate student (registration, travel and hotel) • Conference presentation - undergraduate student(s) (registration, travel and hotel) • Undergraduates to present at Florida Undergraduate Research Conference (hotel and registration) • Undergraduates to present at National Conference on Undergraduate Research (hotel, travel, and registration) • Publication costs (including students as co-authors)

⭐ **New question field this year**

19. **Before submitting a VIP proposal, please confirm that you understand the following aspects of FAU's VIP Program.**
Core Elements of FAU'S VIP Teams
We understand:
- ☐ VIP Teams are large, with at least 10 to 20 degree-seeking students each semester.
- ☐ A minimum of 5 to 7 new students must be degree-seeking freshmen and sophomores within a VIP Team.
- ☐ VIP Teams are expected to be long-term, i.e. the VIP Team should run over multiple years after the seed funding has been provided.
- ☐ VIP Teams include vertical integration of people, processes, or product development to foster mentorship, collaboration, and the continuity of research.
- ☐ VIP Teams must be co-led by at minimum two full-time faculty from two unique colleges and disciplines.
- ☐ VIP Teams must integrate and leverage Artificial Intelligence and/or Data Science skills in the research and offer opportunities for all involved students to gain experience in these technical skills.

Student Selection & Enrollment
We understand:
- ☐ VIP student applicants are not screened by GPA. While this may seem counterintuitive, years of experience have shown enthusiasm to be the strongest predictor of success in VIP.
- ☐ VIP students (undergraduate and graduate) must be registered for specific VIP Directed Independent Research (DIR) courses for each semester they participate in the VIP Team.
- ☐ VIP students (undergraduate and graduate) must complete all research compliance prior to enrolling in the specific VIP Directed Independent Research (DIR) courses

Faculty Team Lead Obligations
We understand we must:
- ☐ Attend VIP Technical Advisory Group meetings two times per year (introductory and at the end of the year with program evaluator) which includes progress assessment and data collection via an annual report to the VIP Program staff.
- ☐ Respond to VIP business communications and emails related to VIP student interest to recruit VIP students.
- ☐ Support (or delegate support) for offering DIR course credit to VIP students; and/or support pursuit of work-study opportunities as appropriate.
- ☐ Acknowledge FIPSE funding in any publications, presentations, or grant submissions (as appropriate) resulting from this work.
- ☐ Facilitate VIP Team meetings once every one to two weeks throughout each semester and invite the VIP Associate Director/GA.

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We understand:

- ☐ The Lead Faculty Mentor's (i.e. PI) College will be responsible for housing and managing the seed funding budget

OURI's Generative AI Use and Policies

The Vertically Integrated Projects (VIP) Program inherits Policies on the Use of Generative AI in the Submissions Process from the Office of Undergraduate Research and Inquiry (OURI). Please review OURI's Policies on the Use of Generative AI in the Submission Process here. Please see FAU's page on AI here for further resources. All AI generated text should be appropriately attributed, with proper AI citation documented here.

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For more information please visit: **https://www.fau.edu/vip/faculty/how-to-form**

Contact Information

For any inquiries, please contact Dr. Donna Chamely-Wiik at ***dchamely@fau.edu***, Senior Associate Dean, Undergraduate Research and Prestigious Fellowships, and Associate Scientist, Chemistry and Biochemistry, and visit www.fau.edu/vip/.

We look forward to receiving your innovative proposals and supporting your efforts to expand collaborative research at Florida Atlantic.

Vertically Integrated Projects (VIP) at Florida Atlantic®
☎ 567-297-4879
✉ vip@fau.edu
🖥 fau.edu/vip/

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