

University Forum Grant Program

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) FOR 2020-2021 **Application deadline: 4:30 PM on Monday, March 16, 2020**

Introduction:

The University Forum (UF) promotes a sense of community, facilitates communication and cooperation among diverse constituencies of the University community, and collaborates in support of the University mission, values statement, and strategic plan with special emphasis on diversity, inclusion, and emergent issues of community importance. This is accomplished through a competitive request for proposal process facilitated annually by the Office for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (ODEI) with the support of a dedicated and engaged group of faculty, staff, and students. The UF team invites grant applications for programs and activities that enhance the WCU campus climate for students, staff, and faculty through scholarship, programming, creative and collaborative activities, teaching, learning, and other aspects of campus community development.

The UF welcomes program and research proposals that promote our understanding of race/color/ethnicity, indigeneity, gender, sexuality, immigration and/or international topics, veterans, people with disabilities, health and mental health disparities, non-traditional students, and projects that address educational and opportunity gaps for students, faculty and staff/administrators.

PART I: GENERAL INFORMATION AND GUIDELINES

Purpose and Goals:

These guidelines include directions and criteria that apply to all proposals submitted to the UF Grant Program. **Please be sure to adhere to the information provided in Part I: General Information and Guidelines; the specific criteria and stipulations provided in Part II: UF Grant Program Description; and Part III: Proposal Instructions & RFP Application Form.**

The overall purpose and goal of the UF Grant Program as recommended by the Campus Climate Survey Advisory Committee is: “Identify sustainable initiatives to provide faculty, staff, and students with the skills to engage in dialogues related to sensitive subjects, in a civil and respectful manner and provide safe venues for these discussions; develop a pool of individuals who are well equipped to facilitate these discussions”. Additional UF goals include:

- 1) to encourage faculty and staff to address the campus goals for building a diverse campus community;
- 2) to fund programs or research initiatives that seek innovative approaches to diversity and inclusion or seek to provide new data to support the importance of institutional diversity and inclusion; and
- 3) to promote the development of initiatives that foster an inclusive and welcoming environment that promotes the success of all who work and study at West Chester University.

Priority Goal Areas:

This year’s priority goal areas include the following:

WCU Strategic Plan Goals:

- Goal 1 - LEARN IT: INCREASE SELF-AWARENESS - Create and enhance opportunities to build self-awareness, knowledge and skills to interact effectively with aspects of diversity, inclusion, culture and global differences.

- Goal 2 - LIVE IT: PROMOTE AN INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENT - Promote a welcoming and inclusive university environment by demonstrating a commitment to the principles of diversity and inclusion in all interactions.

Capacity-Building Goals:

- Enhance the quality of teaching and learning about diversity.
- Enrich the diversity experiences of students, faculty and/or staff.

ODEI Strategic Initiative Goals:

- Provide cultural competence training for students, staff and/or faculty.
- Provide educational opportunities for students, staff, and/or faculty that promote a greater understanding of social identities, inequities, multiculturalism, inclusion and social justice.
- Increase opportunities for cross-cultural dialogue and/or learning among students, and between faculty, staff, and students.
- Incorporate issues of diversity and cross-cultural competence effectively into the curriculum in ways that will improve campus climate.
- Improve recruitment, retention and graduation of students from underrepresented groups.
- Improve recruitment, retention and graduation of student s with disabilities, student veterans and/or non-traditional students.
- Increase recruitment, retention and success of faculty from underrepresented and minority groups.
- Develop initiatives focusing on intersectionality of social identities and issues of social justice.

Eligibility:

1. All WCU tenured and tenure-track faculty members, including a faculty member who is appointed to a tenure track position and who has not been granted tenure; regular full-time employees (staff/administrators); and graduate students, including doctoral candidates, are eligible to participate either individually and/or on teams for awards on a competitive basis.
2. Graduate student applicants must be enrolled during the duration of the grant period and require a faculty or staff sponsor.
3. Program Directors shall expect to be employed at WCU during the grant period.
4. Project Directors of previous UF grant awards are eligible to apply.
5. If a Program Director has not submitted an End-of-Year report for any current or previous UF awards, then they are NOT eligible to apply.

