

Engaged Research and Innovation Seed Grant Program

Proposal Guidelines and Application 2021-23

Proposal Due Date: Friday, May 7, 11:59 PM

Please note that for faculty, your Dean's signature is required on your application; for staff, a supervisory signature is required. Please allow the deans and supervisors adequate time to review and sign off.

I. General Information

Q. What is the rationale and purpose for the Engaged Research and Innovation seed grant program?

The rationale for the Seed Grant Program is to stimulate and support NLU faculty in research, scholarship, and innovation by "seeding" projects that show promise for attracting external funding and/or for creating financially sustainable innovation. This rationale is consistent with the NLU Strategic Planning goals to, "foster a culture of research, inquiry and scholarship," "create structure and process to build capacity in support of an NLU-wide research and dissemination agenda that's collaborative, engaged, and interdisciplinary," and "build paths to distinction in each college."

This seed grant program honors NLU's long history of "engaged" research. There are two types of grants: Track 1: Individual Engaged Research Grants and Track 2: Affinity Group Grants. The requirements for each track are described in detail below.

Q. What does this commitment to engaged research mean?

National Louis University employs Boyer's taxonomy of scholarship:

- Scholarship of discovery: (creating/discovering new knowledge)
- Scholarship of application (responsibly applying knowledge to societal needs and practice)
- Scholarship of integration (research that involves synthesis of information across disciplines, across topics within a discipline, or across time)
- Scholarship of teaching (the systematic study of teaching and learning processes).

This taxonomy goes beyond basic research and describes more "engaged" notions of scholarship. At NLU, by engaged, we mean research that improves the quality of life and benefits the public good by applying research-based knowledge to well-defined problems. We further define engaged as a culture of research, inquiry and scholarship, around all the work we do. The seed grants allow for pilots and explorations that build an engaged research agenda and/or interdisciplinary affinity groups that build the knowledge base and shared work of group members.

Q. What are the specific purposes of the seed grant program?

In addition to the broad mandate to develop engaged research at NLU as indicated above, the seed grant program has three specific purposes:

- To support NLU faculty in developing research agendas that reflect an engaged approach
- To support the development of interdisciplinary research affinity groups at NLU, which are groups that combine perspectives to explore shared research and programmatic interests
- To grow readiness for and increase the number of proposals for external funding of engaged work

Q. What is the expected content of a seed grant proposal?

Below is a description of the grant components and expected outcomes for each type of grant. A full description of the information required for the seed grant proposals is found under the application description further in this document.

	Track 1: Individual Engaged Research Grants	Track 2: Affinity Group Grants
Grant Team	Individual faculty members or small collaborative teams (2 or 3 members; Can involve external partners	Team of interdisciplinary NLU applicants. Contributors must represent at least two distinct disciplines across at least two departments/units within NLU; cross-college collaborations strongly encouraged. Can involve external partners.
Grant Focus	Engaged research project that addresses a compelling need facing communities and/or stakeholders that NLU serves	Engaged research problem or specified interest area shared by all team members that addresses a compelling need facing

		communities and/or stakeholders that NLU serves
Grant Purpose	Explores a research agenda (question, topic, problem, population, etc.) that can be externally funded	Builds an ongoing network of people with diverse expertise around a shared topic of interest or challenge to be addressed
Grant Outcomes	· Completed pilot-level research study AND · Draft proposal for external funding	· One or more of the following: - Completed pilot-level research study - Draft research agenda - Draft plan for a center - Proposal for symposium or conference presentation AND · A plan for continued meeting of the affinity group (if applicable) AND · Draft proposal for external funding

Q. What is the grant period for a seed grant?

Both tracks have a 24-month timeline for completion, from July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2023. Grant funding is on an annual basis, so that separate budgets need to be submitted for Y1 and Y2. **There is no carryover of funds between Y1 and Y2, nor is there funding carryover after the grant is concluded.**

II. Eligibility Information

Q1. Who is eligible to apply for a seed grant?

Any current, full-time faculty member (tenured, tenure-track, non-tenure track, distinguished professor of practice) OR full-time staff member may apply. Full-time faculty who apply for a seed grant may include collaborators who are NLU adjuncts and graduate students. Adjunct faculty and graduate students cannot serve as the PI. Applicants can be part of only one seed grant (Track 1 or Track 2) proposal for each grant cycle.

Q. Can previous seed grant recipients apply for a new grant?

Track 1: Seed Grants. Previous seed grant principal investigators are eligible to apply for a seed grant if they meet the following criteria:

- Must have completed their previous seed grant and have submitted required documentation;
- Must demonstrate a pending external grant application or a successfully funded grant for previous seed-grant projects; and
- Must apply for a new project with significant distinction from the previous seed-grant award.

