

UL Research Institutes Discoveries in Safety Grants

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Letter of Intent Due Date (*required*) (due by 5 p.m. E.S.T)

January 27, 2026

Full Proposal Deadline (due by 5 p.m. E.S.T)

April 24, 2026

Program Overview

The purpose of this funding opportunity is to enhance the mission of UL Research Institutes (ULRI), a nonprofit research organization dedicated to advancing public safety through scientific discovery.

Summary of Program Requirements

This document contains all relevant information related to the Discoveries in Safety Grants Program. The most important information regarding deadlines, eligibility, and award information can be found below and in the respective sections.

Key Dates:

LOI Application Period: December 3, 2025, to January 27, 2026 (due by 5 p.m. E.S.T.)

Applicant Question Period: December 3, 2025, to January 12, 2026

Full Proposal Application Period: March 13 to April 24, 2026 (due by 5 p.m. E.S.T.)

Research Projects Expected to Begin By: September 1, 2026

Who Should Submit Proposals:

All proposals should be submitted by an accredited college, university, government, or non-government organization (including not-for-profit and for-profit institutions) with recognized legal status in their respective country.

Award Information:

Type of Award: Competitive grant

Funding Amount: up to \$200,000 a year

Duration of Award: up to 3 years

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I. Introduction and Background

The purpose of this funding opportunity is to enhance the mission of UL Research Institutes (ULRI), a nonprofit research organization dedicated to advancing public safety through scientific discovery. Since 1894, our research has advanced our mission toward a safer, more secure and sustainable future. Focused on global risks from fire mitigation and air quality to safe energy storage and digital privacy, we conduct rigorous independent research, analyze safety data and partner with experts to uncover and act on existing and emerging risks to human safety. Discover more at [UL.org](https://ul.org).

To meet today's urgent global safety risks, ULRI has set out to address three grand challenges: (1) Building resilience for a sustainable future, (2) Advancing individual and societal health in the 21st century, and (3) Promoting safety at the human-digital interface. ULRI aims to further the progress of safety science by providing grants, thereby continuing the quest to address global challenges and create a safer world.

II. Focus Areas

Successful applications will outline how the proposed project will enhance progress and maximize impact in **one** of the following focus areas:

Focus Area 1: Improved respiratory protection options for first responders under toxic smoke conditions

- Problem statement: When responding to fires at the wildland-urban interface (WUI), emergency personnel are typically exposed to high levels of smoke that can include toxic components generated from the burning of anthropogenic materials and biomass. Traditional respiratory protection devices do not provide sufficient filtering capabilities to gases and particulate, place a significant metabolic burden on the firefighter, and/or do not withstand the extreme environment and use of WUI firefighting responses. Evaluation of emerging respiratory protection devices is necessary to understand the impact on the firefighter and feasibility of implementation. Improved technologies may be needed to develop devices which address these challenges and adequately protect individuals under WUI fire conditions.
- Areas of interest: Assessment of respirator feasibility for use in WUI fire responses: 1) characterization of the physiological, ergonomic, and metabolic impact of performing firefighting operations, 2) quantification of protection during and following exposure to combustion products (such as assessment of biomarkers or markers of effect in WUI firefighters), 3) evaluation of adoption and implementation by the fire service. Technologies that demonstrate high levels of protection against WUI smoke hazards while minimizing physical stress for individuals deploying the technology. Filters that go beyond absorption/adsorption to catalytically react and detoxify specific hazards. Integration of emerging technologies into respirators that are feasible for the fire service.

Focus Area 2: Improved recycling technologies to recover critical minerals from energy storage devices

- Problem statement: Energy-storage technologies make use of a spectrum of critical minerals (elements) for various use cases, including alkali metals, transition metals, and rare earths. Current recycling technologies leave considerable room for improvement with respect to a long-term goal of strong circularity. Recycling technologies themselves must be designed to be cost-effective with minimal environmental impact.
- Areas of interest: Innovations targeting any step in the recycling process for energy-storage technologies covering a spectrum of use cases.