Award Criteria:

The following criteria will be applied in evaluating all grant proposals submitted to the University Forum Review Team:

1. Potential benefits to be realized by the WCU campus community.
2. Impact of the proposed program and its expected outcomes in relation to the RFP purpose.
3. Clarity, completeness and reasonableness of the program proposal and budget request – *what do you expect to accomplish; what work will be done during the course of the program; who will perform the work; how, where and when will the work be performed.*
4. Feasibility of realizing the program's objectives given applicable budget funding and timeline.
5. Appropriateness for UF funding and adherence to UF grant program instructions and guidelines.
6. Incomplete or poorly-written proposals will not be considered by the UF Proposal Review Team.

PART II: UF GRANT PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

General UF Stipulations:

In addition to the eligibility requirements listed above, the following stipulations apply to the UF Grant Program:

1. The **maximum grant award** limit for annual grants awarded this year is **\$5,000**. Any grant funds not used or encumbered by May 30, 2021 will be returned to the ODEI.
2. The UF Grant Program is not intended to be a continuing support mechanism for ongoing projects. All UF grant awards shall be limited to two (2) years funding. If extraordinary growth is demonstrated in year two, then the UF is able to consider funding for a third year.
3. Funding is not intended for normal course development or for Alternate Work Assignments (AWAs).
4. A faculty member may not submit more than one proposal for which they will serve as the Program Director in the annual grant program.
5. Proposals submitted in response to this RFP will be considered only for the
6. 2020-2021 academic year.
7. If so desired, the UF Proposal Review Team may require a follow-up meeting for further information about the program proposal.
8. As there could be some overlap among RFP categories, the applicant must choose the category that represents the “best fit” for the proposal.
9. Project work may start upon receipt of an award notice from the ODEI. However, UF funds will not be accessible until after an SAP Cost Center is established and the University has transferred UF its annual budget.

Submission Requirements, Deadlines, and Important Dates:

1. The UF Co-Chairs shall hold open sessions for questions before submission of proposals on **Tuesday, February 11, 2020 from 3:30 PM – 4:30 PM in Anderson Hall, Room 456** and **Friday, February 14, 2019 from 9:00 AM – 10:00 AM in Anderson Hall, Room 456**. Please **RSVP for the open sessions [HERE](#).**
2. **Application submissions must be received by 4:30 PM on Monday, March 16, 2020.**
3. **Letter(s) of Endorsement/Financial Support** from an appropriate department head/administrator are strongly encouraged for all proposals, in general, **but are required for all proposals whose expenses exceed the maximum UF grant allotment (\$5,000).** Letter(s) should express congruence between the Programs Director(s) proposal and the supporting unit’s objectives and intended outcomes. Letters must emailed directly to Hiram Martinez at hmartinez@wcupa.edu by the specified RFP due date.
4. If applicable, please email a copy of the IRB application to include with your proposal to Hiram Martinez at hmartinez@wcupa.edu by the specified RFP due date.
5. If needed, UF may request individual meetings with proposal writers during the **week of April 6, 2020.**
6. Applicants shall be notified of proposal acceptance or rejection by mid-late April 2020.
7. End-of-Year reports shall be due to the ODEI within 30 days of the project’s completion, but no later than June 15, 2021.

Evaluation Process for the UF Grant Program:

The UF Proposal Review Team and process is collegial and relies on a diverse and talented team of campus community members to review all proposals and provide comments and scoring. The amount of feedback that can be provided on unsuccessful proposals is limited, but every attempt will be made to provide meaningful and helpful review comments. Preference is given to proposals that demonstrate cross-unit collaboration.