Track 2: Affinity Group Grants. Previous seed grant recipients are eligible to apply for a seed grant if they meet the following criteria:

- Must have completed their previous seed grant and have submitted required documentation; and
- Must apply for a new project with significant distinction from the previous seed-grant award.

III. Award Information

Q. What level of funding will be awarded for seed grants?

Track 1: Individual Seed Grant awards typically fall within a range from \$2,500 to \$5,000 for the total budget over the grant period.

Track 2: Affinity Group Grants awards typically fall within a range from \$2,500 to \$7,500 for the total budget over the grant period.

For both tracks, the Research Strategy and Implementation Team reserves the right to make larger or smaller grants at its discretion.

Up to \$30,000 is estimated to be available in total for Seed Grant awards over the two-year period of July 1, 2021-June 30, 2023. The funding cycle for the 2021-23 seed grants will end June 30, 2023, at which time any unused or unencumbered funds will transfer back to the Provost's Office.

Projects will not be renewed for additional funding through the seed grant program.

Q. What are allowable and non-allowable expenses for seed grant funds?

ALLOWABLE:

- *Personnel:* Graduate student support to work on research project and other temporary labor to complete project, for example transcription services. No Seed Grant funds can be used to compensate NLU faculty.
- *Travel* related to project. This includes travel costs related to data collection and conference attendance. All funded travel must take place within the budget year.
- *Conference attendance:* Please note that only one conference can be funded by the seed grant. Seed grant funds can be applied to travel costs, and conference registration fees. Seed grant funds *cannot* be applied to membership fees for professional organizations linked to conferences, as those fees are expected to be covered by faculty professional development funds. All funded travel must take place within the seed grant period.

Communications supplies and cost

Incentives for non-NLU research participants. NLU faculty **cannot** receive any research participation incentives funded through seed grants, e.g., gift cards for focus group participation.

Meeting Costs: Facilities, other

NON-ALLOWABLE:

- *Equipment:* This includes all technology, including recording devices
- *Salary buyout for NLU faculty.*
- *Supplements for any NLU faculty:* This includes incentives for faculty participating in the research (e.g., faculty participating in focus groups may not receive incentives funded by the seed grant; faculty who are not on the seed grant cannot receive funding for temporary labor on the grant).
- *Indirect costs* (Facilities and Administration, F&A) should not be included.

IV. Proposal Preparation and Submission

Q. What should be included in a proposal to the seed grant program?

Five items need to be submitted; all needed forms for these items are attached at the end of this document. The items are:

1. Proposal cover sheet, with required signatures from the dean of the applicant's respective colleges. For Track 2 grants, if faculty originate from different schools, signatures from both Deans are required.
2. Abstract paragraph of no more than 200 words
3. Proposal narrative of no more than five pages, following the Proposal outline form
4. Appendix I: Project timeline and benchmark measures of progress and outcomes
5. Appendix II: Proposal budget form and budget narrative, including expected timeline for expenditure of funds (no more than 2-page narrative)

(Optional appendixes of no more than four pages can be included, as described in the narrative guidelines)

NOTE: If the project requires IRB approval, the P.I. is responsible for obtaining that approval independently of this grant process.

Proposals not following the required format will not be considered.

Q. What is the due date and submission process?

The submission deadline is by 11:59 pm Friday, May 7, 2021. Email the required items as either a single Word or PDF documents to the Office of Engaged Research at EngagedResearch@nl.edu. Please remember that the submitted cover sheet needs to show the required signatures; a scanned version or electronic signatures are both admissible.

V. Proposal Review and Selection Information

Q. What is the review criteria and process?

Faculty and staff who are members of the NLU Research Strategies and Implementation (RSI) Committee will review proposals. Following an initial screening by the committee for eligibility, each proposal will be evaluated by committee members based on the five major sections listed in the proposal narrative form.

Each proposal will be rated by its reviewers on a 100-point scale, based on a proposal's ability to meet the criteria listed in the outline for the proposal narrative. Priority will be given to applicants who have not previously received a seed grant and to Track 2 grants. Applications from previous recipients will be considered following the above mentioned criteria for return applicants. Reviewer comments will be available upon request after the awards are announced. If a committee member submits a proposal, he/she

will not review his/her own proposal and will not participate in conducting the initial screening for eligibility.

VI. Award Administration

Q. If awarded a seed grant what will be my reporting requirements?

Grantees will complete a brief mid-year and year-end reporting form in Y1, and a mid-year reporting form and final report in Y2. The final will be no longer than six (6) pages in length, plus a set of brief PowerPoint slides describing the project. Report guidelines will be available with awards. As described above, a full draft proposal for external funding is required by the close of the seed grant, June 30, 2022

In addition to reporting, awardees are expected to participate in the following meetings:

1) In Y1, Grantees attend a June orientation meeting by zoom, and then have introductory meetings during July 2021 with RSI co-chairs (via Zoom); 2) a seed grantee meeting during the winter term (via Zoom), Grantees may also be asked to present at internal NLU meetings, such as the NCE and CPSA faculty meetings.

