Faculty of Science Teaching Innovation Fund (FoS-TIF)
Projects or Research Proposals in the Area of Teaching and Learning

Terms of Reference and Instructions

The purpose of this fund is to enable Science educators to improve their courses through substantially redesigning a curriculum of studies, developing educational resources, and/or researching educational outcomes achieved through using innovative educational methods. The applicant is expected to be actively involved in the project and to develop expertise in instructional methods. Funds will not be awarded for normal course, program, or curriculum development, or for the publishing of materials (see “Frequently Asked Question” section of handbook).

Eligibility
Applications are invited from persons engaged in teaching Faculty of Science courses and employed by Faculty of Science departments. To confirm eligibility to hold as principal applicant or co-applicant, see University of Alberta Policies and Procedures Online (UAPPOL) document titled “Eligibility to Apply for and Hold Research Funding Policy”. Staff from within the Office of the Dean, Faculty of Science, are not eligible for project or research funding. Only one FoS-TIF project or research award may be held by a principal applicant or co-applicant at one time.

Strategic Directions
Applications are invited in the following areas:
- Diversification of teaching pedagogy in multi-section courses.
- Generation of research results in the scholarship of teaching and learning, or the implementation of evidence-based teaching methods.
- General – all other teaching and learning projects and/or research.

Cycle of Applications
January 11, or the first working day following, annually.

Expectations
- Applications are evaluated on merit, and both small and large projects will be accepted.
- Successful applicants are expected to provide the following to the Associate Dean (Learning and Innovation), Faculty of Science:
  - Evidence of a research plan.
  - Evidence of ethics approval, if required, after funds have been awarded. It is the responsibility of the applicant to determine whether ethics approval will be required for the project or research and to indicate this on the application form.
  - Evidence of pending scholarly work as a result of funding.
  - Plans to present to the university community.
  - Annual progress reports are due April 30 annually for projects extending over one year. Reports are to include the following:
• The status of the project in relation to the original project management plan, budget, and schedule of timelines. In the event of significant deviations, provide an explanation of how the plan and budget have been adjusted to fit the overall budget and timeline.
• A discussion of how the project is empirically examined and/or evaluated.
• A summary of how findings/outcomes have been disseminated to date. Alternatively, provide an explanation as to why this has not occurred.
  • Within 3 months of the end of the project, recipients must submit a final report to the Associate Dean (Learning and Innovation), Faculty of Science.

Recipients will be asked to complete a consent form authorizing use of application materials on the FoS-TIF website.

In addition:
• Funds will be spent for the purposes described in the approved application.
• Following completion of the project, unspent funds will be returned to the source.
• The Dean may request the return of unspent funds if project progress is not satisfactory.
• Projects with outstanding conditions must submit before one year of the proposed start date an explanation for the delay and an outline of the revised timeline. Alternatively, the funding will be forfeited.

Selection Committee
The quorum for the FoS-TIF Selection Committee shall be no fewer than two members when decisions are made.

Proceedings are confidential. Information collected will be retained and disposed in accordance with approved records retention and disposal schedules of the Office of the Dean of Science at the University of Alberta. Questions should be directed to: Associate Dean (Learning and Innovation), Office of the Dean of Science, CCIS 6-193, Edmonton, AB T6G 2G2; telephone (780) 492-1676; fax (780) 492-9434, e-mail glen.loppnow@ualberta.ca.

The Selection Committee, selected by the Associate Dean (Learning and Innovation), Faculty of Science, for this award will include the following:
  • Associate Dean (Learning and Innovation), Faculty of Science
  • Associate Dean (International and Graduate), Faculty of Science
  • Vice-Dean, Faculty of Science

Application Requirements
Complete the application free-form incorporating elements #1-6 outlined below. Use 8.5" X 11" paper, with margins no smaller than 0.75" single-sided.

1. Key Words

Provide up to six key words describing the nature of the project or research (e.g. educational resources, workshop).