Request for Proposals for the UF Grant Program:

The UF will make an attempt to proportionally award funds by the categories, however, it is not mandated to do so. The UF is also not obligated to award all funds in a given year. Based on annual trends, the UF Proposal Review Team anticipates it may receive between 10 and 15 proposals this year. The total amount of money budgeted for the UF Grant Program is approximately \$40,000. At a maximum award of \$5,000, funds may be sufficient for a maximum of eight (8) awards. Proposals should fall within one of the following six categories:

Category 1: Campus Climate

Category 2: Training and Education

Category 3: Recruitment and/or Retention

Category 4: Professional Engagement

Category 5: Student Engagement

Category 6: Faculty and/or Staff Research/Scholarship (NEW)

Funding reservations within this year's RFP:

1. **\$30,000 - \$35,000** is reserved for proposals within Category 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5.
2. **\$5,000** is reserved for one (1) Category 6: Faculty and/or Staff Research/Scholarship proposal which may be awarded annually. If no Faculty and/or Staff Research/Scholarship proposals are received, the balance of funding will be dispensed in support of other proposals.

PART III: PROPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS AND RFP APPLICATION FORM**PREPARATION OF THE PROPOSAL**

The UF Proposal Review Team has limits on the length of proposals. The required Proposal Components below are important to ensure clarity, consistency, and comparability. Please carefully review the following instructions regarding format and the proposal components.

A. Format Guidelines:

1. The UF Proposal Review Team membership represents a variety of departments and disciplines; care should be taken to avoid jargon as much as possible. Write in a non-technical style and language. When technical terms are unavoidable, a short (one sentence, parenthetical or footnote) explanation is encouraged.
2. To maximize the ease of proposal submission, the UF Proposal Review Team strongly encourages all applicants to initially write their proposal as a Microsoft Word document (Font size 11, Times New Roman) - then cut and paste the proposal components into the UF application form.
3. Check the budget instructions to be sure that your proposed budget is in compliance. Verify that the amount requested is accurate and agrees with the amount listed as the total within the budget.

B. Proposal Components:

The component parts below serve as the overall program narrative and should be concise but include sufficient information to permit effective review by a multi-disciplinary group of faculty and staff. Language should be non-technical in nature. Be specific and informative; avoid redundancy. The proposal components include the following:

1. Proposal Program Title - (Limited to 10 words)
2. Abstract - (Limited to 200 words)
3. Total Grant Amount Requested - (Maximum amount is \$5,000)
4. Timeline - (Fall/Spring)
5. Program Categories - (Category 1: Campus Climate; Category 2: Training and Education; Category 3: Recruitment and/or Retention; Category 4: Professional

Engagement; Category 5: Student Engagement; and Category 6: Faculty and/or Staff Research/Scholarship)

6. Program Director Contact Information -
7. Program Director Campus Status – (Faculty/Student/Staff)
8. Additional Co-Director Contact Information -
9. Co-Director Campus Status – (Faculty/Student/Staff)
10. Names, titles, and roles of other key participants (if applicable)
11. Priority Goal Areas - (WCU Strategic Plan Goals; Capacity-Building Goals; and ODEI Strategic Initiative Goals)
12. Background and Significance - (Limited to 700 words) - briefly sketch the background of the proposal; Specifically identify the gaps or needs which the project intends to fill. Clearly state your view of the proposed project's significance
13. Program Goals and Expected Outcomes - (Limited to 300 words) - list all your program goals and expected outcomes, including what you expect to learn and what others will learn, including the ultimate impact on student success.
14. Anticipated Program Completion Date – (MM/DD/YYYY)
15. Program Description - (Limited to 1000 words) - describe the design of your project and the procedures to be used or activities to be engaged in to accomplish your specific objectives. If appropriate, include the means by which data will be collected, analyzed, and interpreted.
16. Marketing - (Limited to 300 words) – describe how the program will be marketed and advertised to reach out to the entire campus community; applicants should use resources such as the Office of Public Relations and Marketing for publicity strategies; a marketing plan timeline should be included within this section.
17. Sustainability - (Limited to 300 words) – describe how this program, if successful, can be shared and replicated in the future; explain any plans for continuing the project beyond the grant period.
18. Program Evaluation/Assessment – (Limited to 300 words) - describe your method of measurement for all outcomes; how you will evaluate your program success.
19. Budget Itemization – identify each budget item that will need to be purchased; provide a description and explanation for each item.
20. Budget Itemization Total – identify amounts to the nearest dollar for each budget item.
21. Budget Narrative – (Limited to 300 words) - explain exactly how budget figures were calculated and how grant funds will be used; please reflect any departmental matching funds; do not assume that UF will identify budget explanations and justifications because they are stated or implied in other sections of the grant application.

