



# University of Pittsburgh

*Office of the Provost  
Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs, Development, & Diversity*

826 Cathedral of Learning  
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November 16, 2016

Dear Colleague:

In support of the Plan for Pitt (<http://www.pitt.edu/impact>), in particular the strategic goal to advance educational excellence, I am pleased to announce that the instructional grants program, ***Innovation in Education Awards***, will again be available this year to all faculty members, both full-time and part-time.

This annual program is overseen by the Provost's Advisory Council on Instructional Excellence. It was created to assist any faculty member who is seeking funding for the development of enhanced and innovative teaching techniques and materials that will strengthen the teaching mission of the University. The attached Request for Proposals outlines the details of the process. **The deadline for proposal submission is Monday, January 30, 2017.**

The Provost's Advisory Council on Instructional Excellence, comprised of faculty from across the University who are respected for their serious commitment to teaching, was established to provide advice to the Provost on means of encouraging instructional development and teaching excellence in all of our academic units. These goals are realized through the sponsorship of special programs and the dispensing of instructional grants to faculty.

I encourage you to consider submitting a proposal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Laurie J. Kirsch".

Laurie J. Kirsch  
Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs, Development, and Diversity  
Chair, Advisory Council on Instructional Excellence

Attachment

# INNOVATION IN EDUCATION AWARDS

## Request for Proposals 2017

Submission Deadline: Monday, January 30, 2017

### OBJECTIVES

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In support of the Plan for Pitt and its goal of advancing educational excellence at the University of Pittsburgh, the Provost's Advisory Council on Instructional Excellence (ACIE) again invites proposals from University faculty for projects that enhance teaching at Pitt and foster new instructional approaches that represent advances over existing methods.

Additionally, proposals should address one or more of the following criteria:

- Solve a challenging teaching problem
- Apply research-based teaching principles or findings to enhance a course
- Make effective use of one of Pitt's new learning spaces (such as the flexible classrooms in David Lawrence Hall or other new campus classrooms)
- Create significant curricular improvements
- Be adaptable in other instructional settings
- Foster cross-discipline collaboration among faculty from different departments, units, and campuses on the development of innovative approaches to teaching
- Develop new course materials
- Develop innovative approaches to traditional teaching methods

In the past, the Advisory Council has funded a spectrum of projects. Faculty are encouraged to explore innovative approaches that utilize evidence-based teaching strategies, new or emerging technologies, or combinations of approaches. Proposals focused on educational technology innovations are welcomed but not required. Proposals should focus on teaching innovations in undergraduate or graduate-level courses. These grants are not intended to support innovations in professional training or continuing education.

Examples of submissions that have been funded in the past include:

- Teaching Quantum Chemistry Through Collaborative Simulations
- Learning and Teaching Together to Advance Evidence-Based Clinical Education
- Learning Lake Initiative – interdisciplinary learning and research

Prior to submission, the Council **strongly encourages** applicants to contact the University Center for Teaching and Learning for consultation regarding development and feasibility of their proposals. Please see "Campus Support Units" below for additional information.

### ELIGIBILITY

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All full- and part-time faculty members at all University of Pittsburgh campuses are eligible to submit proposals or to resubmit revised proposals that were not funded in the past. Please contact Brittany Witoslawski at [blh42@pitt.edu](mailto:blh42@pitt.edu) with any questions.

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### FORMAT

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All proposals must be submitted as an e-mail attachment to the Office of the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs, Development, and Diversity c/o Brittany Witoslawski, in PDF format. Please send proposals to Ms. Witoslawski at [blh42@pitt.edu](mailto:blh42@pitt.edu). Electronic submissions must also be accompanied by a complete hard copy of the proposal with original signatures on the cover page and appendices. The hard copy version should be mailed to: **Advisory Council on Instructional Excellence, c/o Brittany Witoslawski, Office of the Provost, 826 Cathedral of Learning.**

#### 1. Cover Sheet, including:

- Project Title
- Name and signature of the corresponding (for contact and budget responsibility) Project Director with school/department affiliation, complete campus address, telephone and fax numbers, and e-mail address
- Name and signature of Project Director's department chair (or dean in non-departmental schools)
- Project Duration (maximum timeframe: May 1, 2017–April 30, 2018)
- Total funds requested

#### 2. Executive Summary

- This one-page summary should address each of the required project components (see below 4.A.–E.) so that the reviewers will have an overview of the entire proposal.

