Request for Proposals

Introduction to Round Four

Previous applicants will find the majority of this RFP familiar, yet there are several important updates.

Round Four of the Innovative Instruction Technology Grants (IITG) capitalizes upon lessons learned from previous rounds to meet the Chancellor’s vision for “Access, Completion and Success.” Funding priority for this round will be for projects with clear learning objectives that share courses and support materials to students across multiple campuses through use of open education resources (OER).

The IITG program seeks to promote the development and understanding of how new technologies can support and scale-up pedagogy. Online learning, open educational resources, e-textbooks, mobile apps, educational gaming, personalized learning, prior learning assessment, competency based and experiential learning, flipped classroom content, MOOCs and learning analytics are transforming how education is delivered and may also help achieve the mission of access completion and success.

Examples may include development of materials to promote high school level learning for college readiness, or assisting adult learners for degree completion. Application of existing OER content from MERLOT, Coursera, Lumen Learning and others is encouraged while developing new on-demand or flipped classroom content. In general, projects with a goal to use OERs to achieve economic efficiencies lowering barriers to participation in higher education will be competitive.

For those proposing global access to course content via MOOCs, preference will be given to short courses that serve as “on ramps” to existing SUNY degree or certificate programs, or content that is modularized for “on demand” learning.

Exploration of the application of new technologies (e.g., wearable technology, use or development of mobile apps) should be coupled to a course with clear learning objectives and assessment methodology to measure the impact on learning or a related efficiency that meets “Access, Completion and Success” objectives.

Program Resources and Information

The Office of the Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor of the State University of New York is issuing this request for proposals (RFP) to support Open SUNY priorities that can potentially be shared and scaled across the University. Application information is available and regularly updated on the IITG website. Applicants are strongly encouraged to register for informational webinars on Friday January 23 and Monday February 16, 2015, detailing updates in the IITG proposal process.

IITG is a seed grant program that is limited to two rounds of funds. Preference will be given to sustainable projects that can be scaled SUNY-wide through open sharing, future shared or cost recovery models, and/or clear potential for larger foundation or federal funding opportunities. As with all
previous grant rounds, projects receiving IITG funds must select a Creative Commons license when submitting final outcomes.

Funding for the IITG projects is dependent upon receipt of funding through the New York State budget. SUNY University-wide program funds support IITG and are not administered through (or connected with) the Research Foundation. IITG Principal Investigators (PIs) are assigned a state account number managed through campus business officers at the beginning of each academic year. Local expenditures are charged against the assigned State project account, and all funds must be expended by the close of fiscal year (June 30).

Awards will be announced prior to the 2015 SUNY Conference on Instruction and Technology (CIT) to enable principal investigators time for project planning prior to the start of the summer months.

**Timeline Targets**

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>December 22, 2014</td>
<td>Online IITG Application Site Opens</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 2, 2015</td>
<td>Application Deadline (Midnight)</td>
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<td>March 3-27, 2015</td>
<td>Peer Review</td>
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<td>March 30 – April 15, 2015</td>
<td>IIRF Review</td>
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<td>May 1, 2015</td>
<td>Award Notification Target (MOU’s distributed shortly thereafter). PI’s to begin necessary IRB and team communications processes</td>
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<td>May 27, 2015*</td>
<td>Awards Night at CIT Geneseo, IITG “Meet &amp; Greet”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug 15, 2015*</td>
<td>State Accounts Assigned</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 1, 2015</td>
<td>Confirmation of funds available and Community College ACH transfers complete</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 30, 2016</td>
<td>All funds must be expended</td>
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* To Be Confirmed

**Summary of Purpose**

The purpose of these competitive grants is to encourage:

1. Development, application and assessment of instructional technology innovations to improve student engagement and learning;
2. Implementation and support of Open SUNY to:
   a. Expand access to higher education,
   b. Improve completion by supporting educational flexibility,
   c. Support students to ensure they are empowered with the tools and services necessary to be successful in their educational pursuits, and
   d. Foster faculty support and professional development in supporting online education and ancillary services necessary to maximize student success and access;
3. Development of evidence-based outcomes that demonstrate the effectiveness of instructional innovation in support of successful learning outcomes; and
4. Collaboration among SUNY colleagues and supporting partners (e.g., software and technology providers) to pilot solutions and improve quality of learning experiences, as well as provide additional funds or in-kind resources to support innovation that has potential to be scaled more broadly.

