



Grant Budget Guidelines

NetVUE Grants for Reframing the Institutional Saga

This document provides important information about the development of proposals and the preparation of budgets for NetVUE Grants for Reframing the Institutional Saga. A sample budget (along with notes on specific categories) can be found at the end of this document. Please use Microsoft Excel or a similar spreadsheet program to format your budget. Please also provide a one- to two-page Microsoft Word document containing notes that explain the basis of the calculation for each item in the budget. Combine these documents with the rest of the proposal so that it may be submitted as a single document, as specified in the Invitation for Applications.

In general, grant funds are intended to offset one-time costs of the process of reframing the institutional saga, as well as the creation of one or more enduring products that reflect deep research and gather the results of this process. Grant 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 buyouts of faculty and staff time in pursuit of the aims of the project.

In addition, please note the following important requirements:

- Capital expenditures or durable equipment purchases in any amount, the hiring of additional personnel (including graduate assistants), direct fundraising expenses, and indirect or overhead costs must be borne by the institution and are not eligible for support by the grant.
- In the case of stipends to current employees, the employer's share of FICA (currently 7.65%) may be included, but the grant 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 should be modest and not exceed \$1,500 per speaker per day. (Further details about this policy may be found in the Frequently Asked Questions section below.)
- Travel, lodging, and meal expenses for participation in NetVUE conferences and gatherings are the responsibility of the institution and may not be covered by grant funds.
- The NetVUE Professional Development programs (including the Consultant and Campus Visit programs) are funded separately and should not be included in the grant budget.

If any of the above items are included in the grant proposal, they will be removed from the proposal 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 budget proposals. Applicants will increase their chances of success by reading and carefully following the advice that is offered here.

What categories should appear in the budget?

Please provide budget line items that match the expenditures proposed. Specific categories will depend upon the project described in the proposal. Typical budget categories are listed below and in the sample budget later in this document. For example:

- Released time for current employees to direct the proposed project, and/or to create the enduring product(s) specified in the proposal, is an allowable grant expense. If the grant will provide such compensation, the budget should include the number of persons involved, as well as 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 or other duties should be limited to the amount that the institution will spend to replace those duties.
- 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 collectively as "FICA," currently 7.65%) that would normally be paid by the institution for employee wages. 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. 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.
- 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, number of persons, and a subtotal.
- Speaker honoraria should indicate the number of speakers, amount per speaker, number of days, and subtotal. See below for more information regarding NetVUE policy on honoraria.
- Expenditures listed for books, other reading materials, or supplies should indicate the number of copies of the texts, documents, or other items, and a subtotal.
- Expenditures related to the creation of the final product should be itemized by the type of expense.
- Other expenses that do not fit the above categories should be included in a separate "Other" category (with an explanation in the notes).

What rows/columns should be included in the budget?

Please create separate lines for distinct categories of expenses as described above, and columns as noted below; see the sample budget for further details. Each grant year should have a separate set of line items (rows).

- *NetVUE Request:* In a distinct column, the budget should clearly display the projected expenses to be supported by the grant. If more than 50% of the grant funds are budgeted to be spent in the first year, please include a statement that the institution will cover amounts over 50% until second-year grant funds arrive. (Regardless of budget, grant funds will be disbursed in two equal payments at the beginning of the first and second years of the grant.)
- *Institutional Support:* If institutional funds will be used to support the project, a second column may be added with this designation (as per the sample budget below). Please note: although institutional funds are not required as part of this grant initiative, the inclusion of this column will help to confirm and clarify the institution's overall commitment to the project.
- *Total:* A separate column provides the sum of each row of the budget.

In addition, please provide an additional row at the end of each year's expenditures, showing the sum of each column for each of the two grant years. At the end of the entire budget spreadsheet, please also provide a final row representing totals for each column for the entire grant period.

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

Typically, the answer to this question is no. Expenditures for one-time costs related to third-party programs or events (such as subcontracting out a major portion of the grant project for work that would normally be expected to be undertaken by college or university personnel) will be considered only when a convincing case is made for working with a third party in the original grant proposal. Participation in external programs or events that would be considered part of the institution's ongoing operations are not eligible for grant funding.

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

NetVUE limits honoraria to \$1,500 per speaker or facilitator per day from NetVUE grant funds for a given occasion. When a speaker addresses more than one group or occasion on the campus, a higher honorarium may be offered; however, any amount beyond \$1,500 must come from institutional funds. Please note that honoraria are not meant to support ongoing projects, long-term scholars in residence, or multiple instances of the same workshop or presentation. Instead, honoraria are generally intended to support single visits to the institution.

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 is presently providing;
- New personnel lines, including the hiring of additional faculty members, staff, and/or graduate students for purposes of grant activities or administration;
- Benefits beyond 7.65% for the employer's share of Social Security and Medicare tax;
- Capital expenditures, including durable equipment purchases in any amount;
- 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 professional development programs, such as consultants, campus visits, or NetVUE-led workshops?

No. NetVUE provides a separate process to apply for funding for campus consultants or campus visits. See the NetVUE website for details or contact Rachael Baker, NetVUE director of professional development, at rbaker@cic.edu or (616) 526-7939.

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

No. While NetVUE covers most lodging and meal expenses for participants at its conferences and gatherings, travel expenses for participation are the responsibility of the institution and cannot be covered by NetVUE grant funds.

What if changes in the approved grant budget are needed?