#### 3. Key Project Personnel and Role in Project

- Half-page maximum for key project personnel, such as the project director, co-director(s), contributing faculty, etc.; include a brief biographical sketch, and describe their qualifications to undertake the project and the responsibilities each contributor will undertake or oversee.

#### 4. Body of the Proposal

The body of the proposal should not exceed five single-spaced pages in length (exclusive of figures, tables, and references), employing a 12-point font size and one-inch margins. Required sections are:

- A. A clear **statement of the goals** and rationale of the proposed project.
- B. A clear **description of the project**.

The Council recognizes that innovation varies by discipline, particularly in the area of technology-enhanced classes. Please bear in mind that you are writing a proposal that will be reviewed by faculty representing a cross section of University faculties and disciplines. Proposals should be jargon-free and responsive to the objectives set forth on page 1. As part of the description, include explicit statements on the ways in which the proposed project represents an innovative (i.e., new) approach or method of teaching, and how it differs from existing approaches or methods.

The review committee will look for evidence that the proposal reflects sound instructional design. This can be accomplished by consulting with a variety of University resource groups (see below) or might be conveyed by discussing the particular instructional qualifications of project team members.

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- C. Clear indications of **the potential impact on the teaching** mission of the University (e.g., number of students affected, contributions to the curriculum, the department, and the greater University community). Often, proposals can be justified by citing potential effects beyond a single instructor's course, but this cannot be given much weight by the review committee unless evidence is provided that additional instructors, either from the same or different departments, have been included in the process. In this connection, a letter or letters of support from deans, department chairs, or instructors in potentially affected units could be provided to strengthen the case.
- D. A clear and explicit **statement on the project's sustainability** beyond the funding period. If the proposal's budget includes a need for operating expenses, be sure to explain how these operating costs will be covered in future years.
- E. An indication of how the effects of the teaching innovation will be evaluated. Provide a clear description of the **assessment methods and procedures** to be used to determine whether the project will result in a positive outcome, what those specific measured outcomes will be, and, to the extent relevant and feasible, any experimental procedures that will be used to confirm the validity of the conclusions regarding possible outcomes. Among the previously funded projects, some have employed conventional measurement techniques, while others have been developmental in nature.

### 5. Budget and Budget Justification

Prepare a budget for the proposed project using the form included with this Request for Proposals or online at [www.pitt.edu/~facaffs/acie/awards.html](http://www.pitt.edu/~facaffs/acie/awards.html). Also provide a separate statement justifying each line item in the proposed budget. Statements of departmental/school matching salary contributions are encouraged.

Acceptable budget items include but are not limited to:

- Purchase of supplies and equipment deemed crucial for the project and unavailable from school, departmental, or other University sources (and provide a rationale for these proposed purchases)
- Purchases or costs for development of new instructional resources
- Student assistants for course development (including fringe benefits charges as applicable)
- Cost of assistance from campus support units (see "Campus Support Units" section for links to these units)
- Student (including fringe benefits charges as applicable) or professional assistance for coordination/production of course Web sites
- Travel to acquire necessary project resources or to obtain training
- Project-related consultant costs (please note that for Pitt faculty and staff, external consulting rates cannot be charged to these projects)
- One month of summer salary (fringe benefits charges must be included), to be paid as direct compensation for those on 8- to 10-month base salaries and to cover release time for those on 12-month base salaries.

Unacceptable budget items include the following:

- Travel and maintenance costs for participation at professional meetings
- Subscriptions and professional journal costs
- Editorial assistance
- Release time, except for faculty on 12-month base salaries

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### 6. Required Letter(s) of Support

A letter(s) of support for the proposal from the Project Directors (and co-directors, as appropriate) department chair (or dean in non-departmental schools) is required for submission.

### 7. Appendices

Appendices (in electronic form only) can be submitted for references, figures and tables, and appropriate syllabi, and may include additional letters of support (see 4.C, page 2).

