



Rural Reimagined Faculty Grant Program

Application Package

Fall 2026 Application Cycle (2027-28 Project Period)



Center for Rural Innovation
TENNESSEE TECH

Application Information & Instructions

Welcome to the Rural Reimagined Faculty Grant Program application. This package contains all the necessary components for your proposal. Please follow the steps below to ensure your submission is complete and correctly formatted.

Application Checklist

- ☐ Completed Application Information
- ☐ Completed Budget Summary
- ☐ Proposal Narrative within page limit
- ☐ Required headings included
- ☐ Budget justifications completed
- ☐ Required signatures obtained
- ☐ Submitted and all signatures before September 30, 2026, at 4:30 p.m.

How to Complete Your Application

Step 1: Complete the Proposal & Budget Information. Begin on the next page by filling out all fields in the "Application Information" and "Budget Summary" sections. These sections provide the review committee with a high-level overview of your project and do not count toward your final page limit.

Step 2: Write Your Proposal Narrative. Your narrative is the core of your application. It must adhere to the following requirements:

- **Formatting:** Double-spaced, one-inch margins, and a clear, 12-point font.
- **Headings:** You must use all of the required headings as listed in the "Proposal Narrative" section.
- **Page Limit:** The Proposal Narrative must not exceed the page limit corresponding to your chosen funding tier. The Application and Budget sections do not count against the page limit.
Applications with narratives that exceed the specified page limits outlined below will not be reviewed.
- **Tier 1 (Large Grant)** – Up to \$20,000 maximum request. At most two (2) Tier 1 awards will be made per cycle. *Tier 1 projects carry the highest expectations for outputs and impact.* Awardees of Tier 1 grants are expected to produce at least two (2) significant scholarly or professional dissemination outputs as a result of the project. Examples include national or international conference presentations, peer-reviewed journal



publications, juried exhibits or performances, or similar high-impact contributions in the field.

- **Tier 2 (Medium Grant)** – Up to \$10,000 maximum request. Up to three (3) Tier 2 awards may be made per cycle. *Tier 2 projects are mid-scale in scope.* Awardees are expected to produce at least one (1) significant scholarly or professional output (e.g., a conference presentation, peer-reviewed publication, technical report, or comparable dissemination) from the project.
- **Tier 3 (Small Grant)** – Up to \$2,500 maximum request. Up to four (4) Tier 3 awards may be made per cycle. *Tier 3 projects are smaller exploratory or pilot initiatives.* These awards also require at least one (1) scholarly or professional output, such as a conference poster/presentation, white paper, or other appropriate dissemination of results.

Tier	Maximum	Page Limit	Expected Outputs
Tier 1	\$20,000	6 pages	Two scholarly products
Tier 2	\$10,000	4 pages	One scholarly product
Tier 3	\$2,500	2 pages	One scholarly product

Step 3: Submit Your Completed Application. Once your entire application package is complete, [submit the document via DocuSign here](#) by Wednesday, September 30, 2026 at 4:30 p.m. Late submissions will not be reviewed.

Funding Cycle: The Rural Reimagined Faculty Grant Program aligns project funding with Tennessee Tech's fiscal year. Applications submitted during the Fall 2026 competition will be considered for the July 1, 2027–June 30, 2028, project period.

The deadline for all [submissions](#) is Wednesday, September 30, 2026, at 4:30 p.m. Late submissions will not be reviewed.

For questions or more information, contact Stefanie Byrd, TCRI Assistant Director for Rural Resilience, at sbyrd@tntech.edu.



Application Information

Proposal Title

Please enter the full title of your project.

Funding Tier

Please enter the funding tier for which you are applying.

Principal Investigator (PI):

Name, Title, Department, College

Is this a collaborative proposal?

- ☐ Yes, this is a collaborative proposal.
- ☐ No, this is NOT a collaborative proposal.

If yes, provide CO-PI name(s), their college, and department below:

Example: Dr. Jane Doe, Accounting, College of Business

Community Partners

Please enter any community partners that will be part of your project.

