The Graduate Research Development Program (GRDP) is administered by the Virginia Tech Graduate & Professional Student Senate (GPSS) to provide monetary support for degree-contingent research conducted by Virginia Tech graduate students. This funding opportunity is offered twice a year for each academic year, but applicants may only receive an award once in an academic year. The application cycle for **Fall 2026** opens on **June 15th, 2026** and all applications are due by **August 14th, 2026** at 11:59PM EST. After reading all instructions, go to the application form at this link GRDP Fall 2026 Application – Fill out form

Complete Guide to GRDP

Eligibility requirements 2

Who can apply? 2

Award amounts 2

Award criteria 2

What is NOT fundable? 2

Potentially fundable proposals 3

Application Instructions 4

Online Application 4

Research Description 5

Proposal 5

Extended Abstract (3 page limit) 6

References (1 page limit) 6

Timeline (1 page limit) 6

Budget (1 page limit) 6

Advisor Approval Letter 7

Supporting Documents 7

Frequently Asked Questions 7

Eligibility requirements

Who can apply?

All full-time registered graduate students enrolled at Virginia Tech are eligible to apply. Due to the high number of applicants, a graduate student *may not* receive more than one GRDP award per academic year. Assistance through the GRDP is competitive and awarded based on a review process to help ensure fair decisions.

Award amounts

Selected master's proposals are eligible to receive up to $1000 and selected doctoral proposals may receive up to $1500.

Award criteria

- The research must be conducted on behalf of Virginia Tech by full time graduate students (see FAQ for more details).
- A student may only receive a GRDP award once per academic year.
- Advisor approval must be obtained before applying.
- Award recipients are required to serve on the GRDP Review Panel for the following cycle.

What is NOT fundable?

- Salaries for applicant or other personnel who perform routine student services or duties. These may include undergraduate students to perform research experiments, people to help analyze data sets, people to help with statistical analysis, people hired to transcribe interviews or others.
- Tuition, fees, or other personal costs.
- Software and computers/laptops.
- Retroactive reimbursement for expenses incurred prior to the date of the award notice. **Applicants get funded for research to be done in the future.** While the research may start anytime, the cost that can be reimbursed should be incurred and claimed

within 12 months after the receipt of the award notice. Please note that award decisions will be sent out in early October.

- Travel associated with presenting research (**i.e. Conference travel is not supported by GRDP - For more information on support for conference travel please view the GPSS Travel Fund Program**).

Potentially fundable proposals

Below is a list of budget items that do not fit directly under eligibility but may be fundable depending on your circumstance. This is not a comprehensive list. **If you are at all unsure if something will be fundable, please follow up with the fiscal technician/budget manager either in your department or college. Because this award is reimbursement based, the department has the authority in whether to approve/not approve items.**

- **Technology and equipment**. The graduate school cannot fund equipment that costs over $2000. All equipment purchased shall be the property of the grant recipient's department and Virginia Tech. The equipment cannot be kept for personal use.

- **Location**. The funding may be spent at any location and may be used for travel associated with conducting Virginia Tech-associated research. However, you must be doing work that contributes directly towards publications or thesis/dissertation work. If the award is being used for travel of any form, the dates/timeline must be clearly outlined with justification for traveling to the location. **Again, as a reminder, this award cannot be used for travel to a conference**.

- **Human Participation**. The funding can be used to pay or incentivize human participants. However, if you receive an award you **must** work with your department to follow the Controller Office Procedure 23715c. This document is provided in the folder containing the instruction guide.

- **Journal Publication Fees**

- **Research Skill Training.** This includes workshops directly in your area or visiting another professor/university that you are collaborating with on Virginia-Tech associated research.

Application Instructions

Your total application will consist of the following parts:

- Online Application

  - *Proposal*. The proposal will consist of the following parts and should be compiled as a single pdf document. See below under the Proposal section for how to name your document. **You MUST name your document based on the instructions provided**. **Your proposal must follow the format outlined in GRDP_Template, available on the GPSS website.**

    * An extended abstract detailing your proposed work (3-page limit, **includes** figures but **does not include** references). **The extended abstract must be typewritten in 12-pt Times New Roman font at least. All headings must be on their own lines in boldface, 14-pt Times New Roman font.**

      · References – any format permitted, provided your citations are consistently formatted. (1 page limit) **Must be no smaller than 11-pt Times New Roman font.**

    * Timeline (1 page limit)

    * Budget (1 page limit)

  - *Advisor Approval Letter*. This letter is REQUIRED for all applications. The letter template can be found in our Application Materials. This letter must be in pdf format when submitted. **You MUST name your advisor approval letter based on the instructions provided**.