2) In Y2, fall meetings with RSI co-chairs (via Zoom) to discuss project status and plans for external funding application; 2) a seed grantee meeting during the winter term (via Zoom). Grantees may also be asked to present at internal NLU meetings, such as the NCE and CPSA faculty meetings.

Q. What is the full timeline for this grants cycle?

The timeline for the 2021-23 competition follows:

RFP Release March 19, 2021

May 7, 2021 Signed proposals due by 11:59 (signature from PI and Dean or Supervisor)

May 28, 2021 All applicants notified

June Orientation Zoom meeting

July 1, 2021 Year 1 Funding cycle begins

July 2021 Introductory Zoom meetings

Winter 2021 Grantee Zoom meeting

March 2022 Mid-term Reporting Form Due

June 2022 Year 1 End of Year Reporting Form and Plans for external funding; All Y1 funds must be expended

Winter 2022 Grantee Zoom Meeting: Networking and External Funding Support

March 2023 Mid-term Reporting Form Due

June 30, 2023 Final Report and External Funding Proposal Due, All Y2 funds must be expended

VII. Contacts

For more information, contact Shaunti Knauth at shaunti.knauth@nl.edu.

APPLICATION FORM

Seed Grant Proposal Cover Sheet

Principal Investigator(s)	
Rank/Title	
College/Center/Institute/Department	
Campus Address	
Phone # and Email	
Please add rows as necessary for co-PI information	
Collaborators	
Name	
Institution/Rank/Title	

Name	
Institution/Rank/Title	
Please add rows as necessary for collaborator information	

Signature of PI(s)

x _____

Signature(s) of CPSA Dean/NCE Dean

x _____

Seed Grant

Proposal Outline Form

The proposal's narrative should follow this outline and must not exceed five (5) single spaced pages. There are two required appendices of 1) a project timeline and benchmarks and 2) a budget narrative. These two appendices should be 1-2 pages each and are not counted towards the narrative page total. Optional appendices totaling up to four (4) pages may be included for additional documentation, e.g. letters(s) of support from partners(s), evaluation plan, bibliography, news releases, etc.

I. Proposal Title

II. Abstract Paragraph of Project (200 words maximum)

III. Proposal Narrative: (Five pages' maximum)

Required Narrative Components	Track 1: Individual Seed Grant	Track 2: Affinity Group Grant
<i>1. Statement of Need/Rationale. (20 points)</i>	The proposal addresses a compelling need facing the communities and/or stakeholders NLU serves, as evidenced by literature reviews, core studies, audience analysis, or needs assessment. Criteria for evaluating this section are: a) The proposal addresses an issue of strategic importance to NLU. b) There is evidence of need/strategic importance cited appropriately in the narrative. c) The research proposal is collaborative and interdisciplinary.	
<i>2. Methodology and Capacity. (30 points)</i>	a) The proposal methodology adequately addresses the identified need, and the principal investigator(s) and/or implementation team have the capacity to carry out the proposal. Criteria for evaluating this section are: b) The research and programmatic expertise and interests of researcher(s) are clearly described and project Roles for all collaborators on the grant are clearly defined c) Research question(s) clearly defined d) Operational variables are clearly defined e) Study design is clearly delineated f) Study activities are clearly explained	Methodology and Capacity section should select one among four target outcomes described below; and describe the process that will be used to reach the outcome. The criteria for this section are: a) The research and programmatic expertise and interests of group members are clearly described. The proposal clearly describes how bringing together this set of stakeholder/researchers may generate new and interesting ways to approach the compelling need described in Section 1 b) The target outcome for the affinity group grant is given, selected from the following four suggestions: 1. Conduct a pilot study

		2. Develop a draft of a shared research agenda, 3. Develop plans for an institute/center focused on the topic being explored 4. Plan for a symposium or conference on the topic. c) The process for reaching the outcome is clearly described as follows: For pilot research studies: 1. Research question(s) clearly defined 2. Operational variables are clearly defined 3. Study design is clearly delineated 4. Study activities are clearly explained 5. Project Roles for all collaborator on the grant are clearly defined For developing a research agenda, center, or symposium/conference proposal: 1. How the group will deepen knowledge and jointly explore topic (e.g., literature search, presentations by group members, shared readings, conference attendance, invited speakers, other). 2. How research agenda, center, or symposium/ conference proposal will be developed (e.g., facilitated group discussion, development process such as
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		Delphi technique, external consultation, other) 3. If applicable, how data will be collected (e.g., survey to learn stakeholder needs around symposium) d) Other steps as applicable to group
Outcomes (20 points)	The project outcomes are clearly identified, appropriate, and measurable. The project should be defined for successful completion by the end of the grant period. As an appendix, include a project timeline and benchmark measures of progress and outcomes. Criteria for evaluating this section are: a) Project outcomes are clearly identified b) Project outcomes are appropriate and measurable c) Project can be successfully completed in grant period d) Project timeline and benchmark measures of progress and outcomes is included as appendix	
Sustainability (15 points)	Plans are described for the possible continuation of the work after the seed grant funding ends, and potential external funding opportunities for the next stage of the work are identified. Criteria for evaluating this section are: a) Plans for possible continuation of work are clearly defined b) Potential external funding opportunities are identified and alignment of seed grant to funding is described (alignment with funder priorities, possible timeline for application, any available info on rates of funding)	