Project Period: July 1, 2027 – June 30, 2028

Keywords

Enter a minimum of one (maximum of five) relevant keywords, separated by commas, that best describe the subject matter of your project.

Example: public school, learning, language, underserved, Latino



(Do not include rural-related words, as rural relevance is already assumed for all applicants).

Abstract

Provide a 150-word **maximum** abstract.

Budget Summary

Please provide the requested amount for each expense category in the fields below. Use the space beneath each category line to justify and itemize the expenses for that category as needed. Budget requests should reflect activities and expenditures occurring during the July 1, 2027–June 30, 2028 project period. Expenses incurred prior to project account activation are not allowable.

Bookkeeper Name

Please specify a departmental or center bookkeeper for this project.

Last, First

61231 Release Time

\$ (round to nearest whole dollar)

Provide a brief justification.



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62000 Employee Benefits

\$ (round to nearest whole dollar)

Provide a brief justification.

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61410 Student Salaries

\$ (round to nearest whole dollar)



Provide a brief justification.

73000 Travel (in-state only, must supplement the overall success of the project. Please note that out of state travel may be approved for dissemination purposes only. Please reach out to ckelsey@tntech.edu for approval.)

\$ (round to nearest whole dollar)

Provide a brief justification.



74000 Supplies and Operating Expenses

\$ (round to nearest whole dollar)

Provide a brief justification.

Account	Category	Amount
61231	Release Time	\$ _____
62000	Employee Benefits	\$ _____
61410	Student Salaries	\$ _____
73000	Travel	\$ _____
74000	Supplies & Operating	\$ _____
Total	Requested Budget	\$ _____

Notes:

- Equipment purchases are not allowable.
- Summer salary and overload compensation are not allowable.
- Travel must conclude by June 30, 2028.



Project Total

\$ (round to nearest whole dollar)



Proposal Narrative

The narrative must be double-spaced with one-inch margins at the top, bottom, and on each side. The type must be clear, readily legible, and of 12-point size, double-spaced. Spacing should be between 10.0 and 14.0 characters per inch, including spaces and punctuation marks. The narrative must stay within the page limit specified for your proposal's tier and include all required section headings listed below:

Description of Project (*Rubric Weight: 15 points*): Provide a description of your proposed project. Include a clear statement of the problem, question, or activity you wish to investigate; a justification of the research considering deficiencies in the existing knowledge base; other evidence of the need for the research; and references to the literature cited. Include appropriate in-text citations supporting the need for the project. A separate reference list is not required.

Significance/Rural Impact(*Rubric Weight: 40 points*): Discuss the contribution to knowledge that you expect your project to make in its respective field, the potential impact your project will have on rural Tennessee, and the ways in which your project will further extend the mission and vision of Rural Reimagined. Additionally, explain how your project plans to involve TN Tech students.

Plan of Action (*Rubric Weight: 25 points*): Describe each stage of your project plan step-by-step including the gathering of data by sampling or whatever means, the preparation of the data for analysis, the method of analysis, and method of evaluation. If applicable, describe plans and timelines for obtaining IRB, IACUC, Policy 120, or other required approvals prior to beginning project activities. This section must include a time schedule for the completion of the various steps of the research. As a reminder, proposed timelines should assume a project start date no earlier than July 1, 2027 and project completion by June 30, 2028.

Personnel Qualifications (*Rubric Weight: 10 points*): Describe the experience and knowledge you and your team possess regarding the project area.

Dissemination of Results (*Rubric Weight: 10 points*): Describe your plans for facilitating the utilization of the results of the project by interested and appropriate audiences. What are the possibilities for publication or other dissemination? If the research results in an article, list the periodicals that may be interested in publishing it. What are the possibilities of preparing a proposal for external support? List prospective agencies to which your proposal will be submitted. Describe how results will be shared with rural stakeholders.

Submission Information: Once the budget summary and proposal narrative are completed, [submit the document via DocuSign here](#) by **Wednesday, September 30, 2026 at 4:30 p.m.** Late submissions or incomplete applications will not be reviewed.

For questions or more information, contact Stefanie Byrd, TCRI Assistant Director for Rural Resilience, at sbyrd@tntech.edu.

