



# FAIRMONT STATE UNIVERSITY™

Office of Sponsored Programs

March 19, 2026



## REMINDER: Falcon Mini-Grant applications are due March 31, 2026!

Faculty and Staff: Don't forget that FY27 Falcon Mini-Grant applications are due **March 31, 2026**. This is an internal grant program available to make your projects that advance the mission of Fairmont State possible.

Click the buttons below for more information:

[FY27 RFP](#)

The RFP includes information on eligible and ineligible funding requests, how to organize your proposal, and what projects are most likely to be funded.

[FY27 Application](#)

The application form must be completed alongside your proposal and asks for further information about your project.

# SPECIAL FEATURE

## Science Education Goes Global: Fostering International Collaboration and Understanding through Grassroots Outreach

When working with grants, it's sometimes easy to get caught up in the numbers. How much funding was awarded in a certain fiscal year suddenly becomes more interesting than the actual outcomes, including the individuals who were impacted by the sponsored project.

Though grants do award external funding, they also have the potential to spark change far beyond the initial investment. When resources are directed toward bold ideas and genuinely inspired initiatives, they can elevate individuals, strengthen communities, and catalyze progress across entire sectors.

One sponsored project that the Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP) is certain has catalyzed progress within science education and international collaboration is the grant-funded *Enhancing Biophysics Research and Physics Education through International Collaboration Between Fairmont State University and Mid-West University, Nepal*.

Ganga Sharma, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Physics at Fairmont State University, recently led this academic engagement project in Nepal, integrating research collaboration, faculty development, and science outreach to further student engagement and knowledge attainment. The project was funded by the American Physical Society (APS) through the APS-Simons Travel and Professional Development Award program.

During December 2025 to January 2026, Dr. Sharma participated with collaborative research work as well as science inspiration workshops at the Janapriya and Bhairav Secondary Schools in close coordination with the school administration and local government. Over six high schools participated in these workshops, ensuring as many students as possible could benefit from the sessions.

The workshops focused on fostering scientific curiosity, critical thinking, inquiry-based learning, and innovation, encouraging students to think and engage as scientists. Additionally, since the schools were in a rural setting and Dr. Sharma was able to support grassroots science education, he felt this aspect of the project was particularly impactful.

Dr. Sharma said, "Working with students in Surkhet and Bardiya in those workshops showed me that even limited exposure to hands-on science can ignite powerful dreams and shape how young minds see their potential."

During his time in Nepal, Dr. Sharma was also able to host a teaching pedagogy workshop at Mid-West University in which faculty members and students were able to discuss best teaching practices, active learning strategies, and the SCALE-UP instructional model. To share recent research,

Dr. Sharma presented seminars at Prithvi Narayan Campus, Pokhara and Tribhuvan University, Central Department of Physics, which highlighted his work at the intersection of physics, biophysics, and medical applications.



Ultimately, this funding enabled the establishment and strengthening of international research collaborations, contributed to faculty development through pedagogical exchange, and supported impactful science outreach activities across multiple academic institutions and rural communities in Nepal.

"Engaging with faculty and students in Nepal at different institutions, I experienced the power of shared learning, where innovative teaching and interdisciplinary science come together to inspire deeper understanding and meaningful impact," shared Dr. Sharma.

The relationships established through this engagement between Dr. Sharma and multiple faculty members from Prithvi Narayan Campus, Tribhuvan University, Mid-West University, and various secondary schools in Nepal are evolving into ongoing research partnerships, future joint publications, and potential student and faculty exchanges.

Though Dr. Sharma undoubtedly had the necessary passion to organize and lead this project, the funding from APS enabled him to realize the project. The most transformative sponsored projects are those that look outward, embracing global perspectives and fostering collaboration. The work Dr. Sharma completed through this APS-Simons Travel and Professional Development Award will likely have a lasting impact for not only himself and the students and faculty he engaged with in Nepal but also for campus community he engages with at Fairmont State University.

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**SPECIAL NOTE:**

Any grant application, proposal, or request for external funding must be reviewed and approved **prior to submission** through an internal process managed by the Office of Sponsored Programs. Please *visit our website* for more information and to access the required forms which facilitate the internal review and approval process.



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