TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
Huffines Institute

The Huffines Institute Graduate Student Research Grants
FY2026-27 Application Instructions

Application Guidelines:

The Huffines Institute Graduate Research Grant provides financial support for research by Huffines Graduate Student Members that contributes to the student's education and the Huffines Institute's mission. Priority is given to projects that use Huffines Institute-affiliated facilities (see the website), initiate collaborations among Huffines Faculty Affiliates from different TAMU academic units, and align with the Huffines Institute's strategic goals. If the project is funded, the involved Huffines Graduate Student Members can apply for additional Huffines funding through the Graduate Student Travel Award mechanism.

To be eligible, the applicant must be a Huffines Student Member working under the direct supervision of a Huffines Faculty Affiliate. The applicant must be enrolled as a full-time graduate student in good academic standing at a university within the Texas A&M System during the requested funding period. The faculty advisor must be a member of the Huffines Institute. If the student has received a Huffines Student Research Grant, the new application must include progress from the prior funding period and the new direction of the current submission.

The funding for Graduate Student Research Grants is limited to $3,000 in direct costs for the entire project. The project can be funded for up to 1 year, and the applicant may apply for a no-cost extension of up to 9 additional months, subject to approval from Huffines' administration.

Applications will be evaluated at two levels. The first criterion is scientific merit, and the second is the proposed project's fit with Huffines' priorities, mission, and goals. The Graduate Student Grant requires a clear description of how seed funding will engage Huffines-associated facilities, support Huffines Graduate Student education, and foster new collaborations among Huffines Faculty Affiliates.

The deadline for the next submission cycle is <u>September 30, 2026</u>. Submissions are uploaded at the online portal in the Huffines website using the format detailed in the instructions. Applicants will be notified about their application outcome by November 16, 2026. Email: jweston9@tamu.edu for additional information.

- **Important:** The applicant's faculty advisor must also submit an **<u>online advisor reference form</u>** related to the student application by the September 30, 2026, deadline. The Advisor Reference Form link is on the Huffines webpage under the Student Seed Grant section.

<u>Limitations</u>

- Students under the direct supervision of the Huffines Director or Associate Director are not eligible.
- Funding is limited to direct costs associated with conducting research. Expenses related to the production of the research report or for computer equipment and software are not allowable.
- Travel requests for research purposes must be justified and directly related to data collection. Requests for travel to professional meetings to present a paper are funded through a separate Huffines program and can be applied for by the applicant.

<u>Post Award Requirements</u>

- If funded, the applicant will accept the invitation to present project results in poster or oral presentation form at a Huffines-sponsored research event during the award period. All publications and presentations from the funded research must acknowledge the Huffines Funding.
- Submit a written report of the research results, along with resulting publications (including published abstracts) and grants submitted at the end of the award period.

These guidelines are required for a submission to be considered for review.

Format: Single-spaced with 0.5-inch margins. Arial, font size 11, should be used throughout the grant. Section headers should be bolded.

Required Submission Sections *(combined into 1 PDF document and submitted online)*

Cover Page (fillable PDF found on the Huffines webpage under the Student Seed Grant section)

Project Abstract page (1 page – 300 words)

Specific Aims (1-page)

Research Strategy (4-page limit for both Significance & Innovation and Approach sections)

- *Significance & Innovation* (~2 pages) –
  Significance: Define the proposed research's positive effect on the knowledge base in this area. As defined by the NIH, this section answers several critical questions. Does the project address an important problem or a critical barrier to progress in the field? If the project aims are achieved, how will scientific knowledge, technical capability, and/or clinical practice be improved?
  Innovation: Describe how your approach is different/novel from past attempts to answer this question. What is/are the new and different ways (s) that this project approaches the fundamental question you are addressing? The NIH says: "Does the application challenge and seek to shift current research or clinical practice paradigms by using novel theoretical concepts, approaches, or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions?

- *Approach* (~2 pages) – Briefly and concisely describe how the stated purpose will be accomplished. The focus should be on the experimental design (i.e., how will you test your hypothesis?) versus extensive methodological detail. IMPORTANTLY, this section should indicate the status of this protocol with the appropriate compliance committee (e.g., IRB, IACUC, IBC). If your protocol has received approval, please provide a copy of the approval notification (excluding the grant page limit). Suppose your project is still pending approval, and you are awarded a grant. In that case, you cannot expend funds until final approval from the appropriate compliance committee.

NIH-style Biosketch (2-page limit) - Use the current NIH biosketch format, but with a two-page limit for this application.

Budget (separate page) - Provide an itemized budget not to exceed $3,000 listing proposed expenditures in the following categories: 1) Equipment, 2) Supplies & Expendables, 3) Essential Travel for Data Collection, 4) Other.

References - Please provide a list of references. The format of references is AMA.