NetVUE grant recipients are expected to use funds as outlined in the approved budget. However, changes in the proposed budget are sometimes necessary. If a variance of more than 20% in a line item is expected, or if a group of changes amounts to more than 10% of the entire grant budget, the grant recipient should request a reallocation of funds. The request should include a proposed budget revision and supporting documentation; it should be submitted as early as possible, and in no case later than three months prior to the end of the grant spending period. Budgets included in reallocation requests should use Microsoft Excel or a similar spreadsheet program; they should be formatted to show the original budget and the requested revision, so that these may be easily compared. In addition, the request should include a rationale for the change. The request will be reviewed and, if approved, the revised budget will become the basis for subsequent spending reports. Please send requests to Carter Aikin, NetVUE grants director, at caikin@cic.edu.

Can funds be used beyond the stated grant period?

Funds should be expended during the grant period. In some instances, NetVUE has considered an extension of the spending deadline of up to 60 days. Requests for extensions should be made at

least three months before the end of the grant period; send all requests to the NetVUE grants director at the above email address.

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.

Additional questions?

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

NetVUE sample budget: Reframing the Institutional Saga

REVENUES	NetVUE	Institutional	TOTAL
NetVUE grant funds (year one)	\$ 20,000.00		\$ 20,000.00
NetVUE grant funds (year two)	\$ 20,000.00		\$ 20,000.00
Institutional funds spent during grant period		\$ 6,600.00	\$ 6,600.00
Totals	\$ 40,000.00	\$ 6,600.00	\$ 46,600.00
EXPENDITURES	NetVUE	Institutional	TOTAL
<u>Year One:</u>			
Writing Group Opening Retreat			
Meals: 11 participants for 4 days @ \$75/day	\$1,300	\$2,000	\$3,300
Lodging: 11 participants staying 3 nights @ \$80/night	\$2,640		\$2,640
Transportation: 400 miles for 3 vehicles @ \$.54/mile	\$648		\$648
Transport: ferry to retreat center for 11 participants	\$400		\$400
Writing Group Meetings			
Lunch for 10 participants x 4 meetings x \$10 per meal	\$400		\$400
Writing Group Year 1 Stipends			
Spring Semester 10 participants @\$500 each	\$5,000		\$5,000
Fall Semester 10 participants @\$500 each	\$5,000		\$5,000
FICA for stipends	\$765		\$765
Materials and supplies			
1 book x 10 participants @ \$26 plus copying/printing of other materials	\$473		\$473
Project oversight			
Project director @ 3,000/course x 1 course	\$3,000		\$3,000
FICA (7.65%) for one course replacement	\$230		\$230
Year One Total	\$19,855	\$2,000	\$21,855
<u>Year Two:</u>			
Research travel for writing team members			
Travel subsidy for 10 writing group members @ \$750 each	\$3,750	\$3,750	\$7,500
Writing Group Meetings			
Lunch for 10 participants x 4 meetings x \$10 per meal	\$400		\$400
Writing Group Year 2 Stipends			
Spring Semester 10 participants @\$500 each	\$5,000		\$5,000
Fall Semester 10 participants @\$500 each	\$5,000		\$5,000
FICA for stipends	\$765		\$765
Presentation Event to the Campus Community			
Event Space Rental		\$350	\$350
Buffet Meal for 100 @ \$25 per person	\$2,000	\$500	\$2,500
Project oversight			
Project director @ 3,000/course x 1 course	\$3,000		\$3,000
FICA (7.65%) for one course replacement	\$230		\$230
Year Two Total	\$20,145	\$4,600	\$24,745
TOTAL: Two-Year Budget	\$40,000	\$6,600	\$46,600

NetVUE Grants for Reframing the Institutional Saga: Sample Budget Notes

Year One:

Writing Group Retreat

- Opening retreat over spring break at a retreat center located 200 miles from campus. Lodging for three nights at \$80 per night per participant and meals for four days at \$75 per day per participant, for ten writing group members plus a senior university administrator.
- Transportation to the retreat center includes a ferry ride of approximately 35 miles one way, at a round trip cost of \$33 per person (plus tax).

Writing Group Meetings

- On-campus lunch meetings (two per semester) to check in on progress and coordinate common logistical questions and issues. Buffet-style lunch will be served, at a cost of \$10 per person per meeting.

Writing Group Stipends

- Total stipend per person for year 1 of \$1,000, divided into two halves, to be paid in June and December.
- Social Security and Medicare tax (FICA) of 7.65% of stipend amount will be paid using grant funds.

Materials and Supplies

- *At This Time and In This Place* will be used as an introduction to the concept of vocation and institutional calling. Cost = \$26 per book x 10 books. Selected readings from other sources will be provided on the project's course management site as background material regarding the University's founding mission.

Project Oversight

- The project director will receive one course release to work with fellow participants on their contributions and to handle logistical issues related to production of this edited volume. Grant funds will be used to pay Social Security and Medicare tax (FICA) of 7.65% for the replacement instructor hired to teach this course.

Year Two:

Research travel for writing team members

- The university provides faculty \$1,000 annually for travel to conferences. Each participant will receive an additional \$750 to be used for archival research, or for travel to an additional conference related to the project. The grant will provide \$375 per participant of this research-related travel support and the university will supply the remainder.

Writing Group Meetings/Writing Group Stipends

- As in year one.

Presentation Event to the Campus Community

- Writing team members will present and discuss their work at a special meeting of the university's board, which will be open to board members, faculty members, staff, and selected graduates. This event will take place in a nearby event center owned by a graduate who has offered a discounted space rental of \$350 and catering for a buffet dinner at \$25 per person.

Project Oversight

- As in year one.