Focus Area 3: Characterization of chemical emissions and residual ash from wildland-urban interface (WUI) fires

- Problem Statement: Fires at the wildland-urban interface (WUI) are becoming more frequent and severe resulting in 1) airborne emissions that can expose large segments of the population and 2) residual ash that can be subject to re-suspension or runoff prior to cleanup. The chemical composition of the airborne emissions and residual ash from WUI fires are complex with contributions from biomass, building materials, and personal property and can vary with combustion conditions. While some of the chemical components of the WUI fire emissions and runoff have been characterized using both targeted and non-targeted analytical chemistry methods, additional data are needed to identify and monitor candidate chemicals of concern following WUI fire events.

- Areas of interest: 1) Non-targeted chemical analysis of residual ash and runoff samples from historical WUI fire events. 2) Non-targeted chemical analysis of WUI fire emissions and residual ash from real-world incidents and/or simulated laboratory burns of different building materials and representative personal property.

Focus Area 4: Mineral fiber emission and transport characterization from wildland-urban interface (WUI) fires

- Problem Statement: With the changing climate, fires at the wildland-urban interface (WUI) are becoming more frequent and severe. Legacy contaminants in building materials and biomass include mineral fibers such as asbestos. Initial studies on entrained fibers in tree bark and forest duff suggested potential exposure to communities and emergency responders, but little is known about the emissions from legacy building materials and the atmospheric transport under extreme meteorology of a large WUI fire.
- Areas of interest: 1) Mineral fiber emission profiles from asbestos containing building materials. 2) Atmospheric modeling and experimental measurements of the transport of mineral fibers under WUI fire conditions of different sizes and severities. 3) Experimental measurements of mineral fibers and their characteristics in residual ash from asbestos containing building materials.

III. Award Information

Type of Award: Competitive grant

Funding Amount: up to \$200,000 a year

Duration of Award: up to 3 years

Payment of Overhead on Externally Sponsored Projects: All budgetary proposals submitted to ULRI must cap overhead at 25% of modified total direct costs (MTDC). Salaries, benefits, material & supplies, travel, other services, and subawards are direct costs for which overhead may generally be charged. However, the main project budget and a single subaward budget must cap overhead at 25% of MTDC in total in any proportion. For example, if a subaward is allowed 20% overhead, the main project budget may only charge 5% overhead on the MTDC amount of the subaward (20% plus 5% equals 25% maximum allowed). Even if there is more than one subaward, the cap on total overhead for the main project budget still cannot exceed 25% of MTDC.

The following direct costs are not eligible for overhead reimbursement by ULRI:

- Student tuition, student fees, scholarships, and fellowships.
- Equipment purchases (defined as a single or composite item having a cost of \$5,000 or greater and usable life greater than one year).
- Capital expenditures.
- Fabricated or constructed equipment.
- Rental costs of off-site facilities.
- Participant support costs.

IV. Eligibility Information

Who Should Submit Proposals:

All proposals should be submitted by an accredited college, university, government, or non-government organization (including not-for-profit and for-profit institutions) with recognized legal status in their respective country. (Any entity or person on a sanctions list administered by the U.S. Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control's (OFAC) or any entity located in a country designated for comprehensive sanctions on a list administered by OFAC is ineligible to receive funding under this grant program.)

Who May Serve as PI:

The Principal Investigator (PI) must be an individual of the organization holding a full-time administrative or faculty role. Multiple PIs can be included in the proposal.

A PI must NOT be:

- A previous employee of UL Solutions, ULRI, or UL Standards & Engagement (ULSE) within 12 months prior to submitting a Letter of Intent for this program.
- A current recipient of a UL Research Institutes Discoveries in Safety Grant (DSG). However, recipients of non-DSG funds and other current collaborators are eligible.
- Currently serving as a member of a UL Research Institutes advisory board, technical committee, or in a similar formal advisory role (please contact partnerships@ul.org with questions on this status).

V. Proposal Preparation and Submission Instructions

A. Key Dates

LOI Application Period: December 3, 2025 to January 27, 2026 (due by 5 p.m. E.S.T.)

Applicant Question Period: December 3, 2025 to January 12, 2026

Full Proposal Application Period: March 13 to April 24, 2026 (due by 5 p.m. E.S.T.)

