Yale ENGINEERING

AI Seed-Funding Program

The Strategic Vision for the School of Engineering & Applied Science identifies AI as a Research Priority. Likewise, the Yale Task Force on AI has underscored the role of schools in developing initiatives to support AI at the university. To advance this priority, Yale Engineering is seeking AI research and workshop proposals. Selected projects will be funded by the School of Engineering & Applied Science.

Goal: Seed research grants to support new, ambitious, and speculative research in AI to facilitate successful applications for external funding.

Concept: Yale Engineering will provide seed funding to advance nascent AI research. This will enable faculty to be able to generate preliminary results, improving their competitiveness in attracting external support. This program seeks to develop faculty AI partnerships and to expand Yale's footprint in federally funded AI research. Lead PIs must be primary Yale Engineering faculty members; collaborators can be other Yale faculty members, both within and outside Yale Engineering. Proposals should present research that is not currently funded from other sources; those that demonstrate a clear path for outside grant application will be given preferential attention. Proposals in any of these broad research categories are welcome:

1. Foundations of AI
2. AI, Humans, and Society
3. Applications of AI

Selection Criteria

Lead PI must be a primary Yale Engineering faculty member.

Applications will be reviewed by a faculty committee using the following selection criteria:

- Likelihood to be impactful
- Novelty or innovation in the application, development or study of AI
- Whether the proposed team has the proper credentials to complete the project
- Involving multiple disciplines
- Intellectual merit of the proposal, balanced with quality and creativity
- Alignment with the School's Strategic Vision

Research Proposal

- These are intended for research projects that may not be developed fully enough for federal grant opportunities. Successful completion of this project should make a PI more competitive for external funding.
- Proposals for up to $150k will be considered
- Awardees will be eligible for cloud credits ($5k in Amazon credits; $2K in Google credits)
- 2-page project description

Workshop Proposal

- These are intended for a concept that is ripe for research activity but would benefit from a community workshop to advance understanding and partnerships.
- Proposals for up to $20k will be considered
- 2-page workshop description, including who would be invited and draft agenda

Submission Process

Submit 2-page proposal, 1-page budget, and cover sheet to Yale Engineering Dean's office at seas.dean@yale.edu by 10/25/24.

- Budget must comply with all Yale's Appropriate Use of Research Funds policy
- Cover sheet should include:
    - A. Indication of which category of research is being proposed:
        1. Foundations of AI
        2. AI, Humans, and Society
        3. Applications of AI
    - B. List of the PI team, including department/school affiliation; *please note email address of the primary correspondent*
    - C. List of external funding opportunities that an awarded seed grant would ripen
    - D. Statement that the proposed research is not currently funded

Timeline

10/25/24	Proposal deadline
11/18/24	Awards announced
April 2025	AI Research Symposium presentations
September 2025	AI Awardee showcase

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