Current examples of proposals to support Open SUNY priorities might include (but are not limited to):

- Developing a Coursera MOOC or creating a flipped classroom experience with this platform
- Working across multiple campuses to develop new ladder degree programs
• Developing a competency-based program with outcomes that can be scaled across SUNY
• Collaborating with discipline-based colleagues to leverage a new curriculum delivery model

These grants will foster solutions at the campus and department level, while encouraging team-based collaborations across a campus, multiple campuses or in partnership with vendors to test new concepts. Resources will be made available to assist with project support (SUNY Learning Commons and access to collaborative tools) through the SUNY Center for Professional Development.

IITG does not directly support technology infrastructure. A proposal that seeks direct expenditures on technology for the sake of bolstering campus infrastructure without a clear narrative on how the technology will serve pedagogy will not be eligible for funds; however, if the technology is secondary to the pedagogical solution and learning outcomes being explored, such as testing or assessing a newly developed discipline-based application (“app”) or implementing a new process that can be broadly replicated to benefit SUNY, the cost of pilot technology may be funded.

All proposals must use the budget template provided as part of the application. Incomplete budget templates or use of a non-standard template will not be accepted. The definition of “in-kind” services generally includes campus support for a portion of faculty, staff or student time, and reasonable in-kind value of support services. Please refer to the IITG Website FAQ for more information about allowable expenditures regarding supplies, travel and staffing.

Innovative Instruction Technology Grants reward well-designed proposals that:
• Seek to partner with colleagues throughout SUNY;
• Provide a clear budget narrative for how funds will support the project;
• Contain a well-structured communication and/or collaboration plan;
• Clearly describe effective sharing of project outcomes; and
• Clearly articulate an assessment strategy to demonstrate evidence of impact.

Funding & Eligibility

All campus-based, full time, SUNY faculty and staff are eligible to receive funds. Because IITG awards are part of University-wide programs, IITG applicants or recipients are not specifically required to work through campus-based sponsored program offices. If, however, local campus policies require centralized coordination of research efforts, applicants must follow all local campus guidelines.

All project proposals should include a sustainability plan. IITG funded projects are eligible to compete for a one-time funding renewal to expand and broaden the scope of an existing project. Applicants seeking renewal are strongly encouraged to pay special attention to:

• Progress against original objectives, which must be well documented;
• A clear account of the structure and process for moving forward;
• A strong justification for renewal as part of the budget narrative; and
• A plan describing sustainability of the project without IITG funds in the future, as part of the project and/or budget narrative.

Applicants may review previously funded projects at http://commons.suny.edu/iitg/. Three separate funding tiers are available to meet different types of program objectives. Project examples have been provided to illustrate the contrast between funding levels, but these should not be narrowly construed as exemplars of program objectives. The number of awards for each tier will vary according to available funds and proposals received.
Tier 1 – Up to $10,000 maximum
- Supports professional development workshops or symposia up to $5,000.
- Supports projects up to $10,000.
- Workshops that include substantial development of materials, resources or outcomes that extend beyond a one-time meeting or event, and include small proof-of-concept objectives, are encouraged and are eligible for the upper award limits.
- Campus or external in-kind resources are strongly encouraged in the budget, but not required to be eligible for funding.

**Example of a $5,000 project:** A campus wishes to host a workshop featuring a recognized leader of a particular practice. Tier 1 funding covers the speaker’s travel and conference planning expenses, but a small registration fee, sponsorship or campus funds (or combination) cover additional costs such as providing refreshments for participants. Following the conference, a final report, materials distributed at the conference, and (if allowable) a video of the presentation are posted/linked through an approved Open SUNY resource (SUNY Learning Commons, IITG Outcomes Website).

Example: Giving/Getting Access to Scholarly and Instructional Material received $5,000 Tier 1 funding to support a day-long workshop.

**Example of a Tier 1 project eligible for up to $10,000:** A group of faculty and staff conducts a proof-of-concept exercise based on the practice described at a conference, evaluates the outcomes and makes recommendations that are openly shared in an approved Open SUNY resource to disseminate findings or “best practices.”

Example: Design Digital Concierge for SUNY Learning Commons: Pedagogical Rich Reusable Learning Object is an example of a workshop funded to produce additional materials and publications.

Tier 2 – Up to $20,000 maximum with a 25% Campus Match
- Supports development of a proof-of-concept or pilot project of an instructional innovation.
- 25% of the requested project funds must be matched by the campus or from an external funding source. Guidelines for in-kind contributions are available on the website FAQ’s.

**Example:** A group of professors within a department or across SUNY wish to develop a small game that demonstrates a concept. They also develop an assessment rubric and students provide feedback from several course sections for future refinement. The funds cover a stipend for the professor(s), software, and mobile devices for app testing and collaboration with a peer from another campus, as well as attendance at CIT to present outcomes. 25% of their project funds are from in-kind services from the software vendor and significant contributions of instructional support staff time for project development.

