

Grant Budget Guidelines

NetVUE Professional Development Awards

This document provides important information about the development of proposals and the preparation of budgets for NetVUE Professional Development Awards. A sample budget (along with notes on specific categories) can be found at the end of this document; it is also available as an Excel spreadsheet upon request. Please use Microsoft Excel or a similar spreadsheet program to format your budget. Please also provide concise budget notes that explain the basis of the calculation for each item; again, an example is provided at the end of this document.

In general, grant funds are intended to support professional development of faculty and staff members, so that they may strengthen vocational exploration programming for students. Funds may be used for a range of purposes, but not to substitute for faculty and staff costs that the institution is presently providing for its vocational exploration activities. Grant proposals may, however, include additional stipends or buyouts of faculty and staff time in pursuit of the aims of the project.

In addition, please note the following important budget requirements:

- The following are **not** eligible for grant support: capital expenditures (including the purchase of durable goods or equipment in any amount); salaries or stipends for additional personnel (including graduate assistants) hired specifically for grant-related purposes; direct fundraising expenses, and indirect or overhead costs, such as utilities, office space, and the use of office equipment. All these expenses must be borne by the institution.
- In the case of stipends for current employees, only the employer's share of FICA (currently 7.65%) may be included. Grant funds may not be used to support other personnel benefits, whether as a fixed sum or on a "fringe percentage" basis.
- Any speaker honoraria included in the grant proposal may not exceed \$2,000 per speaker per day.
- Travel expenses for participation in NetVUE conferences and gatherings are the responsibility of the institution and will not be covered by grant funds. Please do not include these expenses in the grant budget.
- The NetVUE Consultant and Campus Visit programs are funded separately and should not be included in the grant budget.

If any unallowable items are included in the grant proposal, they will be removed from the budget and the total amount requested will be reduced accordingly. Applicants will not have the opportunity to revise the project to substitute other expenses for excluded items.

The remainder of this document is devoted to frequently asked questions concerning grant proposal budgets. Applicants will increase their chances of success by carefully following the following advice.

What categories should appear in the budget?

Please provide budget line items that match the expenditures proposed. Specific categories of expenditures will depend on the project described in the proposal. Typical budget categories are listed below and in the budget sample at the end of this document. Please provide a separate document with budget notes explaining the calculation of each budget item. For example:

- Released time for current employees to support development of new programs is an allowable grant expense. If the grant will provide such compensation to current employees, the budget should include the number of project leaders and/or administrative assistants, the cost per person (by dollar stipend or proportion of salary related to released time), and a subtotal. A stipend may be treated as extra compensation for the individual when the time commitment is not substantial and the work can be carried out while the individual continues with normal duties. Compensation in the form of released time from teaching must be limited to amounts that the institution will spend to replace those duties (i.e., *not* as a percentage of the salary of the person being granted released time).
- When stipends are to be paid to employees of the institution, the budget may include a separate line item for the employer's share of Social Security and Medicare tax (commonly known as FICA, currently 7.65%), which is paid by the institution on employee wages. Beyond this 7.65% allowance, any additional fringe benefits—whether paid as a lump sum or a percentage of salary—are the responsibility of the institution. Note: If this line item is not included, the institution will be responsible for covering this expense. Grant funds may not be reallocated at a later date to cover these costs.
- The costs of lodging, meals, and transportation for retreats (and similar events) are allowable grant expenditures. Budgets for lodging should include the number of participants projected, the number of lodging nights, the cost per night, and a subtotal. Similarly, budgets for meals should provide the projected number of participants, amount per meal per participant, and a subtotal. Any transportation expenses should indicate a cost estimate per person (or vehicle, if carpooling), number of persons, and a subtotal.
- Speaker honoraria should indicate the number of speakers, amount per speaker, and a subtotal. See below for more information regarding NetVUE policy on speaker honoraria.
- If refreshments and meals are to be provided, a budget line should appear for each event, providing the projected number of participants, amount per meal per participant, and a subtotal.
- Expenditures listed for books or supplies should indicate the number of copies of the texts, documents, or other items, and a subtotal.

What rows/columns should be included in the budget?

Please create separate lines for distinct categories of expenses (such as those described above), and separate columns for requested grant funds and for any additional institutional support. Please also include a row at the end of the budget listing the total allocated funds. The grant fund total should match the amount requested in the grant proposal, up to \$12,000 (\$15,000 for proposals under the special initiative). See the budget sample for further details.

May grant funds be used for student or staff participation in a third-party program or event?

Please do not propose a project in which a significant amount of the grant funds are allocated to a third party for a tool or program that has already been developed. NetVUE grants are intended to support institutions as they develop their own programming, specific to their own context. Expenditures for one-time costs related to third-party programs, instruments, conferences, or trainings will be considered

only as a pilot project or a one-time expenditure to significantly expand an existing program to strengthen vocational exploration. Such pilot projects should account for only a small portion of the overall grant budget. Institutions must commit to sustaining a successful pilot (or expanded) program at an appropriate level following the grant period. Third-party programs covered by this requirement include, but are not limited to, per-student fees for assessment instruments, attendance at professional conferences not related directly to the grant, or costs for certifying staff to administer a particular program or assessment instrument. Participation in external programs or events that would be considered part of the institution's ongoing operations are not eligible to receive grant funding.

What is the NetVUE policy for honoraria for speakers and facilitators?

NetVUE limits honoraria from NetVUE grant funds to \$2,000 per speaker or facilitator per day. Any amount beyond this limit must come from institutional funds.

What types of expenses are not allowed?

