

# Faculty Innovation Grant (FIG) Guidelines

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## Faculty Innovation Grant Program Description

The Faculty Innovation Grant (FIG) program supports members of the faculty in establishing new research projects, taking existing research in promising new directions, or otherwise expanding research programs beyond their current scope. A FIG award may be used to initiate study of a new and potentially revealing research question, test the feasibility of a novel approach or synthesis, or begin particularly promising translation of theory to practice. In each case, a FIG award is intended to begin a line of research of scope and duration well beyond what is provided by the initial investment.

We encourage use of FIG support to establish collaborations in furtherance of these goals. Projects can be uniquely enlightening, productive and competitive when they incorporate unique combinations of talents, or apply methodologies or theoretical frameworks across disciplines. A FIG award may be used to demonstrate the potential of a new interdisciplinary approach or application of concepts from one field to another, and to establish an initial record of joint publication.

Applicants should have high confidence and write convincingly about their projects' futures. As described in detail below, a FIG proposal should first describe the long-term goals of the project in a manner that makes clear its potential impact within and beyond the immediate field of study. Second, the proposal should identify existing barriers to proceeding with the project, including barriers to obtaining support for its continuation. Typically, these involve factors such as the untested nature of the ideas or the sheer novelty of the approach. Finally, the proposal should describe a specific plan for addressing those barriers.

Because the purpose of the FIG program is to start projects that continue beyond the period of FIG support, applicants should be as specific as possible as to how they expect the FIG-funded project to enable them to obtain the external support they will need to continue their research. FIG awards should, by their nature, support exploration of new territory. Applicants are therefore encouraged to take risks accordingly and should be eager to capitalize on unexpected results. Applicants are also encouraged to be creative and entrepreneurial in crafting plans for continuation and expansion of their programs. With positive results, whether planned or serendipitous, awardees are expected, within six months after the end of their projects, to describe progress in their plans for continuation.

## Award

A Faculty Innovation Grant provides funding of up to \$30,000. The actual budget must be commensurate with the needs of the specific project. Generally, it is expected that the awardees are ready and eager to commence on the proposed work and complete the project within a 12-month period. To allow time for recruiting of students, and necessary scheduling and preparatory work including preparation and approval of human subjects protocols, the project start may be delayed for up to six months. See instructions below regarding the project timeline. The earliest start date is **June 1, 2019**.

Awards may not be used to replace or to supplement current funding. A FIG award may not be used to support work within the scope of a pending grant application or an active or recently completed research grant. This does not preclude use of a FIG award to take a project in a new direction that is clearly beyond its current scope, including steps to qualify a project for funding from a new source. Funds may not be used for remodeling or alteration of facilities, faculty salaries or tuition. Grant funds must be expended in furtherance of the goals of the project as described in the proposal.

## Eligibility

All tenure-track faculty members are eligible to apply. Applicants must have made timely submission of all reports and other required materials under all prior internal grant programs. An individual faculty member or team is limited to one FIG award every two years. A faculty member with a current award may apply as a member of a team,

provided that team composition is different and the project goals and scope of work are significantly different from those of the current award.

### Review Process

Lehigh's Internal Review Committee (IRC) will review proposals. IRC members are nominated by their deans in accord with their experience and representation of the scope of research endeavors at Lehigh. **Reviewers will be reading and evaluating proposals within and across subject areas. Proposals should therefore describe the project and its potential in a manner that can be readily appreciated by non-specialists, and details necessary for evaluation by specialists should be kept as concise as possible.** Final selections for funding will be made by the Vice President and Associate Provost for Research and Graduate Studies.

### Selection Criteria

- **Originality, intellectual merit and potential impact.** Do the applicants pose novel research questions, describe a new way of studying an existing question, propose novel means of bridging from theory to practice, or otherwise promise to advance an important field of scholarship, discovery or application? Is there potential for a sustained research program with broad impact? Is the work significantly different in scope from that of any pending, funded or recently completed grant?
- **Quality of the research plan.** Have the applicants proposed a sound research plan that makes good use of their talents and existing resources? Have they identified critical questions about the feasibility or promise of their new ideas, or about the viability of their project, and focused their plan on addressing those questions? Is the proposed timeline appropriate?
- **Budget and personnel.** Is the budget appropriate for the proposed work? If a team project, is every member making a substantive contribution?
- **Long-term potential.** Does the project have potential to open up new avenues for the applicants and for Lehigh? Does that potential reach beyond the initial focus of the FIG project? Could it solidify or serve to expand a research team that could be uniquely productive and competitive? Does it make productive use, or creative new use, of existing resources?
- **Potential for enabling external support.** Have the applicants cited prerequisites to success with future funding sources on which they will depend for continuation of the project? Does their vision for the project serve the missions and priorities of those sources? If expected outcomes are achieved, are the applicants likely to be competitive in the near term?