Research Projects Expected to Begin By: September 1, 2026

B. LOI Requirements

A Letter of Intent (LOI) is a required document needed from all applicants who are interested in receiving funds from this program. The LOI will be submitted through ProposalCentral and reviewed by ULRI's team of reviewers to determine if a full proposal will be requested from the submitting organization.

LOIs must be submitted on or before **January 27, 2026** through ProposalCentral. Invitations to submit full proposals will be communicated to applicants via ProposalCentral by March 13, 2026

ULRI requests the following items be included in the LOI Section:

The following information will be submitted directly into ProposalCentral

1. Project Title
2. Project Director/Principal Investigator Background
 - ORCID ID where applicable **and** Curricula Vitae (exempt from page limit)
 - Curriculum Vitae/Biosketch
 - Include the Project Director/Principal Investigator's C.V. or biography. The C.V. should include the following information:
 - Education
 - Employment History
 - A list of the proposer's most important previous publications
 - Important honors
3. Co-Project Director/Principal Investigator Background
4. Organization Information
5. Nontechnical Project Abstract
6. LOI Narrative (see below)

LOI Narrative: The following information will be submitted as an attachment into ProposalCentral (limited to a total of 3 pages uploaded within a single PDF file)

Narrative Prompts:

- A brief statement about the nature and purpose of the proposed project.
- A description of the proposed work to be supported and any unique aspects and pilot studies being pursued.
- A brief overview of the methodologies proposed.
- A brief overview of the outputs and expected outcomes of the proposed project.

Budget Prompts:

- An estimate of the total cost of the project
- The amount requested of ULRI
- An estimate of the duration of the project
- A brief overview of how funds will be utilized

C. Full Proposal Requirements

After LOIs are reviewed and selected, applicants advancing in the process will be invited to submit a full proposal. The full proposal will be submitted through ProposalCentral and reviewed by ULRI's team of reviewers to determine if a grant will be awarded.

Proposals must be submitted on or before **April 24, 2026** through ProposalCentral

ULRI requests the following items be included in the full proposal sections:

The following information will be submitted directly into ProposalCentral

1. Project Director/Principal Investigator Background
2. Co-Project Director/Principal Investigator Background
3. Additional Team Members
 - Research Team - Curriculum Vitae/Biosketch (exempt from page limit)
 - Include each key research team member's C.V. or biography. The C.V. should include the following information:
 - Education
 - Employment History
 - A list of the proposer's most important previous publications
 - Important honors
4. Organization Information
5. Proposal Narrative (see below)
6. Budget
7. Detailed Budget Template
8. Summary Budget
9. Budget Narrative (see below)

Proposal Narrative:

The following information will be submitted as an attachment into ProposalCentral (limited to a total of 15 pages uploaded within a single PDF file)

Proposal Narrative Prompts:

1. Who are the principal members of the research team?

Introduce the principal members of the research team and briefly provide the following information for each:

- Their responsibilities in the project
- Any notable achievements, qualifications, or expertise pertinent to their designated roles

2. What is the research question? What is the significance of this question?

In a brief statement, outline the proposed research question and the importance of answering it. Include factors like the broader societal implications that this research question aims to address and the role of this research in advancing the field of safety science.

- Succinctly describe the problem that the research project will address. This may include a brief summary of the current scientific and technological state of the art or the developmental status of the field to be advanced.

3. What is the research project? What are the goals and methodologies?

Present an overview of the planned research project. This overview should include:

- An outline of the specific tasks to be carried out
- The project's objectives and how they align with the current research landscape
- The research methodologies to be employed. Describe the goals of the research project and what methodologies will be employed to meet these goals. Project goals and methodologies can be technical and/or non-technical, but please make them as specific as possible. The section should also include how the party will contribute to project goals and methodologies.

The narrative should convey answers to the following questions:

- What do the proposers intend to accomplish in the research project?
- Why is the project significant?
- How do the proposers intend to execute the project?
- How will the proposers gauge the project's success?
- What are the potential outcomes?

Applicants should document any crucial assumptions, strategies, and techniques. The discussion may encompass theoretical frameworks, data sources, experimental apparatus, analytical approaches, and other relevant particulars, depending on the nature of the research. The explanations presented in the narrative should be understandable to an educated and interested non-specialist audience.

