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2026 SMART FIRES Professional Development Grants

For Early Career Faculty and Trainees

Deadline: August 28, 2026

The NSF EPSCoR RII Track-1 SMART FIRES project will support early career faculty and trainees at Montana State University to pursue professional development activities through the 2026-27 academic year. The purpose of this program is to support early-career faculty and postdoctoral scholars in disciplines related to the SMART FIRES project.

Who is eligible

Tenure-track faculty at the assistant level, NTT faculty, and postdoctoral scholars in disciplines related to the SMART FIRES project; these disciplines include (but are not limited to) computer science, engineering, environmental science, economics, chemistry, and social science.

What is supported (how these funds can be spent)

These grants can support professional development activities that include (but are not limited to) travel to conferences, travel and tuition/registration fees for professional development courses and skills development, working with external mentors, and building professional networks.

Award amount

Up to \$5,000 (direct funds)

Key Dates

Application deadline	Friday, August 28, 2026
Award notification	Friday, September 4, 2026
Funds must be fully spent by	May 31, 2027

How to Apply

Email a proposal of **500 words or less** as a PDF to SMART FIRES Project Manager Ben Williamson (ben.williamson2@montana.edu) **by Friday, August 28, 2026**. Your proposal must include:

- A description of the proposed activities
- An explanation of how the activities support your professional development
- An itemized budget with justification
- Confirmation that all funds will be spent by May 31, 2027

Questions

If you would like to discuss a proposal idea before submitting, please contact Ben Williamson (ben.williamson2@montana.edu) or Rob Walker (rawalker@montana.edu)