

Proposed Organizing Principles for VRIF Proposals (Researcher Recruitment/Retention and Applied Research Proposals)

The SCHEV Ad Hoc Committee on Research offers for comment by the Virginia Research Investment Committee these 13 organizing principles for the mechanics of the first round of the VRIF grant competition.

1. Only public institutions of higher education in Virginia will be eligible as lead applicants.
2. The grant competition will be “standard” (rather than pitch-style, prize, etc.).
3. The grant competition will be “limited submission”; i.e., each institution can submit two proposals as lead institution and participate as partner in unlimited additional applications.
4. For researcher recruitment/retention proposals, the grant competition’s guidelines will define “eminent researcher” to include early-stage or rising super-star researchers.
5. Round 1 will be a single grant cycle with separate instructions and formats for recognizing the importance of both applied R&D proposals and researcher recruitment/retention proposals. If VRIC and the Council Ad Hoc Committee determine under Principle 8 that proposals requesting amounts up to the full VRIF appropriation will be accepted, then SCHEV staff will determine whether additional format and/or score/weighting guidelines will be required to ensure that VRIC receives actionable information about, and SCHEV staff and peer review panel(s) can conduct appropriate due diligence for, such large-scale projects.
6. In Round 1, all proposals will be scored and ranked together. Determination of whether and what number of applied research and/or recruitment/retention proposals to fund will be made by VRIC during the selection/award process.
7. No stand-alone competition will be offered for equipment; all equipment requests will be made in the context of proposals for applied research projects or researcher recruitment or retention requests.
8. In Round 1, to inform applicants’ proposal development, the competition’s instructions will articulate guidelines for the dollar amounts of likely for awards. The Ad Hoc Committee recommends awards greater than \$1 million (for both general funds and bond funds).
9. Any funds remaining after award(s) in Round 1 will be rolled forward to Round 2.
10. As a lead applicant, an institution will be allowed to submit proposals in any combination that is consistent with Principle 3 (i.e., two applied R&D proposals; two recruitment or retention proposals; or one of each). However, as lead applicant, an institution will be awarded a maximum of one grant in each category. Institutions can receive funding as collaborating partners on an unlimited number of grant awards.
11. Grant periods may be proposed ranging from one year to five years.
12. A 1:1 match of the award amount will be required.
13. All funds (VRIF, bonds, and matching) must be expended by the end of the grant period unless unusual conditions exist. When unusual conditions exist, any consideration regarding the potential endowment of any grant and/or matching funds will be at the discretion of VRIC, which will review such situations on a case-by-case basis.
14. Nothing herein is intended to limit the Virginia Research Investment Committee’s discretion to reserve or otherwise identify funding for proof of concept proposals below the minimum and apart from the limited submission concepts expressed herein. It is recommended that all proposals, including but not limited to proof of concept proposals, speak to the entire research and development cycle, including commercialization.