

Internal Faculty Grants for 2026-2027

Name: Organized Research and Creative Activity

Award (ORCA)

Amount: Proposals for funding up to \$11,800

Proposal Submission Open: July 1, 2026

Description: The ORCA program provides small project grants to support the execution of research, scholarship, and creative activities by tenured and tenure-track faculty at UHD.

Criteria: The proposed research and scholarship or creative activity must support the goals and/or objectives of the university, college, and/or department and do at least one of the following: (a) contribute to knowledge in the discipline; (b) have the potential to result in patents or licenses for commercial products; (c) have the potential to generate peer-reviewed publications and/or other deliverables commonly accepted for research and scholarship or creative activities in the Faculty Annual Merit process and the Rank and Tenure process, (d) have the potential to attract additional funding from external funding sources.

Eligibility: For research and scholarship or creative activity to be internally sponsored by the University using ORCA funds, the applicant must hold a tenured or tenure-track appointment at the University at the time the research is proposed.

Funding Period: Grants will be available for use from March 1, 2027 – June 30,

2028. **Course releases cannot be taken until Fall 2027**.

FY 27 Timeline:

Monday, August 31	Department ORCA Review Committees constituted.
Tuesday, September 1	Draft application submission due to the department committee.
Thursday, October 1	Department committee provides feedback.
Thursday, October 15	Final proposal submitted to Workflow
Monday, November 2	Department Chair review submitted in Workflow
Monday, November 16	Dean review submitted in Workflow
Tuesday, December 15	University committee submits recommendations to Research Innovation Committee (RIC)
Monday, January 11	RIC submits recommendations to the Provost
January, 31	Provost announces winners
Monday, March 1	Cost Centers are created and funds are available to candidates.

Name: Faculty Development Award (FDA) - *These awards are now managed by the colleges.*****

Name: Funded Faculty Leave

Amount: The compensation for the FFL will be the applicant's salary for the leave period (full amount for one semester or half amount across two semesters)

Proposal Submission Open: July 1, 2026

Description: The University of Houston-Downtown's funded faculty leave (FFL) program is intended to enable faculty members to engage in research, writing, field observation, internships, and other suitable professional or academic activities to improve their professional effectiveness. The leave grants are awarded on a competitive basis.

Criteria: The basic criteria for awarding a funded faculty leave grant are (1) the benefits of the proposed activity to the academic discipline and/or the UHD community, (2) the quality and feasibility of the proposal, and (3) the qualifications and accomplishments of the applicant.

Eligibility: The applicant must hold a full-time, tenured/tenure-track faculty appointment at UHD at the time of application and also must have held a full-time, tenured/tenure-track faculty appointment at UHD for at least two years immediately preceding the beginning of a faculty development leave.

Funding Period: FY28 Academic Year (Fall 2027 – Spring 2028)

Timeline (***updates due to BoR requirements for approving applications):

Monday, August 30, 2026	Department FFL committee appointed.
Monday, August 30, 2026	Applications for FFL are submitted into Watermark Workflow
Monday, September 20, 2026	Department FFL Committee recommendation is due
Monday, October 11, 2026	Department Chair recommendation is due
Monday, November 1, 2026	Dean recommendation is due
Monday, December 6, 2026	The University FFL committee sends recommendations to the Provost.
Monday, January 10, 2027	Provost notifies the candidates that they have been approved at the university level and submitted to the Board of Regents for the Feb. meeting.

Academic Affairs, Internal Grants FY27

Monday, February 21, 2027	Provost communicates to the applicant the status of their application.
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Policy Document: [PS 10.A.08](#) University Funded Faculty Leave