### Proposal Preparation Instructions

Electronic submission of proposals through our [InfoReady Review](#) website is required.

When submitting, the online system will prompt for the following:

- A descriptive project title, suitable for publication on our public web site.
- Name, position, and department of each participating faculty member. One faculty member must be correspondent and will be responsible for all deliverables and management of the budget.
- IRB/IACUC status. Please refer to our Research Integrity web page at <http://research.cc.lehigh.edu/research-integrity>.
- Abstract: a 250-word abstract suitable for a sophisticated lay audience, suitable for publication on our web site. The abstract should describe the project's broad significance, the proposed activities and the project's intended results.

The following must be uploaded to the online system as a single pdf. Page margins must be at least one inch. Exclusive of any figures, text must be 11 point or larger.

- A proposal narrative, not to exceed three pages, that enables reviewers to judge the merits of the project using the criteria listed above. Please adhere to the following outline:
  1. Background, context and long-term goals.

- Describe the long-term goals and potential of the project, beyond the initial period of FIG support, with reference to or in contrast with established work in the relevant field(s), supported by appropriate citations. Describe how the project could overcome existing barriers, open up new possibilities, lead to innovation in practice, or otherwise merits attention.
  - Discuss the project in the context of the backgrounds and research agendas of the faculty member(s) involved, making it apparent why the project presents a good opportunity. Highlight any unique combination of background, prior experience and capabilities that are being brought to bear on the project. Explain why this project is a good opportunity for the people who are involved.
  - Briefly describe the current status of related research at Lehigh, including existing strengths and opportunities.
  - Finally, identify the most critical barrier to moving forward with the project, with emphasis on what is required to convince others of the merits of the research program.
2. Project plan
- Against the background provided in the previous section, describe the work you plan to undertake and its expected outcomes. Make it clear to reviewers that you have devised a well-crafted plan that makes good use of talent, experience and existing resources. After reading this section, reviewers should appreciate how expected outcomes would address the critical barriers that you identified in the previous section.
- Timeline
    - Provide a timeline for completion of the proposed work in simple, readable form such as a short paragraph or simple diagram. Unless justified based on the nature of the work involved, the work should be completed within 12 months of the start. The earliest start date is June 1, 2016. The proposed start date may be delayed for up to six months as necessary for reasons such as recruiting students, seasonal factors in conducting fieldwork, or preparation of regulatory protocols.
  - Plans for continuation
    - Describe plans for continuation, with intent to realize the long-term goals described in part (1) of the proposal narrative.
    - Identify expected sources of extramural support. For each, include
      - the agency or organization and any recurring or special program to which you plan to apply, and any known submission deadlines.
      - a description of how the project will be responsive to the funding source's priorities and/or the requirements of the specific program.
      - a description of how funding through this source would advance the project in accord with your long-term plans.
  - 1-page budget and justification, specifying a budget total. If matching funds will be used or in-kind resources dedicated to the project, specify these including amounts and sources. Funding of renovations, faculty salaries or tuition is not permitted. **Your proposed budget, not including any cost sharing, may be in the range of \$5,000 - \$30,000. Your budget must be appropriate for the proposed work, and the work you propose must be appropriate for your goals.** Funding may not be used to replace current funding for an ongoing project.
  - Indicate the specific involvement of each participant for the project. Short-form biographical sketches for each of the faculty members involved in the project. You may use the form prescribed by any federal agency or a listing, not to exceed two pages, of educational preparation, research activity and relevant publications.
  - List of all current and pending internal and external grants of all faculty involved in the project, including title, award amount, funding period and funding agency. For each, indicate either "no relationship," or succinctly describe the relationship between the work supported by the grant and the proposed FIG project.

## **Proposal Deadline**

Full proposals must be submitted through our [InfoReady Review](#) website no later than **5PM EST** on the deadline date.

## **General Requirements**

- **Collegial exchange.** Awardees will be expected to make brief presentations of their programs and plans at an open symposium to be held early in the funding period and/or to provide written materials about their projects for sharing with Lehigh colleagues.
- **Required reports.** Awardees will be required to submit end-of-project reports and follow-up outcome assessments, using reporting forms provided by the Office of the Vice President and Associate Provost for Research and Graduate Studies.
- **Research integrity.** Conduct of research must adhere to university policies, including those pertaining to research involving human subjects, vertebrate animals, and hazardous materials. Information on these is available at the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP) website.

## **Need More Information?**

For a list of prior awards or for additional information regarding the submission process, please visit our [website](#) or email [VPRresearch@lehigh.edu](mailto:VPRresearch@lehigh.edu).