4. Empirical Research Methods

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Grant proposals requesting support for research should include a comprehensive methodological discussion. ULRI enlists external experts to assess proposals, therefore applicants should anticipate a high level of scrutiny and should tailor their responses for a subject matter expert audience.

The Empirical Research Methods section should encompass the following:

- Intricate and technical details concerning research design, data or sample collection, and instrumentation, if applicable
- Approach to analysis and validation
 - Include specifics like power calculations and preregistration plans, if applicable
- A thorough account of the structure, functioning, and criteria for using models employed in the research process

For proposals related to qualitative research include descriptions of:

- Research design
- Data collection methods
- Analytic approaches
- Interview, survey, and data collection protocols

In cases where projects generate data, models, or code meant for use by others, include the following:

- Specific individuals or groups intending to utilize such products
- Their willingness to collaborate with the investigators to ensure that the products meet their requirements

For data sets that are confidential, proprietary, or have other sensitivity considerations, provide the following:

- An outline of the measures to safeguard the interests of third parties.

Research raising ethical concerns should undergo review by an Institutional Review Board or a similar independent body responsible for safeguarding the rights and welfare of human subjects. Please indicate when such a review has been completed or is planned when responding to this question.

5. What is the work plan?

The proposal narrative should address the project's timeline and its implementation including details about:

- Task allocation
 - List specific tasks to be performed over the duration of the project period and the associated milestones. Tasks should be described as thoroughly as possible and include which project party(s) will be completing each task.
- Project oversight
- Roles and responsibilities of the team members
- Important project milestones
 - Milestones should represent any key events or discoveries that will occur during this project.
- Criteria for measuring success

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- Potential risks associated with various aspects of the work plan along with the corresponding risk mitigation strategies
- Outline of the involvement and expected contributions of a collaboration with external individuals or organizations, if applicable
- Current project status, if applicable

6. What are the anticipated outcomes of the research project?

The proposal narrative should include the following:

- An overview of the expected research outputs
 - Could encompass publications, datasets, participation in conferences, educational activities for students, and postdoctoral researchers
- An outline of the dissemination strategy to be employed throughout the project
- Measurable criteria for the outcomes, if applicable
 - What would signify success? (i.e., target publication venues, software download counts, conference attendance numbers, etc.)
 - List anticipated project deliverables, this may include conferences, orals, poster presentations, seminars, technical reports, etc. Minimum requirements for deliverables are quarterly written progress reports.

7. What is the existing body of literature regarding the research question(s)?

Provide an overview of the existing body of literature related to the research question(s) under consideration. Elaborate on how the proposed project aligns with, complements, or expands upon this existing research, referencing pivotal publications within the field, while also pinpointing areas where the literature lacks coverage. The literature review should encompass significant works authored by the proposer(s) as well as other experts in the field.

8. What is the status and outcomes of grants previously awarded by ULRI?

This question is only applicable to former ULRI grant recipients requesting funding for a new project related to their prior ULRI grant, or when they are seeking renewed or expanded support for an ongoing ULRI-funded project. Provide an overview of the achievements resulting from prior ULRI grants, including a compilation of publications (i.e. working papers, journal articles, books, Ph.D. dissertations, etc.) and other outputs (i.e. conferences, presentations, films, training, etc.) that have been identified as measurable outcomes from current and/or previous grants.

Budget Narrative: The following information will be submitted as an attachment into ProposalCentral (limited to a total of 2 pages uploaded within a single PDF file)

Budget Narrative Prompts:

1. What is the summary justification for the funding request?

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Provide a detailed budget narrative of the rationale for the budget request and Detailed Budget Template, explaining its alignment with the research and the expected outcomes it will facilitate.

2. Are there any additional research funding sources that the proposer has sought or secured to support the research project currently being proposed to ULRI?

If the research project is seeking or has obtained funding from other sources, please provide a list of the sources along with the following information:

- Funding amounts
- Status of funding from each

3. What other research support, both 'Current' and 'Pending,' does the proposer currently have aside from the ULRI research project?

