

Step 1: Development and Discussion of an Idea

Proposals should address the goals and objectives of the College and relate to the College's mission and strategic plan. The strategic areas of focus are:

- Student Access
- Student Success
- Teaching and Learning
- Economic Development
- Community Outreach
- Diversity and Global Awareness
- Technology & Communication
- Evaluation and Student/Customer Service

All grant projects begin with an idea. It is your job in a proposal to persuade the sponsor that your idea is worth funding. Starting early and developing your idea fully can help you achieve this goal.

Review the Literature

To be competitive, you need to develop your idea by doing some background work and collecting support materials for your project. Here are some specific factors and questions you can ask yourself to evaluate the quality of your idea:

- Significance: Have I identified an important problem?
- Innovative: Is my idea new or creative? In what way?
- Increase Knowledge: Will my project increase knowledge in my field?
- Background: Am I familiar with background information about this topic? Can I demonstrate familiarity with this topic through a critical review of the existing literature?
- Gaps or discrepancies: What need does this project/idea fulfill?
- Future Development: Can I identify future areas of study beyond this project?

Discuss with your Program Coordinator and Assistant Dean

Identify potential collaborators

Teamwork is an important part of developing any grant proposal. Individuals can provide assistance in the form of brainstorming, identifying potential funding sources, making suggestions to include or delete certain concepts, developing evaluation strategies, and editing the final proposal.

Your Program/Area Coordinator and Assistant Dean should be informed of your intention to develop a grant proposal as early as possible in the process. They can help you evaluate and clarify your project idea, and make sure it is of interest and benefit to the college. Coordinators and Deans can also help you identify programs or areas that may be impacted by your project and who will need to be involved in the initial conceptualization and planning.

The Director of Grants can also help you identify potential collaborators for your project. Other faculty and staff may have the expertise you need in areas such as evaluation, technology, curriculum development, and so on.

Write a one page preliminary proposal and budget estimate

Now that you have started to focus your idea, it may be useful to write a one-page summary of your project concept. You can use this summary throughout the rest of the proposal development process, so it is worth the effort. Here are some topics you may want to include:

- Significance
- Goals & Objectives
- Overview of planned activities
- Value and contribution to the college

You should also try to estimate a rough budget for the project. The budget is a very important part of the project and should not be left to the last minute to complete. The budget may even determine which sponsor will be the most appropriate for your proposal. Items to think about when estimating your budget:

- Salaries
- Equipment
- Travel
- Consultants
- Materials & Supplies

- Student stipends