

## OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR

## MEMORANDUM

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FROM: Jay A. Perman, Chancellor

DATE: Friday, March 6, 2026

SUBJECT: Wilson H. Elkins Professorship Call for Nominations – FY 2027

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I am pleased to announce that the University System of Maryland (USM) is able to make available to its institutions the Wilson H. Elkins Professorship for use in Academic Year 2026–2027 (FY 2027). The Professorship, which began in 1978 at the University of Maryland, College Park, was established to perpetuate the name and contributions of Wilson H. Elkins, a former Rhodes Scholar who led the University of Maryland to new levels of distinction as its president from 1954 to 1978. When the University System of Maryland began in 1988, Dr. Elkins agreed that the professorship bearing his name should extend to the entire USM family. Information about the Professorship and a listing of recent Elkins Professors are available on the University System of Maryland website at <https://www.usmd.edu/usm/academicaffairs/elkins.html>.

Elkins Professors must exhibit, at a minimum, all of the following qualifications:

- A solid record of achievement in a recognized academic or professional discipline;
- Evidence of significant achievement outside traditional disciplines but linked in scholarly and professional ways to the work of the USM;
- Demonstrated ability and continuing desire to lead and inspire undergraduate and graduate students in a range of learning situations – from the lab, to the classroom, to the studio, to the community, to online; and
- Demonstrated ability and intent to participate in programs and activities outside the USM.

Income from the endowment for the Elkins Professorship is intended to support compelling projects with focus on research, scholarship, or community engagement that will allow the Elkins Professor to make an important contribution to the teaching, research, or public service mission of the institution and the entire

USM. Direct involvement with undergraduate and/or graduate students and outreach to other institutions within the System are hallmarks of the Elkins Professors.

The Professorship income may be used to supplement an existing faculty line; recruit an outstanding individual to an institution to fill a vacancy; or to provide special recognition or support to retain a current outstanding faculty member who has made or will make an important contribution to the teaching, research, or public service mission of the institution and the entire USM through a compelling project with focus on research, scholarship, or community engagement. Institutions that use the Professorship to provide a salary supplement should understand that continued salary supplement after the Professorship period becomes the responsibility of the individual institution.

In all cases, the Professorship should not be viewed as a reward for maintenance of the status quo but as an opportunity for the institution to build on its strengths to be of greater service to its students and to society.

***Beginning in FY 2027, individual Elkins Professorship awards will be made up to a maximum of \$40,000.*** This change is designed to expand opportunities across the System, allowing us to support multiple Professorships and a broader range of innovative projects.

Nomination(s) for the Professorship should include:

- A short (one page or less) narrative description of how the nominee exemplifies the excellence an endowed professorship signifies;
- A brief curriculum vitae of the nominee;
- A description of the compelling research, scholarship, or community engagement project that the faculty member will undertake;
- A description of how the income from the Elkins endowment would be used, including a proposed budget listing the amount of proposed support for publications, graduate/undergraduate assistants, lab materials, distinguished lecture series, travel, salary supplement, etc. (The proposed budget should be based on a maximum annual award of \$40,000. However, the amount of spendable income the endowment generates will determine how many awards and the amount(s) of the awards we can offer for FY 2027); and
- A proposed time-period (Appointments to the Elkins Professorship are ordinarily made for a one-year period. Departments may apply to renew an existing Elkins Professorship during the normal review cycle.).

If your intent is to use the Professorship to recruit an outstanding scholar to your institution, please indicate the name(s) of individual(s) who might be considered for the proposed appointment along with applicable information from above. Also note that identifying possible candidates in no way implies any obligation to make the final selection from those listed.

Applicants may use generative AI tools to assist in proposal development. If AI tools are used, please include a brief disclosure statement indicating:

- Which AI tool(s) were used (including version)
- How they were used (e.g., brainstorming, drafting, editing)
- Confirmation that all content has been reviewed and verified for accuracy

Proposals should adhere to best practices in digital accessibility, such as the use of heading structure and meaningful alternative text for images. The [USM Digital Accessibility Checklist](#) is a helpful guide.

Finally, the calls for nominations for the Elkins Professorship Academic Transformation Award and the Elkins Fellowships for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) have been concurrently released. If your nominees have academic innovation-related proposals focused on the use of Generative AI or on teaching and learning, consider submitting those proposals through those processes.

Please submit your questions and materials to Kelsey Beckett ([kbeckett@usmd.edu](mailto:kbeckett@usmd.edu)) by **11:59 pm on Friday, May 22, 2026**. I look forward to announcing the next Wilson H. Elkins Professors.

cc: Alison Wrynn, Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs  
Denise Wilkerson, Chief of Staff to the Chancellor