If the proposer is currently receiving or has pending support from other sources, please provide the following information:

- Title of Project/Proposal
- Funding Source
- Total Award Amount
- Amount Awarded to the Principal Investigator
- Duration of the Award
- Project Location
- Brief description of the research in relation to this proposal

D. Submission Instructions

ProposalCentral:

Both the LOI and Full Proposal (for those applicants whose LOIs are accepted) will be submitted through ProposalCentral. Below you will find information on how to navigate the platform. If an applicant is having difficulty utilizing ProposalCentral or have any questions about the platform, please use the ProposalCentral contact listed in the Contact section of this document.

- [Home Tab Overview](#)
- [Setting up Your Professional Profile](#)
- [Institution Profile Management - Creating a New Profile](#)
- [Institution Profile Management - Searching for a Profile](#)
- [Direct Link \(Multiple Applications\)](#)
- [Key Personnel Demographics](#)
- [Validate Button tutorial](#)
- [e-signatures](#)
- [Proposals – accessing and editing applications, searching for previous applications](#)

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confidential for Altum ProposalCentral clients and staff only. These videos should not be shared with any third parties without prior written approval from Altum

ULRI requests that all documents that are submitted as an attachment to the applications in ProposalCentral follow the below format:

- No longer than 3 pages maximum for the LOI
- No longer than 15 pages maximum for the full proposal narrative, 2 pages maximum for the separate budget narrative
- 11-point font or larger
- At least .5" margins
- Single line spacing
- Ariel or Times New Roman font
- PDF filetype
- Please do not include a cover sheet with your proposal

Submitting requested documents:

LOIs and Full Proposals that are submitted without the information listed in their respective requirements **will not be reviewed, and therefore will be disqualified from being considered for this program.**

VI. ULRI Proposal Processing and Review Procedures

Applications will be evaluated for scientific merit by the selected review team. Each team will follow a scientific review process.

The following will be considered during the review process:

- Scientific and technical merit of the proposed project as determined by scientific review
- Relevance of proposed project to the scientific scope of the focus areas provided
- Proposed use of funds

The committee will evaluate all applications thoroughly. Resubmissions are not permitted. However, revisions are allowed once a proposal is accepted for award.

VII. Award Administration Information

A. Notification of the Award

Notification of the award is made to the organization by ULRI's Office of Partnerships, Extramural Research, and Administration. Organizations that have been invited, or not invited, to submit full proposals will be notified as soon as possible. This notification will be sent to the Principal Investigator of the submitting organization.

B. Award Conditions

Upon being accepted as a grantee for the UL Research Institutes Discoveries in Safety Grants Program, the chosen organizations will be provided with the following documents:

- The award notice with any amendments made to the submitted proposal
- Information regarding approvals/ disapprovals of the submitted budget

- Terms and conditions of the award

The following is an overview of ULRI standard terms and conditions

- List of program or budget-related changes that require ULRI's prior written approval
- Reporting and project results requirements
- Limits on sharing of confidential or proprietary information
- Publication restrictions and rules on attribution of results
- Intellectual property rights and commercialization

C. Reporting Requirements

Progress reports – submitted no less frequently than quarterly to ULRI using ProposalCentral. This report, submitted by the PI of the award, should include updates on project milestones, findings, outcomes, data, successes and challenges.

Update on Grant Outputs—submitted no less frequently than quarterly using ProposalCentral. This report should include invention disclosures, provisional patents, inventions, and publications.

Invoices – submitted monthly for reimbursement using ProposalCentral. All payments and invoices submitted throughout the duration of the project should be provided in USD.

Final Project Report – at the conclusion of the project, ULRI requires the submission of a final project report that includes a summary of project findings, outcomes, and data.

VIII. Contacts

All inquiries regarding this program should be directed to the Office of Partnerships, Extramural Research, and Administration at partnerships@ul.org with the subject line "Discoveries in Safety Grants Inquiry". Informal communications including, but not limited to, requests for information to any ULRI employee other than an Office of Partnerships representative is discouraged and may result in disqualification of an applicant's proposal.

Questions submitted outside the designated questions period (as indicated in the Key Dates) may be answered at the discretion of ULRI.

For technical questions related to ProposalCentral, please contact the ProposalCentral Customer Support Team: pcsupport@altum.com or (800) 875-2562.