

Research Futures: Major Program Development Grants

The Office of the Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies announces a new fund to support growth of research programs with prospects for becoming emblematic of a strong, multi-faculty research theme that productively involves a growing number of faculty members and students, creates new opportunities for those involved and for Lehigh, and is a basis for strong external relationships.

This program is grounded in the Research Futures vision for the quality, character, and stature of Lehigh research:

- Outstanding scholarship as the foundation for everything we do;
- Drawing colleagues together around areas of collective strength that become attractors of colleagues, students, and partners;
- Healthy public engagement that grounds us in human concerns and is a source of insight; and
- Research programs, and the relationships they bring, as the foundation for a student experience of extraordinary lifelong value.

While not all factors need to be present in making a case for investment under this program, a strong case should be made with regard to at least the first two, and there should be evidence that the applicants are, at minimum, actively open and attentive to the other two.

This program provides substantial flexibility and discretion for program leaders to allocate resources, with the expectation that leaders will work to build a strong presence for Lehigh. In building their programs, leaders are expected to prioritize building environments conducive to the growth and success of colleagues and students.

Use of funds

Funds can be used for costs such as

- Student stipends and postdoctoral fellow support;
- Research activity necessary for groups to demonstrate productivity and qualify for extramural support;
- Necessary travel for development of partnerships and collaborations, and presence in important venues; symposia and programs created by the group for similar purposes; and
- Support for development of major proposals for external support.

These are examples and should not constrain thinking. Funds cannot be used for tuition or for faculty salary. This program is not intended to support development of physical infrastructure, so requests for capital equipment will be carefully scrutinized.

Goals and review criteria

With reference to the vision described above, applicants should have a clear program development purpose in mind, and are encouraged to be inventive, thoughtful, aggressive, and adaptable, in pursuit of that purpose. Groups should set ultimate as well as intermediate goals, to assess what is working and what is not and adjust plans accordingly, and to share what they learn.

Applications will be considered in light of the following criteria:

- Potential. Does the group have a clear goals for growth of their program, consistent with our overall vision for Lehigh research? Is it properly aggressive and imaginative, such that what the group might build can truly stand out, nationally and globally? Though groups are encouraged to reach at least a bit beyond their immediate grasp, are the group's goals achievable in principle considering extant talents, resources, relationships, and opportunities, and considering related programs elsewhere?
- Plan. Does the group clearly describe how it expects to proceed, and is there a sound basis for its plan? Is there evidence that the group will be able to creatively adapt its plans per its assessment of what has worked and as opportunities present themselves?
- Commitment and leadership. Both of the following are important:
 - Are there clear commitments of at least three members of the faculty, sufficient to provide a solid foundation and initial momentum? Does the group have plans, and strong prospects, for involving Lehigh colleagues in the disciplines necessary for full success, as well as external partners and constituents?
 - Are the group leaders clearly oriented toward, and committed to, creating an environment in which colleagues and students will thrive and partner organizations and communities will see value? Are the group leaders clearly committed to a fully inclusive environment for colleagues and students?
- Mission integration. Has the group thought creatively about how the research program, and the partnerships and constituent relations it supports, can enhance graduate and undergraduate education at Lehigh?
- Budget. Is the budget appropriate per the group's initial plans?

How to apply

Please prepare a proposal up to six pages in length, describing the long-term potential of the program you envision, your starting point, your plans for proceeding, your goals for a period of support of up to two years, as well as intermediate goals that will be used to assess progress. Please use the narrative structure and format that you believe will most effectively describe the potential, the team you've assembled, and your plans, and enable reviewers to answer the questions above.

The application should be submitted online at <https://lehigh.infoready4.com/> by the faculty member serving as PI. The PI will be responsible for communications, the budget, and all reports. When submitting your completed proposal, the online system to prompt for the following:

- A descriptive title, suitable for publication on our public web site.
- Name, position, and department of each participating faculty member.
- IRB/IACUC status. Please refer to our Research Integrity web page at <http://research.cc.lehigh.edu/research-integrity>.
- Conflict of Interest statement
- Abstract: 250-word abstract suitable for a sophisticated lay audience, and suitable for publication on our public web site. The abstract should describe the program's broad significance and the manner in which the team plans to advance work in the field as well as long term vision.
- Budget: In tabular form, provide an initial budget showing amounts that the team plans to allocate to student stipends and other personnel costs, supplies, materials, travel, etc. Include applicable employee benefits in personnel costs. Do not include indirect costs. If the total direct costs exceed the amount requested, identify sources of co-funding and attach letters of commitment as applicable. The total amount requested, not including any cost sharing, may be up to \$250,000. Applicants should request only what they need.

Review and award process

Proposals and awards will be made on a rolling basis: A proposal may be submitted at any time, and an award will be made per determination that the proposed activities are likely to advance the goals of the program (see expected outcomes and review criteria above).

In the interest of obtaining the strongest possible proposals, applicants may, after initial review, be invited to submit revisions.

Awards will be made by the Vice President and Associate Provost for Research and Graduate Studies, per evaluation by members of the faculty Internal Review Committee.

Listings of current and past awards will be listed on the Research Futures website.

Consultation prior to submission

We encourage consultation prior to proposal preparation and submission. Please contact us at vpresearch@lehigh.edu .

Relationship with other programs

[Accelerator Grants](#) provides support for development of lines of research involving multiple members of the faculty with significant potential for growth. Like this program, the Accelerator program focuses on starting and expanding *programs* rather than projects. Compared with the Accelerator Grants, these Major Program Development Grants come with heightened expectations with regard to potential scope and visibility of the research program, meriting and securing external relationships, and opportunities created for colleagues and students .