

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES (CAS) PEER POWER FACULTY RESEARCH INITIATIVE

Watch the Peer Power Research Initiative [Meeting Recording](#) here.

PURPOSE

The CAS Peer Power Faculty Research Initiative is an internal effort by the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) aimed at supporting the research and creative activities of CAS faculty in alignment with Peer Power's mission to provide high-quality tutoring and mentoring services.

ABOUT PEER POWER FOUNDATION

Peer Power's vision is a world where students receive a quality education regardless of their zip code. Their mission is to provide high-quality, life-enhancing tutoring and mentoring services that ensure personal, partner, and provider success. Through that lens, Peer Power seeks to collaborate with districts and school leaders whose practices align with our values: innovation, equity, integrity, student-centered, and active learning.

Through engagement and partnership with the University of Memphis, its students, and other local colleges and universities, Peer Power offers an in-class tutoring and mentoring model that leads to student success at every level, secondary and post-secondary alike.

Peer Power's proven embedded tutoring model entails Success Coaches who are trained to serve as in-class tutors and mentors, teaming up with teachers to move students to proficiency. Peer Power partners with school districts, principals, and school administration to determine the strategic focus areas where support is needed. Peer Power Program Directors create and manage Success Coach schedules and serve as the site-based leader, ensuring implementation with fidelity.

Learn more about Peer Power here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qGXpPTsTvbU>
Learn more about Peer Power's impact here: <https://peerpowerfoundation.org/impact24/>

PEER POWER INSTITUTE

The Peer Power Institute serves as a comprehensive educational support organization. It focuses on evidence-based practices, student success, and educational research and leverages its connection with the University of Memphis to create a meaningful impact on education.

Learn more about Peer Power Institute here: <https://peerpowerfoundation.org/ppi/>

POTENTIAL RESEARCH TOPICS

- Examine the impact of mentoring and support systems on college success rates for students from high-crime neighborhoods.

- Examine how community-based educational initiatives like Peer Power contribute to sustainable urban development and community resilience.
- Sociocultural Factors in Education: Racial Socialization Studies: Examine how Peer Power's mentoring influences peer racial socialization and critical consciousness among students.
- Collaboration Between Success Coaches and Teachers: Study the dynamics of collaboration between Success Coaches and teachers, focusing on instructional strategies and conversational dynamics in the classroom.
- Role of Language in Building Relationships: Explore how language use in tutoring sessions contributes to building rapport and trust between Success Coaches and students.
- Training Success Coaches in Conversational Techniques: Develop and evaluate a training program for Success Coaches focused on effective conversational techniques that enhance learning.
- Cultural Considerations in Language Use: Investigate how cultural factors influence the language and communication styles of Success Coaches and their effectiveness in diverse classrooms.
- Investigate the role of peer support among Success Coaches in enhancing comfort levels within the tutoring environment.
- Perceptions of Structural Inequalities Among Students: Explore students' perceptions of structural inequalities and how these perceptions affect their academic motivation and engagement.
- Culturally Relevant Curriculum Development: Engage students in researching the effectiveness of culturally relevant teaching practices and develop recommendations for curriculum changes that reflect their experiences.
- Peer Influence on Academic Success: Research how peer relationships impact academic motivation and performance among racially minoritized students, leading to recommendations for supportive peer programs.
- Youth Participatory Action Research: engage students in co-designing educational interventions that address local needs and investigate how participatory methods can enhance the effectiveness of Peer Power's model.

- Youth-Led Community Action Projects/Collaborative Research with Success Coaches: Empower students to design and implement community action projects based on their research findings. Involve Success Coaches in the YPAR process to provide mentorship and support to students conducting research, training them on YPAR methodologies to guide students through the research process.

ELIGIBILITY

Individuals eligible for an award must be full-time research-active faculty with primary appointments in the College of Arts and Sciences (including the Lambuth campus) at the time of proposal review. It is expected that the grant recipient will remain at The University of Memphis for at least one year following the conclusion of the grant period.

Eligible individuals submitting proposals to the CAS Peer Power Faculty Research Initiative may also submit proposals to other University of Memphis internal grant mechanisms. However, faculty receiving grants from any other internal mechanisms will may not accept an award from the CAS Peer Power Faculty Research Initiative for the same project.

DURATION OF GRANT

Awards are for one fiscal year, beginning July 1, 2025 and ending June 30, 2026. Expenditures must be consistent with the financial policies of the University of Memphis and in keeping with the University's fiscal year-end closing schedule. In the case of default situations, such as the applicant's inability to complete the project, unexpended funds will revert to the CAS Peer Power Faculty Research Initiative pool account.