Below are the instructions for each individual document required.

Online Application

The online application can be found here: GRDP Fall 2026 Application – Fill out form will be redirected to a Microsoft Forms where you can complete your application. The application can be saved and retrieved at a later date **during the submission period**. Once the submission period has closed, you will no longer have access to the application.

NOTE: If you wish to save and return to the application at a different time, you MUST use the same computer and the same internet browser to make sure your responses are recorded. Once the application is completed, you may email bria@vt.edu to confirm your submission has been received.

Research Description

You will be asked to categorize your research proposal in two different categories: methodology used and best-fit discipline. In the methodology section, you have four options: Qualitative, Quantitative, Mixed Methods, and Other. In the discipline section, you have seven

options: Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics, Social Science, Business, Education/Humanities. You will choose the three different disciplines that best describe your research, in ranked order. This information will be used to assign reviewers to your application as well as grant awards. The remaining awards will be granted upon best scores and do not consider discipline. Three reviewers will be assigned to your application:

- A reviewer who uses the same methodology
- A reviewer inside of the three ranked categories
- A reviewer outside of the three ranked categories

Please note that your application will be reviewed by individuals **both within and outside of your discipline**, so make sure that your proposal can be understood by someone who is not familiar with the common jargon in your field. We will grant at least four awards in Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics and four awards in Social Science, Business, Education, and Humanities, which is based off of the Outstanding Dissertation Award.

Proposal

This is the primary document for your application. **DO NOT put any identifying information such as your name, email, or ID number in your proposal document. The review process is blind. We do our best to not give reviewers access to the names of the applicants**. Your proposal should consist of a 3-page extended abstract, a single (1) page for your references, a single (1) page for budgeting, and a single (1) page for your timeline. You should have a total of 6 pages. Detailed instructions for the extended abstract, timeline, and budget documents can be found in the sections below.

The document name MUST be as follows: the first three words of your proposal title above with one underscore between each word, without spaces. It will look something like this: *First_Three_Words.pdf*. For example, if the title of your proposal is "Inorganic crystal hydrates for heat storage: potential and limitations," you MUST name your document "Inorganic_Crystal_Hydrates.pdf." **Your proposal WILL NOT be reviewed if you do not follow this naming convention**.

Extended Abstract (3-page limit)

The extended abstract has a 3-page limit **including figures but NOT references**. It MUST consist of the following sections. A Word template can also be found on the website. Within the template, all of the sections in bold are required: *Motivation, Proposed Work, and Broader Impact*. Subsections within these sections may be included but are not required.

- **Abstract** (200-word limit). The abstract should give an overview of the total project.

- **Public Abstract** (200-word limit). Should provide a non-technical overview of the project, which is accessible to readers outside your field.

- **Motivation**. This section should include any relevant background information, the motivation for the work, and any prior work that has been done if it is applicable.

- **Proposed Work**. This section should detail the proposed work requiring funding. As a reminder, your reviewer may not be well versed in your subject field, so please communicate your proposal to a broader audience (i.e. avoid highly technical jargon, clearly explain field specific methods and terms etc.).

- **Broader Impact**. This section should detail the impact of this work on society or the impact on the advancement of knowledge in its particular field.

References (1 page limit)

Following the 3-page extended abstract, please include any references within one page. You may use any standard reference style.

Timeline (1 page limit)

Here you will provide an outline of the timeline for the proposed research. You must provide a proposed timeline of experiments or proposed timeline of qualitative research. If you are requesting funds for travel, you must provide the estimated dates of travel with justification. If you are requesting funds to conduct research at another institution or lab, you must provide dates of travel and timeline of experiments at this other institution. If you are requesting funds to conduct interviews, you must provide the proposed dates of the interviews. If you are requesting funds to purchase software/technology/equipment, you must provide a timeline for the purchase of the item. Please note that any retroactive reimbursement for expenses incurred prior to the date of the award notice will not be funded.

Budget (1 page limit)

Here you will provide the budget you intend to use for the requested funds. Please provide each expense as its own line item. Each line item must have a description and a cost associated with it. You may also provide a budget justification. If the requested funds are a subset of a larger project/experiment/equipment, you may put in the budget justification the total cost and how this award amount will relate to that total cost. For example, if you are

wanting to purchase a smaller part that attaches to a larger machine already in your department's possession, you may describe that in the budget justification.

