

Pott College Innovation Fund

The Pott College of Science, Engineering, and Education promotes and encourages innovative recruitment, retention, and teaching/learning practices through research and teaching-based strategies focused on undergraduate success. We encourage our faculty, staff, and students to continuously work to research, update, develop, and implement new strategies to improve undergraduate enrollment and success. The Pott College Innovation Fund serves to support faculty, staff, and students in these endeavors and to develop a national reputation in effective student recruitment, retention, and success.

In the higher education landscape of today, we are continuing to re-imagine what it means to be a leading public university — and the newly-launched Pott College Innovation Fund is a key vehicle for that work. This fund will invest in initiatives that creatively fuel increased student enrollment and success. Projects must focus on one or more of the following: student recruitment and retention; challenging students to take an active role in their education; and transforming classrooms into active learning spaces. In short, we encourage projects that promote “learning by doing” with a focus on recruitment, retention, and academic success. Interdisciplinary projects are encouraged but not a requirement of this internal award.

The Pott College Innovation Fund will be awarded to faculty who propose novel ways to approach recruitment, retention, and teaching and learning, with a particular focus on helping more students from all backgrounds to not only persist, but to excel. This program is closely modeled after the nationally recognized Hrabowski Fund for Innovation at the University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC). Learn more about the UMBC program and their funded projects at: <https://calt.umbc.edu/academic-innovation-competition/apply-for-an-academic-innovation-grant/>

Awards and Funding Amounts

Funding will be available and allocated through the competitive review of proposals by a selection committee made-up of faculty members from across the Pott College of Science, Engineering, and Education. The three subcategories of awards available through this fund are:

- **Innovation Seed Awards:** Seed Awards will have a maximum budget of \$3,500 and will fund projects that aim to: (1) initiate small-scale pilot projects in an individual or small number of classrooms; and/or (2) develop small-scale retention pilot projects for a specific academic major, student population, or geographic region. The purpose of the Innovation Seed Awards are to provide funding for pilot projects and preliminary data collection that will lead to submission of a proposal to the Innovation Implementation and Research Award, and/or to seek external funding. Innovation Seed Awards are funded for one year, with an option to seek an extension of up to one year to take advantage of any remaining funds associated with the funded project.
- **Innovation Recruitment Awards:** Recruitment Awards will have a maximum budget of \$4,000 and will fund projects that aim to: (1) support faculty and staff in recruitment efforts to increase visibility of academic programs in the Pott College; and/or (2) support programming that focuses on the recruitment of current High School students to

academic programs in the Pott College. The purpose of the Innovation Recruitment Awards are to bolster enrollments in academic programs in the Pott College and establish methods that best engage and motivate prospective students to pursue a degree at the University of Southern Indiana. Examples of potential projects include, but are not limited to, the development of a hands-on programs for High School students, support events that bring High School students to campus, and programs that engage High School teachers in our region. Innovation Recruitment Awards are funded for one year, with an option to seek an extension of up to one year to take advantage of any remaining funds associated with the funded project.

- **Innovation Implementation and Research Awards:** These awards will have a minimum budget of \$2,500 to a maximum of \$5,000. Innovation Implementation and Research Awards aim to fund large-scale recruitment, retention, and/or student success projects that have significant research basis and therefore a high potential for success. Innovation and Implementation Research Awards should be transformative in nature and upon completion, provide data/evidence for informed decision-making and/or adoption at the University level or beyond. Innovation and Implementation Research Awards are funded for two years, with an option to seek an extension of up to one year to take advantage of any remaining funds associated with the funded project.

Recipients will be designated as a “Pott College Innovation Fellow” for the duration of the award. Individuals participating in a collaborative group project will be considered as members of a “Pott College Innovation Collaborative.”

Proposal Development and Criteria

The proposal narrative must describe the: (1) goals and outcomes of the project; (2) provide a summary of relevant background and a brief literature review; (3) methods that will be used for the project; (4) a plan to assess/evaluate/measure the effectiveness of the project in reaching the stated goals; and (5) a budget and justification. Proposals need to address, and will be evaluated upon, the following criteria:

1. Clear description of a well-defined project and/or problem to be investigated.
2. Potential impact on student success and/or increased enrollment and the metrics that will be used to assess this impact.
3. Where appropriate, the relationship between the proposed methods and/or concepts and relevant existing research (especially important for Innovation Implementation and Research Awards).
4. The feasibility of the project to be accomplished successfully during the period of the award.
5. Plans for formative and summative assessment of the impact on student recruitment, retention, and/or success.
6. Intentions for dissemination within the USI community including the potential of the transfer of lessons learned to other courses, disciplines, and programs.

