

# Georgia Tech School of Brain, Cognition, and Behavior Psychology Interlab Grant (PIG)

## Synopsis

As part of its effort to foster collaborative research, the GT School of Brain, Cognition, and Behavior has allocated \$2,000 to support new graduate student initiated inter-lab research. Collaborations across areas are especially encouraged. Any number of graduate students can partake in a single PIG project; however, each student must be able to contribute something unique. Projects that are already funded will not be considered.

PIGs are in amounts up to \$2,000, meaning that the entire PIG fund can go towards supporting a single project or apportioned to support multiple projects, depending on the proposals received.

PIGs can be used to cover the cost of participants, training, and/or hardware/software, or other research related expenses. Any hardware/software that is purchased with PIG funds becomes the property of the Department of Psychology at the conclusion of the funded project. PIGs cannot be used to pay for travel or as stipends/salary.

## Due Date

**PIG grants are due by Friday May 30, 2025 @ 11:59 PM**

## Submission

The PIG application must be submitted as **three** PDFs to the PIG Committee at [interlabgrant@psych.gatech.edu](mailto:interlabgrant@psych.gatech.edu). The first PDF should be the title page; the second PDF should have the abstract, project description, collaborative agreement, and budget; and the third PDF should be the advisor approval and/or project supervisor forms. (Separate PDFs facilitate the blind review process.)

## Notification

PIG award notifications will be made on or about **Monday, August 11, 2025**.

## The PIG Committee

Directors: Drs. Tansu Celikel and Scott Moffat

Committee Members: Yara Al-nouri, Amanda Arbuckle, Sadie Kee, Emily Parcell

## Contact Information

Direct questions, concerns, and applications to: [interlabgrant@psych.gatech.edu](mailto:interlabgrant@psych.gatech.edu)

## The PIG Application

The application should be written in a manner that reviewers outside of the applicants' area can understand it.

- 1) **Title page** — Project title, team members and their corresponding lab and areas
- 2) **Abstract** — No more than 250 words
- 3) **Project description.** The project description should be no more than four single spaced pages (including tables and figures; see also formatting instructions below) that includes:
  - a) A statement of the scientific question or problem
  - b) Relevant background
  - c) A clear description of the methods and procedures
  - d) Intellectual Merit and Broader Impacts described under two separate, distinct headings
    - i) If the PIG is intended as seed money (e.g., to fund pilot and feasibility studies) then this should be stated in the intellectual merit section and a plan for obtaining further funding should be detailed.
  - e) List of works cited (not included in page count)
- 4) **Collaborative Agreement** ( $\leq 1$  page). This agreement explicitly states why a collaboration is necessary to complete the project and what role each of the researchers will take. The researchers' names should be omitted from the collaborative agreement page.
- 5) **Budget Form.** Each budget should include items that you plan to use the awarded PIG money for along with a rationale for each item. See Appendix A for the Budget form.
- 6) **Advisor Approval and Project Supervisor Forms.** Each graduate student involved with the project must submit an Advisor Approval Form (Appendix B). In the case that the supervising faculty member is not a primary advisor of *any* of the participating graduate students, a Project Supervisor Form should be completed in addition to the Advisor Approval Form (Appendix C).

## PIG Application Formatting

- Times New Roman, 12-point size
- 1" margins all around
- Single spaced
- Unless otherwise noted, APA format

## Award Conditions

- 1) A photo of the graduate student team to be uploaded on the department website and other platforms.
- 2) An abstract, written in an accessible manner, to be uploaded on the department website and other platforms.

3) Colloquium presentation to share results with the department.

## Review Process and Criteria

The PIG Review Process is modeled after NSF's Merit Review Process<sup>1</sup>. Applications received by the PIG Committee are assigned to one or more of the three PIG chairs. PIG chairs conduct initial reviews to assess whether applications followed instructions and the spirit of the PIG and, if they do, to select two graduate student reviewers per application; applications that do not follow the instructions or spirit of the PIG (e.g., there is no collaborative aspect) will be returned without further review.

Graduate student reviewers score applications based on the criteria below (for a score sheet, see Appendix D). Applications that receive an average score of 3 (*good*) to 5 (*excellent*) are further reviewed by their assigned PIG chair. After this second round of review, the PIG chairs will meet and discuss award recommendations. Reward recommendations are then made to the PIG director and co-director who make final decisions. If a PIG chair is involved with one of the second-round applications, they will recuse themselves from the award recommendations process.