Assurance of compliance with WCU research requirements – It is the responsibility of the Program Director(s) to assure compliance with all WCU research requirements (e.g., Human Subjects Research, Animal Welfare, Conflict of Interest, Integrity in Research), if applicable to the proposed program. The program director(s) must initiate the IRB process before submitting the UF grant application. Please email a copy of the IRB application to include with your proposal to Hiram Martinez at hmartinez@wcupa.edu. If the grant is awarded, grant activity cannot start and funding is contingent pending IRB approval.

BUDGET GUIDELINES

The program budget must include all anticipated expenses and revenue. Wherever possible, projected expenses should be based on estimates provided by suppliers or appropriate University offices. Applicants are expected to exercise prudence and request funds only for essential costs that cannot be covered otherwise. The following instructions pertain to specific budget items. All amounts should be rounded to the nearest dollar.

Student Wages – The exact nature of work to be performed by students should be indicated either in the proposal narrative or the Budget Narrative. Requests for student hourly wages that exceed Pennsylvania’s minimum wage are allowed but must include justification in terms of University policy and/or the nature of the work to be performed by students. Clearly indicate how much students will be paid and for how many hours.

Honoraria – The University may contribute additional funding for honoraria if desired. Proposals should include the names and credentials of the person(s) to be invited.

Supplies – These are consumable items required to carry out the project.

Equipment – Total requests for equipment, books, computer software, or similar items will be considered, provided that the proposal offers strong justification related to the needs of the project. Any such items purchased with UF grant funds will be the property of WCU.

Operating Expenses – These include expenses for surveys (including paper and postage), off-site facility costs, housing and other items typically treated as direct costs, as well as refreshments or other costs associated with meetings that may be part of the project. Items that are typically treated as indirect costs cannot be charged to the grant. Food purchases are prohibited.

Travel Expenses - Requests may be made to cover costs of travel, lodging, and other direct costs incurred during the course of the proposed activity.

Indirect Costs – The UF does not fund overhead or indirect costs such as accounting, University space, clerical support, or legal.

College/Division/Department Contribution – To gauge the feasibility of a proposed project—whether or not its goals can be accomplished—the UF requires information about additional funding, including any University contribution that has been committed to the project. University matching funds are not required and do not affect selection. Within the Budget Itemization section, please list only specific dollar amounts, if any, pledged to the particular project by the University or from other sources. It is assumed that in-kind support (e.g., some clerical support, copying, etc.) will be provided in many cases; in-kind support may be mentioned within the Budget Narrative, but estimates of the monetary value of this support should not be included in the Budget Itemization section or Narrative.

Other Revenue Sources – Estimated or actual funds pledged or anticipated from external sources should be listed in this column of the budget format; these sources should be identified in the Budget Narrative.

POST-AWARD INSTRUCTIONS

Upon award of the funds by the UF, the ODEI will prepare and issue Letters of Understanding (LOUs) and will provide the appropriate SAP Cost Center number to post transactions throughout the duration of the program.

EXTENSIONS - In order to secure an extension, a Program Director must submit an email request to the UF Co-Chairs that outlines the reasons an extension is needed, i.e. the delay in the completion of the planned scope of the program. A Program Director can receive no additional funding. A project cannot be extended simply because there is a balance of funds or to expand the scope of the original project. There must be a legitimate reason directly related to the planned scope of the original project. Extensions are not allowed solely to expend funds to travel to make presentations.

BUDGET REVISIONS - A request for a budget revision should include an explanation of the reasons for the shift in funds and a description of the impact on the project. Identify reasons the revision is necessary to accomplish the project objectives and reasons the funds are not needed in the original budget category.

All requests for revisions or extensions can be submitted to Dr. Wan-Yi Chen, WChen@wcupa.edu, and/or Mr. Hiram G. Martinez, hmartinez@wcupa.edu.

[TAKE ME TO THE APPLICATION FORM](#)