Proposal Submission and Deadlines

Proposals will be reviewed once each year and must be submitted by 4:30 pm on the first Friday of November using Cayuse, USI's grant proposal management software. Proposals received after the deadline will not be considered.

Proposal Submission Format and Review

The proposal must clearly state the objectives of the research, meet the funding criteria of the award, and include a detailed budget and accompanying justification. The following are the required components of a proposal:

1. Cover page that captures essential information from the proposal narrative, such as: title of the project; names of faculty and departments involved in the project; a concise summary or abstract of the project including project goals; and total funding amount requested. The cover page requires a signature indicating endorsement of the proposal by the applicant's department chair and/or supervisor.
2. The proposal narrative must contain an introduction that clearly outlines the goals of the project, expected outcomes, summary of relevant background, and reference to peer-reviewed literature pertaining to the proposed research.
3. Methods section that includes details about data collection, activities, experiments, surveys, and other research tools that will be implemented for the project. If the proposed research involves human subjects, a brief statement acknowledging that Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval is required prior to conducting the work.
4. Discussion section that outlines a detailed plan to assess/evaluate/measure the effectiveness of the project in reaching the stated goals of the project, as well as a plan to disseminate the results of the work.
5. Detailed budget with justification. If the total budget for the project exceeds the funds available from the program, the investigators need to provide information about other sources of secured and potential funding. Expenses that may be covered by the Pott College Innovation Fund include, but are not limited to, the following: supplies and equipment, programming or research assistance, fees and expenses for student field trips, benchmarking, school visits, honoraria for classroom guest speakers, fees and expenses for conferences or workshops related to teaching, and summer stipends.
6. Bibliography of relevant sources of information that support the proposed research.

Proposal narratives for Seed Awards (budget less than or equal to \$2,500) or Recruitment Awards (budget less than or equal to: \$4,000) have a maximum length of five (5) pages that includes the budget justification. Proposal narratives for implementation and research awards (budget less than or equal to \$5,000) have a maximum length of eight (8) pages that includes the budget justification.

Proposals will be reviewed and evaluated by a selection panel reporting to the Dean of the Pott College of Science, Engineering, and Education. After an initial screening and evaluation of proposals, the review panel may require finalists who have applied for Implementation and Research Awards to make a brief presentation to the selection panel and answer questions about their proposed work.

Selection Process

Members of a selection panel will review and evaluate applications. The selection panel will consist of: (1) one representative from the Pott College Dean's Office (*ex-officio*) and (2) one faculty member from each Department within the Pott College of Science, Engineering, and Education. Members of the selection panel are not eligible to submit a proposal during their service on this panel.

Submission Instructions

1. Submit an "intent to apply" request for internal grant applications no later than the second Friday of October. The form may be found on the Office of Sponsored Projects and Research Administration (OSPRA) website at: <https://www.usi.edu/ospra/internal-awards-and-grants/>
2. Once OSPRA has received the intent to apply notice, your proposal template will be created in Cayuse. Once the template is ready, you will be notified by email that you have been added as a user and may begin completing your application and proposal.
3. Access Cayuse through myUSI. You will find the icon for Cayuse under your Eagle Apps. Once in Cayuse, locate your project proposal shell and enter in your contact information.
4. Complete the Research and Related Budget (RR Budget) in Cayuse that includes all line items from your proposal budget. See Cayuse budget instructions on the OSPRA website at: <http://www.usi.edu/ospra/cayuse-424>
5. Attach your proposal as a pdf file to the documents section under Proposal Summary in Cayuse. Please be sure to include your detailed budget and justification in your proposal. For detailed instructions on uploading documents to Cayuse, please see: <http://www.usi.edu/ospra/cayuse-424>
6. Submit the proposal for routing through Cayuse no later than 4:30 p.m. on the first Friday of November. Note: To submit your proposal you will need to approve the proposal in Cayuse by checking the box next to your name in the routing and approval section. The routing feature of the software allows your Department Chair and the Dean to approve the proposal electronically following your submission.

Expectations of Award Recipients

Projects will officially start at the beginning of the following year (January 1) and extend for 1.5 years (3 semesters). The maximum award will be in the total amount of \$5,000, and all awardees are responsible for appropriate use of, and accounting for, the funds provided. Award recipients are encouraged to continue or expand their projects by seeking external funding. Within three months of project completion, award recipients will provide a brief written report that summarizes key outcomes of the project, along with a list of professional presentations and/or publications resulting from the work. Award recipients may also be asked to make short presentation (5 to 10 minutes) at a fall or spring college meeting to summarize the results of their work.