# FY2011
# PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENT
## RCG.2012.WV.01 and Request for Proposals

## RESEARCH CHALLENGE GRANTS (RCG)

**Proposal Due Date:**　　　　　　　　　**15 December 2011**

## Summary of Program Requirements

- **Program Title:**　　Research Challenge Grant
- **Program Officer:**　　Jan R. Taylor, Ph.D., Director of Research Programs
  Jan.taylor@wvresearch.org, 304-558-4128

## Eligibility Limits

- **Organization:**　　Any 4-year institution of higher education in West Virginia
- **Principal Eligibility:**　　Full-time faculty members or research professors in science, technology, engineering or mathematics (STEM)
- **Limit on Number of Proposals:**　　NA

## Award Information

- **Anticipated Type of Award:**　　Standard or continuing grant, up to five years dependent on funding availability
- **Estimated Number of Awards:**　　3-4
- **Anticipated Funding Amount:**　　up to $400,000 for the first year, decreasing amounts thereafter.

## Program Description

### Synopsis of Program:

Projects funded by Research Challenge Grants (RCGs) should assist faculty researchers in their ability to successfully compete for external funding on a national basis by providing incentives to increase capacity. The Legislature intended for institutions to collaborate in development and execution of research programs and projects to the extent practicable and to target research to needs of the state, linked to future competitiveness of the state. Programs may support faculty, students, and equipment in the overall goal of institutional enhancement. Research centers and projects that foster economic development and work force advancement within the state are especially encouraged.

### West Virginia's Investment Strategy:

In 2002 the West Virginia legislature provided the first RCG funding with long-range goals and strategies. Given the emphasis on infrastructure growth in promising cluster areas, proposals should pay special attention to university strategic plans for research growth strategies and Vision 2015, the West Virginia strategic plan for science and technology. Vision 2015 may be found at:
http://www.wvresearch.org/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_download&gid=10&&Itemid=26

The vision of this plan is "By 2015, research and innovation will be the number one driver of West Virginia's new, diverse and prosperous economy." Division of Science and Research (DSR) grant programs are focused on this vision and RCG applicants should use this program to further the goals of this strategic plan. Goals 3, 5, and 6 are particularly germane to the current solicitation.

RCG support for initiatives under this program shall not exceed five years in length and shall receive a decreasing award increment each year. The maximum awards in each year are as follows: Year 1 $400K, Year 2 $350K,

Year 3 $300K, Year 4 $200K and Year 5 $100K. All projects should be self-supporting at the end of the grant period. No limitations have been placed on the number of applications by any qualified institution.

**Research Challenge Program Description:**
The purpose of a Research Challenge Grant (RCG) is to provide support for lasting improvements in an institution's research capacity and to build toward technology-based economic development. RCGs focus on building core research strengths needed to develop efforts for the successful pursuit of significant regional opportunities in science and engineering that also have economic development potential.

An RCG proposal must describe the strategy and implementation mechanisms to develop and sustain the scientific focus of the proposal. Most importantly, the strategy must identify implementation mechanisms that have a high probability of realizing stated goals and objectives. In all instances, clear specification of research goals, performance milestones and a timetable for achieving such milestones is a requirement for RCG support.

## Application

Proposals must be submitted via the Grant Opportunity (GO!) system
https://www.wvresearch.org/data/go/login.php). To apply, you must be registered as a GO! user. If you are not currently registered, go to the login page and click on Register for Access. Choose a user name and password. We request that you provide contact data by clicking on the Basic Data tab and demographic data by clicking the Demographics tab. You may also upload or copy and paste your NSF-style or other brief biographical sketch in the tab labeled Biographic. These data take the place of the traditional cover sheet.

A PDF help document for the GO! system is available by clicking the Help link at the upper right corner of the page.

**Submitting an application:** Log in to your account and select Add a New Proposal from the GO! dashboard. Select Research Challenge Grants from the list of open RFPs. Enter the title of your proposal.

**NOTE:** If desired, the entire proposal including the Project Summary and Project Description may be uploaded as a single word processing or pdf document using the upload function on the first web page of the application. Otherwise, type directly into the text boxes or copy/paste from a word processing document.

**Project Summary:** Provide a one-page summary that includes a heading and the project abstract. The heading should include the title of the proposed endeavor and the names of the submitting institution and Principal Investigator. The abstract should briefly describe the project goals, content, and expected outcomes.

**Project Description:** The Project Description must include the following elements:
1. The proposal narrative should provide convincing background and rationale for the project proposed. The narrative should also explain the project's contribution to:
   - the scientific discipline
   - the state strategic plan
   - institutional strategic plans
   - economic development
   - workforce development.
2. How the proposed overall strategy and accompanying implementation mechanisms, which if augmented with the requested funding, will improve the research group's competitiveness for federal, jurisdictional, and private sector R&D funding. The specific S&T investments and activities must advance the research group's future research competitiveness.
3. Collaboration and recruitment: Proposals that delineate plans for inter-institutional collaboration must provide details of proposed interactions and shared resources (expertise, equipment, facilities) that will be utilized in completion of the proposed research.(Funds cannot be provided to entities outside the state of West Virginia). Similarly, if specific expertise is required but currently lacking, plans for recruitment of talent must be provided. Plans must include the institution's long-term commitment to the new faculty, post-doc or technician position.
4. A management plan is a critical component of the RCG. The management team is responsible for implementing the proposed research activities and managing all aspects of the project including timely reporting. In addition, it is expected that the management team will coordinate with other offices (e.g., sponsored research offices) to identify additional funding opportunities.