## UNIVERSITY COPYRIGHT POLICY

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Any copyrightable materials created by faculty, staff, or students as a result of this University-funded project will be owned by the University subject to a royalty-sharing agreement with the creator. For specific information, please refer to University Policy 11-02-02, Copyrights, at <http://www.cfo.pitt.edu/policies/documents/policy11-02-02.pdf>.

## PROPOSAL REVIEW PROCESS

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All proposals will be reviewed by the members of the Advisory Council on Instructional Excellence, with the Council retaining the option for sending proposals out for review by relevant colleagues where needed. Review criteria will include:

- Congruence between the goals of the grants program and those of the proposal
- Projected likelihood for success
- Perceived potential impact on students, the curriculum, the department, and the academic community

Final recommendations to the Provost will be based on a thorough Council discussion. Preference will be given to projects/project directors who have not been funded previously under this program.

## EXAMPLES OF PREVIOUSLY FUNDED PROPOSALS

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A summary of previous years' awards is provided on the ACIE website at <http://www.pitt.edu/~facaffs/acie/awards.html>. Examples of a range of previously funded proposals are also available for review. Please contact Brittany Witoslawski at [blh42@pitt.edu](mailto:blh42@pitt.edu) to acquire past copies of proposals.

## NUMBER, SIZE, AND DURATION OF AWARDS

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The Council anticipates awarding a mixture of grants of varying sizes (usually ranging from \$3,500 to \$15,000). Larger awards (in the neighborhood of \$25,000) will be considered for truly exceptional proposals of sufficient scale or scope as to merit such support. The award period will cover projects undertaken

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between May 1, 2017 and April 30, 2018.

### SUBMISSION DEADLINE AND NOTIFICATION OF AWARDS

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Proposals must be submitted electronically by **Monday, January 30, 2017**. The hard copy version with appropriate signatures and appendices should be mailed to **Advisory Council on Instructional Excellence, c/o Brittany Witoslawski, Office of the Provost, 826 Cathedral of Learning**. Questions about the submission process can be directed to Ms. Witoslawski via e-mail ([blh42@pitt.edu](mailto:blh42@pitt.edu)) or by calling 412-624-2103. It is anticipated that notification of awards will be made by **April 1, 2017**.

### FEEDBACK

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Applicants will be notified via e-mail of the results of the review process.

### REPORTING

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Successful applicants will be required to report on the outcome(s) of the project, particularly in reference to the criteria for success established in the proposal. Additional guidelines for reporting will be provided to funded project directors. The summary report will be due in the Provost's Office on **June 30, 2017**.

### CAMPUS SUPPORT UNITS

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#### University Center for Teaching and Learning

The Teaching Center serves the teaching and learning mission of the University by providing support for instructional excellence and innovation, including the application of effective teaching methods and technologies for on-campus and online education. Visit the Teaching Center website ([www.teaching.pitt.edu](http://www.teaching.pitt.edu)) for information, or contact Carol Washburn, Manager of Teaching Support ([washburn@pitt.edu](mailto:washburn@pitt.edu)), or Joe Horne, Director of Instructional Services ([jhorne@pitt.edu](mailto:jhorne@pitt.edu)).

It is **strongly recommended** that all applicants contact the Teaching Center for an initial project consultation. Faculty should contact Dr. Washburn at [washburn@pitt.edu](mailto:washburn@pitt.edu) to make an appointment.

# INNOVATION IN EDUCATION AWARDS

## 2017 Budget Form

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**Project:**

**Project Director:**

**Instructions:** Requested funds must be itemized and all amounts must be whole dollars. Attach budget justification by line item(s). Please use additional sheets as necessary.

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**Salaries and Wages (must include fringe benefits\*):**

\*Current rates: Medical Faculty: 26.5%; Faculty-Other: 31.7%; Graduate Students: 50%; Temp/Student/Other: 7.7%

*Subtotal, Salaries and Wages with Fringe: \$*

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**Equipment:**

*Subtotal, Equipment: \$*

**Supplies:**

*Subtotal, Supplies: \$*

**Other (specify):**

*Subtotal, Other: \$*

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**Total Amount Requested: \$**

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**Additional Funding from Other Sources (please specify, as appropriate):**

Note: Budget form may be downloaded from the ACIE Web site at <http://www.pitt.edu/~facaaffs/acie/awards.html>.