In the event that multiple applications are recommended for award AND the total amount of funding requested exceeds \$2,000, then the PIG director and co-director may decide to decline one or more awards or suggest recommended applicants revise their budgets.

All applications that are fully reviewed will receive feedback.

### Criteria<sup>2</sup>---See Appendix D for a score sheet and E for scoring guidance

- 1) **Collaboration.** To what degree is the project leveraging the wealth and diversity of interests, knowledge, and skills that our department has to offer? How likely is it that each graduate student will learn new information and skills from this collaboration?
- 2) **Intellectual Merit.** What is the potential of the proposed study to advance knowledge and understanding? To what extent does the proposal suggest and explore creative, original, and potentially transformative topics?
- 3) **Broader Impacts.** What is the potential of the proposed project to benefit society or advance desired societal outcomes?
- 4) **Project Plan and Rationale.** Is the plan for carrying out the proposed activities well-reasoned, well-organized, and based on a sound rationale?
- 5) **Team Qualifications.** How well qualified is the team to conduct the proposed activities?
- 6) **Resources.** Are there adequate resources available to the graduate student researchers to carry out the proposed activities?

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<sup>1</sup> See [https://www.nsf.gov/news/mmg/mmg\\_disp.jsp?med\\_id=76467](https://www.nsf.gov/news/mmg/mmg_disp.jsp?med_id=76467)

<sup>2</sup> See [https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappg17\\_1/pappg\\_3.jsp#IIIA2a](https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappg17_1/pappg_3.jsp#IIIA2a)

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **1. Is the review single- or double-blind and why?**

This year, we will be using a double-blind review process. The PIG committee chairs will have access to the names of the applicants and reviewers, but neither the reviewers nor applicants will be given the names of each other. Reviewers will be assigned based on their expertise with the applicant's area but will not have access to the advisor approval form. Although reviewers may be able to identify the labs the applicants work in based on the research area, we have chosen to keep both the reviewers and applicants anonymous to encourage an objective evaluation of the proposal and because any questions about an award decision should be directed at the PIG Committee (and specifically the PIG directors) who ultimately make the award decisions.

### **2. What is being done to mitigate bias in the review process?**

Award decisions are made based on input from multiple people throughout the various stages of the review process and all decisions must be justified. More specifically, at least two graduate students will review each blind proposal using the PIG score sheet (see Appendix D). The PIG committee and faculty members will ensure the reviews from graduate students are reasonable and sound. We hope the double-blind process we are using this year will add another layer to minimize bias.

### **3. How are reviewers chosen?**

Psychology graduate student volunteers will be solicited over the Summer to review the PIG applications. Reviewers will be assigned to applications based on their expertise and its relevance to the proposed project. Because of the department's small size and even smaller areas, reviewers may not always come from an applicant's area.

### **4. Projects that are already funded cannot be supported by a PIG—can you elaborate?**

PIG money is a limited resource that should support projects that have the potential to advance knowledge and impact our society but that may not be undertaken without PIG support. Therefore, PIG applications requesting money to *enhance* a project that is already funded—for example, by increasing the sample size, buying equipment to alleviate a bottleneck, or to pay for training for a new project member—will not be considered.

### **5. How can I become part of the PIG committee?**

Join the Psychology Graduate Student Council (PGSC) next year!

### **6. I have questions/comments/feedback about the PIG, who do I contact?**

[interlabgrant@psych.gatech.edu](mailto:interlabgrant@psych.gatech.edu)

**Appendix A**

**Budget Form**

<b>Item Name</b>	<b>Item Cost</b>	<b>Rationale</b>
<b>Total cost</b>		

**Appendix B**

**Advisor Approval Form**

**Directions:** Please complete a separate Advisor Approval Form for each of your students who wish to work on the proposed project.

To: PIG Review Committee

From: \_\_\_\_\_  
[name of Advisor]

Regarding the project proposed by: \_\_\_\_\_  
[name of graduate student]

\_\_\_\_\_(initial) I affirm that I have read the proposal and I believe that the graduate student is fully capable of carrying out this research, with this grant and the resources at hand, in a timely manner.

\_\_\_\_\_(initial) I affirm that this project will not detract from the student's progress in the program.

\_\_\_\_\_(initial) If any portion of the proposed project will be used to fulfill requirements towards obtaining a masters or doctorate then I further affirm that the student's committee is aware and approves.

