



Michigan Materials Research Institute (MMRI) Call for Proposals: AY26-27

In addition to this Annual MMRI call for incubator proposals, this year MMRI is partnering with the Center for Materials Innovation (CMI), NSF MRSEC (R. Goldman, Director), in the “*CMI-MRSEC Superseed Competition 2026-27*” that will focus on building integrated research groups (IRGs) for the NSF MRSEC renewal proposal in 2028-29. The MRSEC Superseed Competition 2026-27 call will be announced separately by CMI. **The ideas proposed in the MMRI incubator proposals should not be duplicated in the MRSEC Superseed call.**

LOI due (required): 5 pm, Friday **October 30th** 2026

Proposal due: 5 pm, Friday **December 11th** 2026

Submit a single PDF file via e-mail to <materialsresearch@umich.edu>

In the subject of the e-mail, please include:

MMRI Proposal 2026-27 - <PI last name, first name>

Failing to include this string (with the PI’s last name and first name) in the subject line of the email may result in your proposal not being reviewed.

Joint Webinars about the **MMRI call for Incubator proposals** and **NSF MRSEC CMI call for “super seed” competition**, hosted by Amit Misra, Max Shtein and Rachel Goldman.

Both webinars will present the same content. Please join one based on which date/time works better for you.

Session #1: Friday Oct 2, 2026, 4 – 5 pm

<https://umich.zoom.us/j/93397399560>

Meeting ID: 933 9739 9560

Passcode: 967776

Session #2: Wednesday October 14th, 11 am – 12 pm

<https://umich.zoom.us/j/99158935998>

Meeting ID: 991 5893 5998

Passcode: 679520



MMRI Incubator Proposals

- Limited to MMRI Faculty Affiliates at UM-Ann Arbor campus

- **Team composition**

2-4 funded faculty investigators,

≥ 2 departments (proposals where all faculty investigators are from the same department will not be accepted).

- There is no limit on the number of unfunded UM faculty collaborators that can be listed in a proposal.

- **Industry Partnership (optional):**

Projects that involve industry or create consortia with full or partial industry support are encouraged. MMRI funds cannot be allocated to industry. However, MMRI faculty investigators can include a partner from industry in the proposal. The role of the industry partner should be clearly articulated in the proposal narrative, including any financial commitment from the industry to the MMRI faculty investigators.

- **Typical budget**

\$60K - \$100K [including 20% cost share from investigators/departments] total for 2 years.

- **Expected number of teams in cohort: 3-4 new teams**

Faculty PIs are encouraged to contact us to discuss ideas prior to submission:

[Amit Misra](#), Faculty Director, MMRI-(MC)²

[Max Shtein](#), Lead, Incubators and Industry Partnerships, MMRI



MMRI Incubator Proposals: new proposals

Teams should present a vision for pursuing external sponsorship to establish a “center of research excellence” in emerging topical areas including (but not limited to):

- AI/ML for Discovery in Materials Research
- Materials for Medicine
- Critical Minerals and Materials
- Materials for future Microelectronics, Energy
- Materials for Hypersonics, Nuclear Fusion
- Materials - Advanced Manufacturing Co-design

Faculty who are currently serving as Director or Associate Director in externally sponsored centers or UM Institutes/Centers, Department Chairs, Dean/Associate Dean, etc. can be included only as unfunded faculty collaborators on the proposal team (This restriction is only for internal MMRI funding. There is no restriction on team composition for proposals submitted to external sponsors).

Faculty recently promoted to (or newly recruited at) the rank of tenured associate or full professors with a vision to lead multi-PI external proposals in future are particularly encouraged to apply as lead PI.

Join MMRI

- The MMRI internal call for proposals is limited to the MMRI Faculty Affiliates.
- UM Ann Arbor campus faculty (all ranks) who are not yet affiliated, can become MMRI affiliates by sending an e-mail to <materialsresearch@umich.edu>
- There is no membership fee.
- In the e-mail, include your name, e-mail address, current rank, and home department.
- The current (>200) MMRI Faculty Affiliates are listed on the [MMRI website](#).

MMRI Incubator Proposals: new proposals

Individual faculty participation limit:

- No more than 2 proposal submissions as funded investigator (e.g., 1 as lead PI and 1 as co-PI or 2 as co-PI).
- Lead PI, preferably, should be a tenured (full or associate) professor. Assistant Professors and research-track faculty can be involved as co-PIs. In some cases, Assistant Professors (particularly those who have completed 2 full years and have a track record of success as single PI) can also be considered as lead PI.
- There is no limit regarding number of proposals an individual can be listed as “unfunded collaborator”.
- Participating UM-Ann Arbor campus faculty must be [MMRI affiliate](#).
- **MMRI AY25-26 awarded teams:** these faculty can only be included as unfunded collaborators in the AY26-27 proposals.
- **MMRI AY24-25 awarded teams:** will be completing 2-years in February 2027.
 - These faculty can either join new proposal team(s) to pitch new ideas (as funded investigator or unfunded collaborator) or apply for a 1-year extension to continue pursuing the current proposed vision.
 - The budget for 1-year extension will be capped at 50% of the original budget and must be justified by evidence of success of the current team, list of proposals submitted/awarded/pending as a team, and additional (new) funding opportunities that will be pursued in 2027-28 in the extension period.