Budget Table and Narrative (15 points)	The budget narrative should be submitted as Appendix II, and it should clearly explain all expenses shown in the budget table (budget table is included below as part of the application form) and should give approximate timeline for expenditures. All expenditures need to be realistic expenses that are focused on project success during the seed grant year and the possibility of applying for external funding. Criteria for evaluating this section are: a) All expenses are realistic that are focused on project success during seed grant year b) All expenses are explained and justified in narrative. c) Approximate timeline for expenditures is shown. NOTE: For questions on allowability or other topics as you develop your budget, please feel free to reach out to Shaunti Knauth. We suggest reaching out at least a week prior to the grant due date to ensure adequate time for responses. Shaunti Knauth: Shaunti.knauth@nl.edu
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Appendix I: Project timeline and benchmark measures of progress and outcomes

Appendix II: Proposal budget form and budget narrative, including expected timeline for expenditure of funds (no more than 2-page narrative)

APPENDIX 1: Project Timeline

Please use the form below to list project outcomes, activity benchmarks and timeline. There is an example timeline at the end of the document.

Appendix I Project Outcomes, Timeline and Benchmark Measures

Project Outcomes: (Enter the outcomes you have listed in the narrative).	
Benchmark Activities (Please see example at the end of this RFP)	Timeline

Seed Grant Proposal Budget Form

Budget Guidelines: Please see page 4-5 for allowable and non-allowable expenses.

Seed Grant Proposal Budget Form

Budget Guidelines: Please see page 4-5 for allowable and non-allowable expenses.

Proposal Title		
Principal Investigator(s)		
Additional applicants		
EXPENSES	Y1 Budget: July 1, 2021– June 30, 2022 <i>No Y1 funds will be carried over to Y2</i>	Y2 Budget: July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023 <i>All Y2 funds must be expended by June 30, 2022.</i>
Personnel – students and/or temp. labor	\$	\$
Communications	\$	\$

Resources (e.g. purchased publications costs)	\$	\$
Travel	\$	\$
Incentives for Non-NLU Research Participants	\$	
Supplies	\$	\$
Meeting costs: facilities, other	\$	\$
Other (please specify)	\$	\$
Total for each Year	\$	\$
TOTAL Request (Track 1: not to exceed \$5000. Track 2: not to exceed \$10,000)	\$	

EXAMPLE Project Timeline

Appendix I Project Outcomes, Timeline and Benchmark Measures

Project Outcomes: 1. Completed pilot study that 1) gives initial findings on what data points and formats show promise of effective feedback to students AND 2) give initial findings on utilization of NLU extensive curriculum mapping as part of effective feedback 2. Draft Plan for center that outlines purpose, member participation, and outline of Y1-3 activities 3. Proposal for external funding for Center 4. Defined affinity group: members, and plans for continued convening and work 5. Raised visibility of NLU as a site of strong practice and innovation in the use of and experimentation with LA to support underserved higher ed students	
Benchmark Activities	Timeline
• Review of available data related to coursework; selection of 2-3 data points and course assignments as focal points • Sample selection: Gen Ed course with two sections, single instructor • Design of first experiment, including expert external review • Write and submit an IRB application for quantitative component	July 2019 - September 2019
• Two Iterative experiments in Fall 2019 term in presenting students with feedback designed from LA data and processes. • For each cycle, analyze quantitative data on assignment completion and grades; design next test based on results.	October - December 2019
• Whole team deep data dive into experiment results • Internal and external reviews and comments on data • Development of interview protocols based on quantitative results • Stratified random selection of five students for interviews • IRB amendment for qualitative data	January-February 2020

Visits to three existing LA research Centers	February - April 2020 (NWU: February; IU and U of MI TBD)
Qualitative data collection and transcription	February 2020
Analysis of Qualitative Data	March-April 2020
Develop draft of Center purpose, structure, and main activities Internal and external reviews and comments on drafts	April - June 2020
Preparation of proposal(s) for Center funding	July - December 2020