



## **Request For Proposal:**

# **Graduate Faculty Top Tier Doctoral Graduate Research Assistantship (TTDGRA) Grant Program**

## **TTDGRA Program Information**

The Top Tier Doctoral Graduate Research Assistantship program will provide approximately 30 doctoral graduate research assistantships to support doctoral degree-seeking students at UNLV. This competitive program will fund selected proposals for research and creative activity by providing a 9-month state-funded doctoral research assistant for an academic year, which is renewable for up to two additional years (for 3 years of total support: Fall 2026 through Spring 2029). These TTDGRAs will receive the standard doctoral student GA stipend ([which varies by graduate program](#)) and standard Graduate College GA benefits (tuition, health insurance, & summer tuition benefits). Faculty members awarded TTDGRAs are encouraged to supplement the stipend and/or hire the student in summer using department, college, or other external funds, if available. The approximate value of this entire TTDGRA program is \$800,000 per year for 3 years, or approximately \$2.4 million dollars from state allocations.

### **TTDGRA Application Information**

- TTDGRAs are awarded to academic faculty who then select and appoint a doctoral student to fill the GA position each year in the Grad Rebel Gateway.
- Proposals should clearly address how the TTDGRA faculty and graduate student research, scholarship, or creative activities will support [UNLV Top Tier 2.0](#) efforts and/or advance our efforts to cultivate and sustain a strong, R1 (Carnegie very high research) graduate community.
- Proposals must show how the TTDGRA will promote graduate student success and appropriate time-to-degree.
- Collaborative and interdisciplinary teams are encouraged to apply. Teams may be eligible for multiple TTDGRAs.
- Individual faculty applicants may submit multiple applications as either PI or Co-PI, but can only be awarded a maximum of one TTDGRA as a PI.
- Current TTDGRA PI recipients (awarded in the AY2023-26 cycle) will be ineligible for the award in AY2026-29 since we aim to diversify the award opportunities across faculty ranks and fields.

- This program supports tenure-track and tenured graduate faculty of all ranks and from all fields of study housing graduate programs.
- The TTDGRA application can only be completed and submitted online using the Qualtrics [TTDGRA Application form](#). You may begin the form, save it, exit, and return to complete the form. The form is not considered complete until you fill it out completely, per the instructions provided, and hit the submit button.
- TTDGRA applications are due by August 4th, 2025, @ 9 pm PST. Award notifications will be sent in December to allow time to recruit and appoint TTDGRA students to begin in Fall 2026.
- Recipients of TTDGRA awards must complete an annual TTDGRA report each spring as part of the request for renewal of the TTDGRA award for years 2 and 3.
- Recipients must submit a grant proposal that includes support for a GA during the 3-year award period.
- Recipients must also commit to serving on future TTDGRA review committees to adjudicate applications in future cycles.

## Submission Guidelines & Information

Please submit the TTDGRA proposal as described below. The submission deadline is 9 p.m. PST on August 4, 2025. After submission, the proposals will be distributed to the proposers' deans and department chairs for review, rating, and comment. Independently, a select committee of faculty, with representation from each college with graduate programs, will review and rank all of the submitted proposals and make recommendations to the Graduate College. The committee will also consider deans' and department chairs' evaluations. We anticipate funding 30 TTDGRAs. The Graduate College will determine the final number and distribution of awards and manage the TTDGRAs for the duration of the program after the TTDGRA committee completes its work. The Graduate College will announce awards no later than January 2026. Funded proposals will be able to recruit their TTDGRA for fall 2026 admission or hire a current graduate student for this role. Funded researchers and teams will be required to submit an annual report each spring.

## Proposal Requirements & Format

In the Qualtrics [TTDGRA Application](#), you will be asked to provide some basic information and submit a PDF of your grant proposal. Your proposal must conform to the following guidelines:

- Please describe your proposed research, scholarship, or creative activities. What are you proposing to do during the 3-year funding cycle, and how will having a 3-year TTDGRA support and advance your project?
- Include a brief section explaining your background and related research/scholarship/creative activities, and how this prepares you/the research team to be successful.
- How will your proposed project contribute to existing knowledge in your field and department/university mission ([UNLV Top Tier 2.0](#))?

- Outline your program timeline for the 3-year funding cycle between August 2026 and May 2029.
  - Describe your anticipated outcomes of this project and deliverables (conference presentations, publications, grants, performances, exhibitions, book chapters, manuscripts, etc.).
  - Recipients must submit a grant proposal that includes support for a GA during the 3-year award period. Please describe the potential funding source and explain the timeline for grant submission.
  - Do not exceed 5 single-spaced pages, including diagrams, tables, appendices, and references
  - 1-inch side margins
  - ½ inch top and bottom margins
  - Text font should be at least 11 point
  - A header with the project director/directors' first & last name(s), departments, and project title (so no cover page required)
  - A footer with the page number
  - Naming convention of proposal submissions: Proposal\_(First name\_Last name of PI)
  - Naming convention of CVs submissions: CV\_(First name\_Last name of Researcher)
- Proposal Evaluation

## **Review Criteria:**

### **Primary Criteria**

- Is the TTDGRA project rigorous, clearly explained, and compelling in terms of significance?
- Is the proposed work for the TTDGRA student clear and appropriate, in terms of scope?
- Are there clear deliverables or outcomes specified?
- Does the proposal describe how the TTDGR assistantship would support the generation of funded research, publications, creative works, or other scholarly outcomes?
- Do the applicants have a successful record of research, scholarship, or creative activity that prepares them for success with this project?
  - If early career faculty, is their record thus far indicative of success, and is their proposal well-written and rigorous?
  - If mid-career faculty, how does this TTDGRA advance their research, scholarship, or creative activity and support their advancement to full professor/their career advancement, etc.?
  - If senior faculty, how does the TTDGRA fit into a successful academic record?
- Does the PI provide a sound mentoring plan for the TTDGRA graduate student?
- Does the proposal clearly support UNLV's top-tier goals and metrics?
- Does the project have the potential to secure additional funding, especially from external sources? (Once awarded and within the award period, awardees must submit a grant proposal that includes support for a GA.)

## Secondary Criteria

- Does the project involve an interdisciplinary team of researchers (projects listing a total number of 2 faculty members at minimum, are preferred but this is not an eligibility requirement)?
- Is the PI an assistant professor, or is there an assistant professor or junior researcher listed as Co-PI (projects listing assistant professors are preferred, but this is not an eligibility requirement)?
- Is the timeline of the project appropriate? Is the project doable given the project timeline?
- Are there other broader impacts of the research proposed for UNLV/region/city/state that would factor into the rating of this proposal?

2023-2026 TTDGRA Awardees (<https://www.unlv.edu/graduatecollege/ttdgra>)

The winners of our 2023-2026 Top Tier Doctoral Graduate Research Assistant (TTDGRA) grant competition, names and project titles, may be viewed on the awardees' document [here](#). There were 100 submissions in 2022, and 35 TTDGRAs were funded in the 2023-2026 cycle. The funded proposals were from professors of all ranks (43% Assistants; 37% Associates; 20% Professors), and 67% are based on collaborative, often multidisciplinary, faculty teams.