Proposal Format (New submission)

1) Cover page (1 page)

Title of the proposal.

Names and affiliations of the PI, co-PI and unfunded collaborators.

2) Proposal Narrative (3-4 pages)

Narrative section should provide the following information:

- a) Vision for the proposed work and its transformative impact
- b) Potential external funding opportunities (be as specific as possible)
- c) Summary of work plan
- d) Qualifications, experience of, and synergies among the investigators
- e) (optional, for proposals with industry partners): role of the industry partner in the proposed research
vision, plus pledged or intended financial commitment from industry to MMRI funded investigators.
- f) Summary of how the requested budget will be spent and how the cost share will be funded.

The narrative section includes figures, and tables.

Cited references can be listed at the end and are not included in the 4-page limit. There is no page limit for references.

Font size: Times New Roman 11 pt or equivalent, single-spaced, 1" margins top/bottom, left/right.

3) Attachments

- a) 2-page NSF format CV for PI and co-PIs (investigators who will receive funding from this internal grant).
CVs are not needed for the unfunded collaborations, but a summary of their expertise and anticipated contributions to this proposal team can be included in section 2(d).
- b) Current and pending support documents for PI and co-PIs.

Proposal Format for 1-year extension for AY24-25 teams only

1) Cover page (1 page)

Title of the proposal. Names and affiliations of the PI, co-PI and unfunded collaborators.

2) Proposal Narrative

The narrative section should provide the following information:

- a) Vision for the proposed work and its transformative impact
(indicate how it has evolved in the last 2 years based on experience and identification of new opportunities)
- b) List of proposals submitted that included at least 2 (or all) of the MMRI funded investigators and unfunded collaborators in your team. (For each proposal, indicate whether it was awarded, declined or pending. Use abridged format, for example: <external sponsor name>, <proposal title>, lead PI: M. SHETIN* (MSE, UM), co-PIs: <A.WITREOL*, Physics, UM>,<list all names> *MMRI incubator proposal team investigators
- a) Requested funding (total): \$xxx million for y years; Requested funding (UM share): \$xyx million for y years;
- b) Date Submitted: month/year
- c) Outcomes: funded / pending / submitted
- d) List any other internal UM grant (e.g., OVPR Bold initiatives, or seed funding from other UM institutes, or Electric Vehicle Center, etc).
- e) Summary of the work plan for the 1-year extension, how the requested budget will be spent and how the cost share will be funded.
(Note: The requested budget for the 1-year extension will be capped at 50% of the original budget.)
- f) Explain any changes to your team (if applicable) from the original proposal from 2 years ago.

The narrative section should be 3-4 pages, including figures, and tables. Additional pages can be used to list cited references, and a list of submitted proposals and publications based on the MMRI incubator project. Use single-spaced Times New Roman 11 pt or equivalent, 1" inch margins.

3) Attachments

- a) 2-page NSF format CV for PI and co-PIs (investigators who will receive funding from this internal grant). CVs are not needed for the unfunded collaborations, but a summary of their expertise and anticipated contributions to this proposal team can be included in section 2(d).
- b) Current and pending support documents for PI and co-PIs.

Reporting:

- **Present a talk at the annual MMRI Summit (Spring 2027 and Spring 2028).**
- **A copy of presented slides will serve as the annual report.**
- **A brief (1 page) final summary at the end of 2-year period.**
 - **Summary must include a list of proposals submitted (*as a team*) that grew out of the seed project, and which of the proposals are pending, were funded, or declined, the total award amount and UM portion, and award dates.**
 - **Summary must include all publications, presentations, and press releases for the award.**
- **MMRI funding should be acknowledged in all publications, presentations, press releases for work supported from this award.**

Allowable expenses:

- **Part of faculty summer salary towards time and effort for proposal development for external sponsors.**
- **Part-time support for graduate students and postdoctoral fellows in generating initial results towards an integrated center proposal, including LNF, (MC)², FLUX computing time, etc.**
- **Travel to meet potential sponsors and program managers.**
- **Cost of hosting focused topical area workshops / deep dive sessions on campus.**
- **Publication costs.**

Who is responsible for covering over-runs?

- **Funded investigator and their respective department chair.**
- **MMRI will not add funds to cover budget over-run.**