Grant funds may be used for a range of purposes, but not for:

- Ongoing faculty and staff costs that the institution presently provides;
- Capital expenses or durable goods expenditures, including equipment purchases;
- Stipends or salaries for additional personnel (or graduate students) hired specifically to support the grant project;
- Fringe benefits beyond the 7.65% Social Security and Medicare tax allowance;
- Direct fundraising expenses; or
- Indirect or overhead costs.

Can grant funding be used to provide gift cards or vouchers as incentives or rewards for participation?

No. Gift cards and other “cash equivalent” instruments (such as gift certificates, vouchers, or “tabs” at certain businesses) are not acceptable uses of grant funds, largely because they are rather complex from a tax standpoint. These “cash equivalents” (whether for campus vendors or off-campus entities) are understood by the IRS as a form of compensation, and therefore may be subject to taxation—the responsibility for which can fall on both the giver and the receiver. Fortunately, there are acceptable alternatives for encouraging participation, for which grant funds may be used. Small stipends are often the most manageable approach; these are obviously taxable, but all parties should be aware of this, and recordkeeping is typically automatic. Other alternatives might include prioritization for some opportunity or service, badges and other microcredentials, and small, one-time gifts (such as specialty food items, books, magazine subscriptions, or tickets for events).

May the grant proposal include funding requests for NetVUE consultants or campus visits?

No. NetVUE provides a separate process for applying for funding for campus consultants or campus visits; see the NetVUE website for details. For questions beyond the website description, please contact David S. Cunningham, director of NetVUE, at dcunningham@cic.edu or (616) 632-1060.

May grant funds be used to attend NetVUE conferences and gatherings?

No. Travel expenses for participation in NetVUE conferences and gatherings are the responsibility of the institution and cannot be covered by NetVUE Professional Development Awards.

What happens if changes in the approved grant budget are needed?

NetVUE grant recipients are expected to expend funds as outlined in the approved budget. However, changes in expenditures (compared with the proposed budget) are sometimes necessary. If a variance of more than 20 percent in a line item is expected, the grant recipient should request a reallocation of funds as early as possible, and in no case later than three months prior to the end of the grant spending period. Please send requests to Carter Aikin at caikin@cic.edu. Reallocation requests should provide a rationale for the change, as well as a revised budget; the latter should be formatted to show the original budget and the requested revision, so that these may be easily compared. Requests submitted without a revised budget cannot be considered. The request will be reviewed and, if approved, the revised budget will become the basis for subsequent spending reports.

Can the grant spending deadline be extended?

Funds should be expended during the grant period. In some instances, NetVUE has considered an extension of the spending deadline; typically, such extensions should be limited to 60 days. Requests for extensions should be made at least three months before the end of the grant period to Carter Aikin, NetVUE grants director.

What happens to unexpended funds at the end of the grant period?

At the end of the grant period, residual funds of more than \$250 must be returned to the Council of Independent Colleges and will be used to support future NetVUE grant programs.

What if I have additional questions?

Please contact Carter Aikin, NetVUE grants director, at caikin@cic.edu or (217) 854-5619.

Sample Budget

NetVUE Professional Development Award

	<u>NetVUE Grant</u>	<u>Institutional Support</u>
Faculty/staff retreat (July)		
Lodging: 13 participants staying 1 night @ \$150/night	\$ 1,950.00	
Transportation: 4 cars for 150 miles @ \$.54 per mile	\$ 324.00	
Meals/snacks for 13 participants-2 days @ \$90/day	\$ 2,340.00	
Materials: 13 copies of At this Time and In this Place @ \$32 each	\$ 416.00	
Fall faculty/staff workshop (2 meetings)		
Stipends: 10 participants @ \$250 each	\$ 2,500.00	
FICA for stipends at 7.65%	\$ 191.25	
Refreshments: 10 participants @ \$30/day x two sessions	\$ 600.00	
Materials: 10 copies of Leading Lives that Matter at \$28 each, plus \$59.25 for office supplies	\$ 339.25	
Project direction		
Director - two course replacements @ \$3,000 each	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,000.00
Replacement FICA (7.65%)	\$ 229.50	\$ 229.50
Total	\$ 11,890.00	\$ 3,229.50

NetVUE Professional Development Award Sample Budget Notes

Faculty/Staff Retreat (July)

- Thirteen key faculty and staff members will participate in an overnight retreat intended to consider ways to introduce the concept of vocation among the wider campus community. Lodging at a nearby retreat center @ \$150 per person, inclusive of taxes.
- Transportation – carpooling is assumed, four cars will be driven 75 miles each way.
- Meals and snacks for two days @ \$90 per person (day 1 refreshments @ \$15, day 1 dinner @ \$30, day 2 breakfast @ \$15, day 2 refreshments @ \$10, and day 2 lunch @ \$20).
- Materials – participants will read and discuss *At this Time and in this Place*.

Fall faculty/staff workshop (October)

- A second group of faculty and staff will consider ways to implement vocational reflection in work with students. Stipends of \$250 per person will be paid for two days during Fall Break. Grant funds will also be used for FICA of 7.65%.
- Mid-morning refreshments (coffee at \$10 per carafe and cookies at \$15 per platter) will be provided at both sessions.
- Participants will receive selected readings from a variety of sources, as well as a copy of *Leading Lives that Matter: What We Should Do and Who We Should Be*. In addition, grant funds will be used to purchase large Post-it easel pads, markers, pens and other supplies.

Project direction (September – May)

- The Project Director will receive two course releases to be used in the fall and spring semesters. The standard rate for visiting faculty at our institution is \$3,000 per course taught. Grant funds will be used for the fall course release, including FICA at 7.65%. Institutional funds will be used for the course release and FICA for the spring.