Tier 3 – Up to $60,000 maximum with a 33% Campus Match
- Supports development of an innovation as a proof of concept.
- 33% of the requested project funds must be matched by the campus or from an external funding source. Guidelines for in-kind contributions are available on the website FAQ’s.

**Example:** Faculty from several campuses collaborate to design and create an open online course for students intending to pursue a particular discipline. They develop course content modules, assessment rubric and documentation to enable other campuses to use in a “flipped classroom”
model. The funds cover production costs, faculty stipends, travel for the group to meet several times, and purchase of specialized software. The funds also support assessment of the course content and delivery, as well as attendance at CIT to present outcomes.

Project Requirements and Limitations

All campus-based SUNY faculty, staff and administrators (including community colleges) are encouraged to respond to this RFP within the following guidelines:

- Any campus submitting a proposal(s) must have a minimum of one campus FACT^2 representative who actively participates in FACT^2 webinars, serves as a “grassroots” liaison communicating campus concerns, and coordinates distribution of SUNY activities throughout their home campus. This requires campus-level support for the representative to annually attend the CIT Conference to meet with the SUNY Provost. A campus FACT^2 rep is NOT required to “sign off” on an IITG proposal, but applicants are encouraged to consult in advance with their campus FACT^2 representative and provide them with a copy of the final proposal at the time of application.

- Proposals that require expenditures prior to the availability/distribution of University-wide funds must indicate how they will execute the project plan. A campus department may choose to allocate project funds before IITG distribution, the replace the funding advance through a journal transfer from the IITG sub-account back to the department. The IITG application requires identification of a department-level contact name for project budget and purchasing support, and also identification of the campus business contact to assist with distribution of project funds from the University-wide state account.

- For any project that requires campus based technology support or that may affect network security, appropriate technical support staff must be consulted before the project application is submitted. IT support staff should not be assumed or obligated to support non-standard device(s) at a campus without prior consultation to avoid conflicts in meeting project objectives.

- All local campus policies and procedures must be followed for appropriate use of State funds. Funds used as project participation incentives must follow very strict guidelines – you must clearly state how any stipends or awards will be used as part of your budget narrative and work with your campus business officer as part of a proposal. Campus business officers (or their designees) responsible for any funds distributions will need to be aware of any special circumstances involving cross-campus collaborations.

- All project content and outcomes must be openly shared through the SUNY Learning Commons. As the Learning Commons matures, specialized areas are being developed to encourage the building and sharing of outcomes through discipline-based communities of practice. Use of a license is required. All PI’s are required to present findings at the annual SUNY CIT conference in a format of their choice.

- All proposals must follow IRB and Human Subjects policies and processes. This should be considered as part of the proposal in order to initiate the process immediately upon receipt of an award, to avoid any delays related to data collection.

- Each project must effectively communicate how a proposed innovation will be evaluated for its contribution to a body of knowledge and/or the benefit of SUNY as a whole. Assessment must be described to a level of detail sufficient to demonstrate measurable outcomes.
Proposal Evaluation

Note: All SUNY Faculty and Staff are invited to serve as IITG reviewers. Information for how to apply as a reviewer is posted on the IITG website.

Each proposal will be evaluated in three stages:

1) Projects are blind peer-reviewed from a rubric mirroring the RFP. Reviewers have access to the complete proposal as submitted, but all reviewer identity and scores are hidden from each other. Peer review scores and comments are ranked and compiled;

2) The compiled files are forwarded to the Innovative Instruction Research Council and members of the Office of the SUNY Provost for consideration and funding recommendations in alignment with SUNY priorities

3) The SUNY Provost makes final funding decisions within available resources.

All reviewers will evaluate proposals for evidence of:

- Innovation – either in terms of a fresh concept, or a creative or novel approach to “move the dial” in scaling a solution to benefit SUNY more broadly;

- Overall quality;
  - Clear project description and vision
  - Feasibility (project timeline and budget)
  - Assessment Plan (how the project goals and outcomes will be assessed, measured and reported)

- Communication Plan (how the innovation will be shared with colleagues across SUNY);

- Clear justification for the proposed funding tier (if seeking a renewal, the narrative must describe progress to date, how funds will extend the progress, and how the project will be sustained absent IITG funds in the future);

- How well the proposal engages expertise regarding the proposed topic or project, both internal and external to SUNY;

- How well the proposed innovation, practice or method can be shared, adopted and replicated either within a particular discipline, or across disciplines;

- Appropriate letter(s) of support from the campus, communicating commitment to the proposed project; and

- In-kind services or matched support committed to the project (may be realized through public or private funding to assist in realizing project goals depending upon the specific tier criteria).

Questions regarding this RFP should be directed to the IITG Project Team at: itgrants@suny.edu.