2. Abstract
Provide an abstract (up to 150 words) about your proposed project or research that highlights the items below. This abstract will be used for promotional purposes. Comment on:

- the Strategic Direction.
- the purpose of the research or project
- how the project is innovative
- its impact on teaching and learning.

3. Project or Research Description

Include in your proposal, comments on the following criteria as they relate to the project. Applications will benefit from demonstrating how the project or research is related to educational theory and/or empirically validated educational practice. It is not necessary to address items not relevant to the project.

**Innovation:** Discuss how this project or research will be innovative and expand the realm of effective practice in teaching and learning at our University. Where funding is being requested for an activity or event that is ongoing, describe how it has been funded in the past and address how FoS-TIF support will allow for new innovation.

**Leverage (if appropriate):** Discuss how this project or research will be used to leverage other internal or external funding, if appropriate.

**Collaboration:** Demonstrate how the project or research will represent a joint undertaking involving a number of collaborators by describing the following:
- collaboration among different faculties, departments, and/or divisions,
- collaboration among students and faculty,
- collaboration with other institutions or agencies,
- opportunities for students to participate in learning-centered environments in a variety of roles.

**Evaluation:** Include a comprehensive evaluation strategy (e.g. what are the outcomes/desired results of the projects and how will these be measured?). Specific research questions and related research methodology need to be defined. Include evidence of how students will be included in the evaluation of the project.

**Sustainability:** Demonstrate how the proposed activity has the potential for sustained improvements in educational outcomes. For example, how will the project or research:
- make optimal use of existing resources from your Department/Faculty, and if this is not possible, indicate why. Note: For equipment needs, consider the following sources: Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) and Information Services and Technologies (IST),
- benefit a significant number of students or how does it have the potential to do so,
- continue to operate or provide benefit beyond the FoS-TIF support period.

**Dissemination:** Include a dissemination plan which will benefit educators and students within our Faculty and elsewhere. Describe:
- how the project or research outcomes will be accessible for others,
how the knowledge gained and resources developed will be transferable to other courses, programs and instructors.

4. Budget, Justification, and Schedule of Timelines

Provide a budget along with justification and a schedule of timelines.

Be specific in how calculations are derived. It is the applicant’s responsibility to ensure the appropriate salary scales are used and that benefits and cost of living increases are included. The budget is to be aligned with the fiscal year April 1 to March 31. The start date should not be earlier than the adjudication date, and the project should not exceed three years.

Budgets should include, at a minimum, the points outlined below:
- funds requested from FoS-TIF,
- funding requested from other sources – identify received, requested, and in-kind contributions,
- justifications for all expenditures,
- unit and total costs for salaries and benefits, supplies, equipment, etc.,
- project or research timelines for major activities.

Where project applications request funding for capital equipment (e.g. computers), explain how these expenses are integral to the proposal and proportionate to the project’s enhancement of the learning environment. In addition, where University resources exist but will not be used, indicate why. (See “Sustainability” section.)

It is anticipated the bulk of the budget will be used to support activities which promote high quality teaching and learning at the University of Alberta. Dissemination is considered to be an important component of the FoS-TIF projects or research, but costs should be incurred only in the final year of the project and total no more than 10% of the total budget (before dissemination costs).

Notes:
- Principal applicants and co-applicants are not eligible to receive remuneration.
- Funding for teaching release will be considered.
- For salary and benefits cost information, consult the following links:
  o Graduate Student Appointments: “Graduate Student Association Collective Agreement”
  o Academic and Support Staff Appointments: “Collective Agreements”.

5. Curriculum Vitae

An abbreviated curriculum vitae (maximum of 3 pages) for the principal applicant is required. The selection committee reserves the right to request the CV of any co-applicant at a later date, if required.

6. Appraisal Letter from Chair

Applicants are required to include a letter from the Chair. The letter should include the following:
• the extent to which the proposed activities are likely to benefit students and instructors within the Department, Faculty and University as a whole,
• an indication of long-term sustainability for the project or research within the Faculty,
• an indication of any commitments from the Department,
• an indication of infrastructure (e.g. software, equipment, etc.) that the department will provide.