Advisor Approval Letter

You MUST use the standardized advisor approval form that is available in the Application Materials. **We will not accept letters of recommendation or emails from your advisor**. Additionally, this form MUST be submitted as a pdf. If your advisor is unable to sign the advisor letter, please send an email to bria@vt.edu **at least 48 hours** before the application deadline.

Please use the format First_Three_Words_AdvisorApproval.pdf to name your advisor approval document: For example, if the title of your proposal is "Inorganic crystal hydrates for heat storage: potential and limitations," you MUST name your document "Inorganic_Crystal_Hydrates_AdvisorApproval.pdf."

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Who is eligible for GRDP funding?
   - All graduate students at Virginia Tech who are enrolled full time and were not granted a GRDP award in the previous cycle are eligible to apply.
2. Can the GRDP fund be used to conduct research somewhere else?
   - Only if the work directly contributes directly to your thesis/dissertation work. For example, using this funding to conduct fieldwork is acceptable. Also, using this funding to conduct analysis at another university or laboratory because that resource is not available at Virginia Tech is also acceptable. However, if you are requesting funding to conduct work outside of Virginia Tech, you MUST provide a justification for why that work cannot be conducted here.
3. Can the GRDP fund be used to attend a conference?
   - NO, please apply to the Travel Fund Program (TFP) for conference travel.
4. Where can I find the application form?
   - The GRDP application form link is located at the top of this document.
5. What do I need to submit for the GRDP application?

- You will need to complete the online application (see *Online Application* section for full details). On the online application, you will need to upload your proposal (which consists of the extended abstract, timeline, and budget), advisor approval letter, and any necessary supporting documents.

6. What format do the uploaded documents need to be in?

   - The proposal document, the advisor approval letter and the supporting documents MUST be in pdf format. The online application will not let you upload any other file format. See the *Supporting Documents* section for more details.

7. Do I need to provide supporting documents?

   - Not necessarily. Please see the *Supporting Documents* section to see what supporting documents may be necessary for your application. For example, if you are requesting funding for software/technology/equipment you MUST submit the GRDP Acquisition Waiver, which can be found in our Application Materials.

8. I work with non-vertebrate animals; do I need to submit an IACUC?

   - No, research proposals that involve only non-vertebrate animals require no additional IACUC documentation.

9. My research proposal does not fit into three different disciplines, what should I do?

   - Please do your best to pick the top three disciplines as we use this information to assign reviewers.

10. Do I have to name my application documents a certain way?

    - Yes. Each document follows generally the same convention where it is the first three words of your proposal followed by what the document is (other than the actual proposal). For example, if your proposal is titled "Inorganic crystal hydrates for heat storage: potential and limitations," you must name your proposal document "Inorganic_Crystal_Hydrates.pdf." For your advisor approval form, it must be named "Inorganic_Crystal_Hydrates_Advisorapproval.pdf". For complete information on all the naming conventions of the different documents, please refer to its particular section.

11. If I have more than one advisor, do all of them need to sign the Advisor Approval Letter?

- No, only one of your advisors needs to sign the Advisor Approval Letter, which can be found in the Application Materials.

12. What if my advisor cannot sign the advisor approval form before the submission deadline?

    - If your advisor is unable to sign the advisor letter, please send an email to bria@vt.edu **at least 48 hours** before the application deadline.

13. Can I submit the application through email?

    - No, submissions through email will not be accepted. All applications must be submitted through the online application. No applications will be considered if submitted otherwise. We do not accept applications once the form closes.

14. How am I evaluated?

    - Every application is carefully reviewed for completeness, quality, and clarity by the GPSS Director of Programs and an interdisciplinary review panel. Keep in mind that your application is being reviewed by individuals both within and outside of your discipline, so make sure that your materials can be understood by someone who is not familiar with the common jargon.

15. How do I know the current status of the application process?

    - The status of each individual application will not be revealed until all final decisions are made, which will be no later than October 31st.

16. How do I collect the funds if my application is accepted?
    - We will send more detailed instructions once you receive an award. As a reminder, all funds are distributed through your department via reimbursements, so please keep all receipts and expense documentation.

17. What else do I have to do if I am awarded the GRDP?
    - You will serve as a reviewer for the following GRDP cycle (ex: if you win in Spring 2026, you review for Fall 2026 GRDP)