\_\_\_\_\_(initial) I agree to be the primary investigator and as such, will be the faculty member primarily overseeing the project which includes doing such things as reading and approving the IRB protocol.

Advisor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix C**

**Project Supervisor Approval Form**

To: PIG Review Committee

From: \_\_\_\_\_  
[Insert name of Faculty Mentor]

Regarding the project proposed by:

\_\_\_\_\_  
[List name(s) of graduate student(s)]

\_\_\_\_\_(initial) I affirm that I have read the proposal and I believe that the graduate student team is fully capable of carrying out this research, with this grant and the resources at hand, in a timely manner.

\_\_\_\_\_(initial) I agree to be the primary investigator and as such, will be the faculty member primarily overseeing the project and doing such things as reading and approving the IRB protocol.

Project Supervisor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## Appendix D

### Score Sheet

1	2	3	4	5
Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent

Category	Score
<b>Collaborative Nature of the Project</b> To what degree is the project leveraging the wealth and diversity of interests, knowledge, and skills that our department has to offer? How likely is it that each graduate student will learn new information and skills from this collaboration?	
<b>Intellectual Merit</b> What is the potential of the proposed study to advance knowledge and understanding? To what extent does the proposal suggest and explore creative, original, and potentially transformative topics?	
<b>Broader Impacts</b> What is the potential of the proposed project to benefit society or advance desired societal outcomes?	
<b>Project Plan</b> Is the plan for carrying out the proposed activities well-reasoned, well-organized, and based on sound rationale?	
<b>Qualifications</b> How well qualified is the team to conduct the proposed activities?	
<b>Resources</b> Are there adequate resources available to the graduate student researchers to carry out the proposed activities?	
<b>Average Score</b>	

**Comments:**

## Appendix E

### PIG Review Scoring

PIG Grant submissions are reviewed and scored on a 1-5 Likert scale. Examples for scores 1 and score 5 are detailed below.

#### Collaboration

- **Excellent (5)**
  - Team members are in different psych areas, typically conducting research that is quite different from each other.
  - The project involves a corpus of knowledge and methods that are largely new to one or the other (or multiple) graduate student researchers
  - Overall, it is clear that each student researcher will benefit from this collaboration
- **Poor (1)**
  - Team members are in the same area, typically conducting the same kind of research as proposed
  - The research team is not likely to learn very much if anything from conducting this project
  - Overall, it is doubtful that, as a result of this project, either graduate student researcher will learn new information or skills.

#### Intellectual Merit

- **Excellent (5)**
  - The project question is novel
  - The results of the project are likely to have a significant impact on the field
  - The results and implications are very likely to lead to further research
- **Poor (1)**
  - The project aims to replicate a prior study without extending or otherwise showing any novelty
  - The results of the project are not likely to significantly affect the field

#### Broader Impacts

- **Excellent (5)**
  - The very process of conducting this project will benefit society
  - The results of this project are very likely to significantly affect our society for the better
- **Poor (1)**
  - There is little evidence that society will benefit from this study.

## **Project Plan and Rationale**

- **Excellent (5)**
  - The project description is clear, concise, and written in accessible manner
  - The research question is clearly stated and its significance is made clear
  - The literature review is thorough, providing all relevant information
  - The hypotheses and/or predictions are logical
  - The method section describes the procedure and other relevant details (i.e., sample, materials) in sufficient detail that the study can be replicated
  - Accounts for possible issues and how they can be addressed
- **Poor (1)**
  - Spelling and grammatical mistakes interfere with understanding
  - It is not clear why the research question should be investigated
  - The literature review was too sparse or difficult to follow
  - It is clear the study design and statistical analyses have not been thought out

## **Team Qualifications (based on the collaborative agreement)**

- **Excellent (5)**
  - The advisors and, if applicable, supervisor have a proven track record and are experts in fields relevant to the research.
  - the graduate student's project responsibilities clearly fit their interests and strengths
  - Overall, it is extremely likely that the team will successfully complete the proposed work
- **Poor (1)**
  - The faculty advisors'/supervisor(s)'s expertise does not encompass areas relevant to the project.
  - The students' interests and strengths are not suited to the proposed project.
  - It is unlikely that the team will be able to complete the proposed work

## **Resources**

- **Excellent (5)**
  - Current resources and a PIG will be sufficient to carry out the proposed project in an effective and timely manner.
- **Poor (1)**
  - Even with a PIG, the researchers will not be able to complete the project in an effective and timely manner with the resources available to them.