APPLICATION PROCESS AND DEADLINES

Final proposals must be submitted electronically via [InfoReady](#), by **Friday, April 25, 2025**. Each proposal must be accompanied by electronic endorsements from the faculty member's Department Chair. It is the submitter's responsibility to ensure that the flow of approval and all email addresses are correct, and officially supported by the University. THE CAS DEAN'S OFFICE IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR LATE OR MISDIRECTED APPLICATIONS. Evidence of submission for approval must be obtained if either human or animal subjects will be used; the appropriate box on the Cover Page must be checked. IRB approval is required before funds will be awarded.

PROPOSAL FORMAT

Links to the online application will be shared with CAS faculty by email and will be posted on the CAS web page ([Click here](#) for access to the electronic application form). CARE SHOULD BE TAKEN TO ADHERE TO THESE PROPOSAL GUIDELINES AND TO EDIT THE PROPOSAL BEFORE SUBMISSION. PROPOSALS THAT DO NOT FOLLOW THESE GUIDELINES OR INCOMPLETE APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE REVIEWED.

Application Questions: Provide the requested information and complete the checklist of assurance. If the Department contributes academic year release time, indicate the amount of release time (expressed in credit hours or percent of time). Please note that any research involving human subjects requires evidence of IRB submission.

Abstract: Limited to 350 words

Peer Power Partner: Projects require an established partnership with someone from Peer Power. Provide your Peer Power partner's name, title within Peer Power, and responsibilities related to this project.

Budget Justification: All cost categories requested should be clearly identified and justified. You must specify any internal sources of funding (received or pending) for this project.

Maximum budget allowance = \$10,000.

***See details under project description. Applicants should only request what is necessary for the success of their proposed project.*

Acceptable budget items and category limitations:

- stipends for undergraduate and/or high school research assistants (\$10,000 maximum) **tuition and fees cannot be covered. **projects that hire undergraduate and/or high school students are preferred*
- stipends for graduate student research assistants (\$10,000 maximum) **tuition and fees cannot be covered and sources of tuition and fees should be documented when academic year graduate stipends are part of the budget*
- faculty summer salary (\$5,000 maximum) **May be taken all in 2025 or split across years (July-August 2025, May-June 2026).*
- travel necessary for the collection of data (\$5,000 maximum)
- specialized equipment, software, or consumable research supplies (\$5,000 maximum)
**generally expected to be matched by the PI's department*
- course buyouts at CAS established adjunct faculty rates (up to 2 courses across the academic year)
**must be approved by Chair and funds will go directly to department to cover release time. Course buyouts that would result in a zero teaching load require provost approval.*

Expenditures Not Covered:

- academic year faculty salaries
- taking or developing courses
- domestic or foreign travel to conferences
- writing grant proposals
- general purpose equipment
- publication costs

Project Description: **Not to exceed 5 pages. Upload file in Adobe PDF format.**

The description should be as complete as possible but limited to necessary and relevant material and written in a clear and straightforward style. The proposals will be evaluated by a

review committee composed of faculty who may lack technical expertise in the specific project area. Consequently, it is very important that the text and materials be understandable to an audience of colleagues with varied backgrounds.

- Use one-inch margins on all sides with 12-point type, single-spaced, and left justified (do not full justify).
- The narrative must include:
 - A concise description of the research question to be addressed, the hypothesis to be tested, or the creative product to be developed.
 - A statement of how the proposed research project aligns with the research priorities of Peer Power Institute.
 - A clearly described methodology appropriate to the project. Where necessary, the analytic strategy should also be described.
 - The outcome of the project, and the significance of the expected results.
***Clearly distinguish outcomes and metrics that are achievable within the one-year project timeframe from longer-term objectives and outcomes that the award is expected to lead toward.*
- Include any plans for the development of future proposals for external funding as an outcome, with specific target programs and timelines.
- The applicants' qualifications to complete the project and the potential impact of the project on the applicant's career and future funding, if appropriate.
- Descriptions of materials, equipment, staff, participants, and facilities required for the project.
- A detailed work plan with start and end dates, and the expected dates of all major milestones.

The evaluation of the proposal will take the above factors into consideration.

Appendices:

- Questionnaires, instructions to participants, scoring forms, etc., if relevant to your project (not to exceed 5 pages).
- Technical explanations (if relevant to your project)
- Bibliography (not to exceed 5 pages).

Summary Curriculum Vitae: Current University of Memphis Curriculum Vitae

Provide a PDF of your updated CV from the UofM CV site:

https://www.memphis.edu/aa/resources/cv_information.php

FOLLOW-UP REQUIREMENTS

The applicant's submission indicates their agreement with the following requirements:

Report: The project director will provide a short report within sixty days of the conclusion of the grant period (August 30, 2026) to the Dean's office. Applications from faculty who have not submitted a report on previous FRG awards will not be considered.

Acknowledgements: Any publication resulting from the research supported by a grant from the CAS Peer Power Research Initiative shall include the following statement: "This work was supported in full or in part by a grant from The University of Memphis College of Arts and Sciences Research. This support does not necessarily imply endorsement by the University of research conclusions."