

**2025-2026**  
**Background Information for the**  
**UC Davis Early Career Faculty Award for Creativity and Innovation**

**Note:** The application process for this award is now combined with the UC Office of the President (UCOP) Early Career Faculty Research Excellence Awards. Additional application information can be found [here](#). Note: If you are a non-tenured ladder rank Assistant Professor, your application will be considered for both awards. If you are a recipient of a UCOP Early Career Faculty Research Excellence Award, you will no longer be considered for a UC Davis Early Career Faculty Award for Creativity and Innovation.

## **PURPOSE OF THE PROGRAM**

The UC Davis Early Career Faculty Award for Creativity and Innovation was established in 2016 to promote and support exploration, creativity, and advances in research by UC Davis faculty. It is intended to encourage talented early-career faculty to develop their own intellectual pursuits. The Award is a one-time-only unrestricted cash award made to a non-tenured ladder rank Assistant Professor to support exceptional scholarly or creative work. One Award will be granted annually.

## **ELIGIBILITY**

Only non-tenured ladder rank Assistant Professors are eligible for this Award.

**UC Davis Assistant Professors** are eligible if they are non-tenured at the time of the Award start date (April 1, 2026). Prior recipients of the Award are not eligible for future nomination, but Assistant Professors who applied in prior years but did not receive an Award are eligible to apply again.

There is no restriction on the number of applications a department may forward to the Dean for review and possible nomination. Deans should remind Departmental Chairs to encourage Early Career Faculty to apply.

## **EVALUATION CRITERIA**

Award recipients will be selected from nominations received by the due date based on a Review Committee's evaluations. Criteria for evaluation include how this Award will support:

- enhancing creative academic activity,
- advancing innovation, and
- advancing scholarship at UC Davis.

Several government agencies (NIH, NSF, etc.) and professional societies award substantial research grants specifically designated for scholars in the early period of their careers. Since those grants also provide recognition and funding for scholars at the Assistant Professor level, nominees who have already received such honors will have lower priority for the UC Davis Early Career Faculty Award.

## **LIMIT ON THE NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS FROM EACH SCHOOL OR COLLEGE**

Since one (1) Award will be made each year, the number of nominations that the Dean of each College or School may forward for consideration is limited to one (1), except that because of the large sizes of these colleges two (2) nominees each may be proposed by the Deans of the College of Letters and Science and the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences.

## **BUDGET PROPOSALS AND APPROPRIATE EXPENDITURES**

The Award will be \$40,000 to support the proposed activities.

The duration of the Award is one year. All these funds must be spent within two years of the Award.

Award funds may be used for research-related expenses, such as the purchase of laboratory equipment, travel to a site where data will be collected, attendance at a professional meeting to present a paper or performance, as well as salaries for research assistants, students (including graduate student fees), or postdoctoral fellows on the research team.

Award funds may also be used to pay the Summer Salary of a recipient who holds a nine-month appointment.

With the approval of the Department Chair, Award funds may also be used to provide partial teaching relief by paying the salary and benefits of a lecturer who will provide the necessary course relief. Applicants may request teaching relief for no more than one academic quarter during the Award year, and their Departmental Chair must explicitly support this request when the application is first submitted.