Program Development Grants

Invitation for Applications

Deadline: September 17, 2021

The Council of Independent Colleges (CIC) invites colleges and universities that are members of the Network for Vocation in Undergraduate Education (NetVUE) and that meet certain other requirements to apply for grant support to develop, expand, or otherwise strengthen existing campus programs for the intellectual and theological exploration of vocation.

The Opportunity

Colleges and universities that are members of NetVUE are already committed to campus activities that encourage vocational exploration by students. These institutions are making significant investments of their own resources in order to develop and sustain vocational exploration initiatives. In order to support NetVUE member campuses in their work, Lilly Endowment Inc. has provided funding to CIC to be used for NetVUE Program Development Grants. Many NetVUE campus leaders have observed that grants for program development at even modest levels will enable their institutions to strengthen and expand existing programs.

The Council of Independent Colleges is grateful to Lilly Endowment Inc. for its generous support of this program.
NetVUE Program Development Grants may be requested in amounts ranging from $25,000 to $50,000 for use over two years to deepen, expand, or otherwise strengthen programs that are already underway and supported by the institution itself. Funds may be used for a variety of purposes to offset one-time costs of program development and implementation. Some expenses are ineligible for grant support; for details, please consult the Grant Budget Guidelines document on the NetVUE website.

A wide range of proposals that augment existing programs in vocational reflection and discernment will be considered. Examples of initiatives that might be proposed include:

- Mini-grants to support released time for faculty members or instructional staff to design new courses (or to revise existing courses) to include greater engagement with issues of vocational reflection;
- A faculty development initiative to expand a first-year seminar that includes vocation-related readings and focuses on pedagogy;
- A program that brings faculty members, student life administrators, and campus ministry staff into partnership for vocational exploration in advising and mentoring and in experiential learning opportunities beyond the classroom; and
- A project to integrate reflection on calling and vocational discernment into an institution’s general education requirements, or to help specific academic departments structure this work into their major or minor field requirements.

Grants will be awarded based on proposals that explain (a) the purpose and goals of the proposed activities and their relationship to the ongoing vocational exploration program of the institution, (b) the extent of institutional support for vocational exploration efforts to date, (c) the proposed enhancements to existing programs, and (d) the ways in which the NetVUE-supported initiatives would be sustained by the institution after the grant period. Programs consisting mainly of direct support for undergraduate students in the form of internships, scholarships, or stipends will be considered only if the institution can demonstrate how it will sustain the programs after the end of the grant period.

**Eligibility and Funding Timeline**

All NetVUE member colleges and universities are eligible to apply for funding, as long as they do not hold a NetVUE Vocation across the Academy grant or a NetVUE Professional Development Award at the time of application, and any prior Program Development Grant that they held was concluded no later than 2017.

This is the ninth round of selection for NetVUE Program Development Grants. In the first eight rounds, CIC awarded more than 180 grants to NetVUE members. Up to 20 awards will be made in this round. The application deadline for the ninth round is **September 17, 2021**. Decisions will be announced by November 30, 2021. Funds will be dispersed by May 1, 2022, for use between May 1, 2022, and April 30, 2024.
Expectations of Grant Recipients

If awarded a NetVUE Program Development Grant, the institution will agree to:

- Submit a written progress report to CIC by March 31, 2023—that is, toward the end of the first year of grant activities;
- Provide final narrative and financial reports to CIC by June 15, 2024, describing the outcomes of the project, including a reflection on the effectiveness of the initiatives during the grant period, with possible recommendations for future projects;
- Permit the inclusion of information about its project in CIC and NetVUE publications;
- Be willing to share, at future NetVUE Conferences and gatherings, what the institution has learned through its grant-supported activities;
- Identify the funded activities as supported by the Council of Independent Colleges and Lilly Endowment Inc. in all project materials and publicity;
- Maintain membership in NetVUE throughout the grant period; and
- Send a campus team headed by the president, chief academic officer, or another officer at the vice-presidential level to the 2022 and 2024 NetVUE Conferences.

Application Guidelines

Proposals should be submitted online as a single document and consist of the following:

A One-Paragraph Executive Summary of the Proposal

A Brief Public Description of the project (five sentences maximum), which will be posted on the NetVUE website if the project is funded. Examples may be found in the listings of previously-awarded grants on the website.

A Three- to Four-Page Narrative that provides:

- A description of current vocational exploration programs on campus (including an estimate of the amount of ongoing annual expenditures for these programs), as well as an account of the institution’s understanding of vocation in relation to its mission and how this understanding guides the current program and its proposed development;
- A description of both the challenges and the opportunities that the grant would address in the institution’s program for the exploration of vocation;
- A statement of project goals that can be referenced and assessed, both during and at the end of the grant period to evaluate project success;
- A description of proposed activities during the grant period;
• A statement of the institution’s willingness to share at future NetVUE Conferences and gatherings what the institution has learned through its grant-supported activities;

• A statement of how the institution will continue the enhanced vocation initiative after the grant period; and

• A plan for assessment and evaluation of the project, both during and at the end of the grant period, along with a description of indicators that would demonstrate that project goals have been met.

A One-Page Project Timeline

A One-Page Roster that lists the names and contact information for (a) the principal project contact; (b) the senior (cabinet-level) administrator who will oversee the project; (c) the project’s leaders, including short descriptions of their qualifications for the specified roles; and (d) the individuals who will carry out the project, including a one-sentence description of each person’s role.

A Concise Budget (typically one to two pages) that describes the main expense categories for each project year, including programmatic expenses and, as needed, faculty and staff stipends, honoraria for speakers, meals and travel for meetings, and costs of materials and supplies. The budget also should include a separate column indicating the institution’s financial support of this project. Details about eligible expenses and the construction of the budget, as well as answers to frequently asked budget questions and a sample budget, are available in the Grant Budget Guidelines document on the NetVUE website.

A Letter of Support from the president indicating the institution’s commitment to sustain the activities that would be supported with a NetVUE grant during and after the grant period and designating a member of the president’s cabinet to provide oversight for the project. The letter should briefly describe plans for sustaining the work of the project beyond the grant period. It also should affirm the institution’s commitment to continue NetVUE membership throughout the grant period and to send a campus team headed by the president, chief academic officer, or another officer at the vice-presidential level to the 2022 and 2024 NetVUE Conferences.

Application Deadline

The application deadline is September 17, 2021. Proposals should be submitted electronically with supporting materials as a single document at www.cic.edu/NetVUEgrant. Only applications submitted electronically will be considered.

Questions?

Questions about NetVUE Program Development Grants should be addressed to Lynn Hunnicutt, assistant director of NetVUE with special responsibility for grants, at lhunnicutt@ncce.edu or (253) 535-7644, or to David Cunningham, director of NetVUE, at dcunningham@ncce.edu or (616) 395-6750.