5. A comprehensive evaluation and assessment plan must be included. This plan, including milestones, must show the metrics selected to assess and evaluate demonstrable impacts and achievements of the award on the science and technology enterprise. The plan should detail metrics that indicate how the project is progressing towards developing strength to address scientific issues of regional relevance and potential economic development. The plan should include review and evaluation of activities by a group of external experts during the award period. The report prepared by these review committees must be shared in a timely manner with the DSR Program Officer.

6. A plan for long-term sustainability of the proposed activities must be included in the project description. The proposer must describe clearly, with milestones, the strategy for sustaining the impacts and achievements in the science and technology enterprise subsequent to RCG support.

The Project Description is limited to 15 pages with 2.5-cm margins on all sides, should be single-spaced and must use a legible font such as 10-point Arial or an 11-point proportional font (such as Times New Roman). The evaluation plan is not included in the 15 page limit but must not exceed 3 pages.

**Biographical Sketches:** Include a biographical sketch for each key personnel member. Each sketch is limited to 2 pages and should be sufficiently detailed to show that the necessary expertise is available to conduct the project. At a minimum, biosketches should include academic credentials, external funding received in the last 5 years, and refereed publications in the last 5 years relevant to the proposed project. Biographical sketches may be uploaded to GO! as a single document on the Attachments tab or included as part of your complete proposal upload.

**Budget:** Provide a budget request for each year and a cumulative budget. A budget justification, not to exceed three pages, and addressing each budgetary line-item, must be prepared. The budget spreadsheet can be downloaded from GO! in the budget detail section. When completed, upload the budget to MARS. The budget justification may also be uploaded.

## Budgetary Information

**Cost Sharing:** No matching is required. However, the WV Science and Research Council will consider the positive impact of leveraging internal and external support in the overall consideration of each proposal.

**Indirect Cost Limitations:** Overhead costs are not allowed.

**Other Budgetary Limitations:** Reasonable travel expenses will be considered. Expenses other than faculty, post-doc and student support and research equipment may be allowed with adequate justification.

## Due Date

Full proposals must be received by 5:00pm, Thursday, 15, December 2011.

## Review and Award Procedures

Proposals will be reviewed for scientific merit and competitiveness by an expert external review panel. Proposals will be further assessed for economic development potential by the WV Science and Research Council. The Council will approve awards to the successful applicants. Awards are anticipated in April 2011 with start dates on July 1, 2011. The Council retains the right to conduct interviews of potential awardees as necessary in making award decisions.

## Award Administration Information

**Notification:** Notification of the award is made to the submitting organization by the DSR office with a copy to the Principal Investigator. Organizations whose proposals are declined will be advised as promptly as possible. Copies of reviews, not including the identity of the reviewer, will be provided automatically to the Principal Investigator.

**Award Conditions:** All RCF awards consist of: (1) the award letter, which includes any special provisions applicable to the award and any numbered amendments thereto; (2) the budget, which indicates the amounts, by categories of expense, on which DSR has based its support (or otherwise communicates any specific approvals or disapprovals of proposed expenditures); (3) the proposal referenced in the award letter; and (4) the applicable award conditions generally pursuant to WV regulations. Awardees may adjust budget line items by no more than 10% without receiving prior written approval from the DSR office.

## Reporting Requirements

Reports must be filed on an annual basis in GO!. Reports must contain a summary of the year's research activities, and an evaluation report. In addition to reporting on the past year, a renewal request shall also be completed. The renewal will explain any failures to meet project milestones and describe the coming year's work plan. A financial report and a budget for the coming year must also be filed. Annual reports must be filed 60 days prior to the end of the performance period so that renewals may be processed without delay.

Invoicing should be submitted no more frequently than monthly and at least quarterly and shall be on a reimbursement basis. Invoices must reflect expenses by budget item and must include a brief description of program activities during the invoice period.

The final report is due no later than 60 days after the end of the grant period. The final report shall include a summary of the year's research activities and the overall activities and outcomes of the grant. A summative evaluation report shall be submitted. Final financial reporting is also due at this time.

## Contact Information

Programmatic questions should be directed to the program officer,
Dr. Jan R. Taylor, Director of Research Programs

**Division of Science and Research**
WV Higher Education Policy Commission
1018 Kanawha Boulevard East, Suite 1101
Charleston, West Virginia 25301
jan.taylor@wvresearch.org • (304) 558-4128 voice • (304) 558-2321 fax

Questions about GO! should be directed to Jonathan Caldwell, Director of IT Services at
johnathan.caldwell@wvresearch.org.