



Commonwealth Cyber Initiative

CENTRAL VIRGINIA

Call for Proposals: CVN Research Grant FY27

Application Due Date: June 18, 2026 5:00 p.m.

Objective

The Commonwealth Cyber Initiative (CCI) is establishing Virginia as a global center of excellence at the intersection of security, autonomous systems, and data. With a mission of research, innovation, and workforce development, CCI serves as a catalyst for the Commonwealth's long-term leadership in this sector through the leadership of a central hub and four regional nodes. The Central Virginia Node (CVN) is led by Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU).

As the CVN leader, VCU uses CCI funding to strengthen a robust research program and seeks to support projects related to CVN's research focus areas: cyber physical systems, autonomous systems, Internet of Things (IoT) as it applies to medical device security and smart city technology. This CCI-funded program aims to fund projects that relate directly to CCI's overall mission and CVN's research focus areas and aims to produce novel research.

Eligibility

Eligible applicants must be full-time faculty at a CVN institution. Eligible applicants may serve as a Principal Investigator (PI) on one application, and as a co-PI on one additional application. Each proposal must include a co-PI from another institution within CVN¹. We also encourage researchers who have not previously been funded by CCI to apply. **However, PIs or co-PIs who are currently funded through CCI or CVN on three or more projects at the time of award are not eligible to apply.** I.E. PIs or co-PIs should have no more than three CCI or CVN projects running concurrently.

Focus areas are limited to: cyber physical systems, autonomous systems, IoT as it applies to medical device security and smart city technology. Proposals must be approved by the lead institution's Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP) prior to the proposal deadline.

Awards

Amount of Funds to be Awarded: \$800,000

Maximum Award Amount: \$100,000

Match: No Match is required for this funding announcement.

Award Details: Awardees will also be required to submit periodic reporting. PIs and co-PIs are expected to participate in CVN meetings, present research findings at CVN and CCI poster sessions, and respond to data collection requests by CCI, and may be asked to present their research at other CCI engagements as required. Any publications that result from this project must include the following statement (contract numbers will be assigned during the award process):

¹ CVN institutions include Brightpoint Community College, Longwood University, Piedmont VA Community College, Reynolds Community College, University of Virginia, Virginia Commonwealth University, Virginia State University, Virginia Union University, and the University of Richmond

This work was supported [in part] by the Commonwealth Cyber Initiative, an investment in the advancement of cyber R&D, innovation, and workforce development, under the contract number xxxxx. For more information about CCI, visit www.cyberinitiative.org.

According to the terms under which CCI is funded, the following costs are **not** allowable:

- Costs of developing and delivering undergraduate capstone programs, except as part of the larger effort to align cyber and cyber-physical systems security-focused undergraduate program content with industry needs.
- Portion of salaries and benefits of faculty for time spent teaching undergraduates, including teaching cyber-related courses. However, effort required for the PI to complete the proposed project is allowable.
- Scholarships for costs of attendance at institutions of higher education. However, Tuition reimbursement for graduate students is allowable.
- Indirect costs (IDC)

Schedule

Request for Proposals Released	May 22, 2026
Last Day for Q&A	June 5, 2026
Proposal Deadline	June 18, 2026, 5 p.m.
Award Notification	Prior to August 1, 2026
Project Dates	August 1, 2026 – July 31, 2027

Proposal Format

Proposals must use 1-inch margins, 11-point (Calibri or Arial) font, and single line spacing. Proposals submitted in the wrong format or missing items will be deemed incomplete and will not be considered. The following outline should be followed:

1. Title Page (See template; 1 page)
 - Title of proposed project, contact information for Principal Investigator (PI) and co-Principal Investigators (co-PIs).
2. Proposed Research (up to 4 pages)
 - Problem Description/Need Statement: a clear statement of the circumstance, problem, or issue that your project is addressing or resolving; a persuasive description of a need, issue, or problem that a grant proponent proposes to address or solve if awarded
 - Rationale: Discussion of the technical background and engineering/scientific justification. This should include project objectives and the intellectual merit of the proposed work.
 - Research Plan: What exactly will be done? How will the objectives be met? What are the motivations, methods, likely outcomes, milestones, and future directions? If existing CCI assets and equipment will be leveraged to support the research, please describe the equipment/assets and how they will be used.
3. Plan for Impact on the Commonwealth (up to 1 page).

- Address potential for commercialization and economic development/impact, and/or workforce development in the Commonwealth.
4. References (not included in the page count)
 5. Budget (See template; 1 page)
 - Budget items and detailed narrative justification
 - Budget must include requested amount and identified commitment
 - Budget must be approved by OSP
 6. Biographical Sketches (NSF Format; 3 pages)
 - Required for PI and all Co-PI

Proposal Submission

Proposals must be submitted via jotform ([CCI CVN Proposal Form](#)) no later than the close of the business day (5:00pm) on Wednesday, June 18, 2026. All proposals must be uploaded to the jotform as a single PDF document. Proposals received after the deadline will not be considered. The CVN proposal jotform can be found at: https://vcu.jotform.com/team/engineering/CCICVN_ProposalForm

Evaluation Criteria

The applications received in response to this RFP will be evaluated by a panel of reviewers and scored according to the following criteria:

- Strong intellectual merit related to CCI's mission,
- Strong broader impacts related to CCI's mission,
- Relevance to industry needs,
- Potential to generate additional funding and revenue,
- Strong relevance to CVN's focus areas.

Contact Information:

For questions on this solicitation or technical assistance with submitting an application, contact ccicvn@vcu.edu.