

## STRATEGIC INITIATIVE FUND GRANT PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

### PURPOSE

TCU emerged from the two year Vision In Action Project with clear strategic planning goals and vision. The Project identified the five following goals:

- Recruit and retain students, faculty, and staff who can achieve their full potential at TCU;
- Design a vibrant learning community characterized by distinctive curricular, co-curricular and residential programs;
- Sustain an environment in which rich personal interaction is enhanced by outstanding facilities and appropriate technology;
- Accelerate our connection with the greater community: Fort Worth, Texas, the nation, and the world, and
- Couple wise financial stewardship with a well-planned entrepreneurial approach to academic opportunities

The vision from the Project guiding the Strategic Initiative Process is equally directive and states:

*“TCU will become an increasingly more significant private university with a greater international presence”.*

In response to the Goals and Vision, TCU Trustees have established a strategic grant program. The program will enable faculty and staff an opportunity to submit proposals for projects which will, “raise the Academic Profile of the University” and be closely aligned to the vision and at least one of the five VIA goals. Examples of projects approved for the previous two academic years can be found by visiting [www.via.tcu.edu](http://www.via.tcu.edu).

Applicants have the opportunity to apply for one or both of the following grant programs:

- **Transformational** – Projects are expected to transform the nature of the institution. If proven successful, the university will work toward sustainability in the budget process. Frog Camp and Community Scholars are examples of existing programs that have transformed the nature of the university. It is expected that successful applicants will seek funding from extra-mural sources in subsequent years. Most, if not all, of these types of projects will be multi-year. Project renewal will be dependent upon a strong and successful assessment methodology.

- **Pathways for Transformation.** This program is intended to fund smaller projects of short duration, generally one year or less. Planning grants, feasibility studies, program start-up costs are examples. The recommended limit for these grants is \$25,000. An end of project report will be required. It is possible that a successful Pathways grant may lead to a subsequent Transformational application.

## **GUIDELINES**

The following guidelines provide essential information for the development of proposals submitted for VIA awards.

### General Information

1. The original proposal and nine copies must be submitted to Merry Roberts, Office of Research and Sponsored Projects, TCU Box 297023 or Sadler Hall, Room 208 by Friday, February 2, 2007 for the 2007-08 academic year. For questions contact Leo Munson at x7104 or [l.munson@tcu.edu](mailto:l.munson@tcu.edu).
2. It is anticipated that funding of approximately \$1.2 M is available for 2007-08 applications. Award announcements for 2007-08 will be made in mid to late March 2007. These funds will then be available approximately June 1, 2007.
3. Applicants must specify how the project will raise the academic profile of the University, which VIA goal(s) is/are being met and must align with the strategic vision of the home academic department or support unit of the Project Director.
4. The Project Director must be an employee of TCU and will be expected to play a primary role in the project.
5. The academic dean or relevant vice chancellor must indicate whether the project is or is not consistent with the unit's strategic plan.
6. There is no minimum or maximum length of time for carrying out the project activities. Projects may be multi-year. However, the project may not extend beyond May 31, 2010 unless it is absorbed into the TCU budget.
7. There will be no maximum limit on single awards. Most grants, however, will not exceed 20% of a given year's funding.

### Budget Requirements

1. All expenditures must be outlined on the budget submittal form.

2. All requests for equipment, including computers, must be documented and include:
  - a. An explanation of why the equipment or computer is vital to the proposed project.
  - b. If such equipment is already available on campus, an explanation should be given as to why it is not sufficient to meet the needs of the project.
  - c. A statement as to the disposition of the equipment at the end of the project.
3. All personnel requests should be the result of a position description that has been reviewed by HR so that proper classification and compensation can be included with the proposal. A job profile should be submitted to Pat Jolley in HR for review and submitted with the Strategic Fund application. Proposals should anticipate a 3% merit increase for each position throughout the duration of the proposal.
4. Proposals that include financial aid as a component should include an escalation of 8% per year for the duration of the proposal.

A detailed budget should be submitted using the preprinted Budget Form included with the Grant Application materials. Justification for each major line item should be provided on not more than one page immediately following the budget.

Additional information essential to a clarification of the project narrative (e.g., measurement instruments, justification for collaborative research or programming, etc.) may be included.

**PLEASE REMEMBER THAT PROPOSALS ARE REVIEWED BY PERSONS WHO ARE NOT NECESSARILY EXPERTS IN YOUR FIELD. IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THE DETAILS AND IMPORTANCE OF YOUR REQUEST ARE PRESENTED IN LANGUAGE THAT WILL BE CLEAR TO THE READER. PROPOSALS THAT DO NOT FOLLOW THE GUIDELINES WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED FOR FUNDING.**

Please note that external funding is not the same as internal TCU fundraising as part of the capital campaign to support a project. If your external funding is based on capital campaign contributions to build an endowment please be clear in your application that this is the source of anticipated funding.

## **PROPOSAL FORMAT**

Proposals are to be organized into five sections: (1) the preprinted Grant Application Form, (2) a project narrative, (3) the preprinted Budget Form with justification, (4) a completed job profile if appropriate, and (5) appendices, as appropriate.

## Grant Application Form

The preprinted Grant Application Form serves as the cover page for the proposal. The form includes an executive summary of no more than 200 words.

## Project Narrative

The project narrative should be prepared according to the format described below. The narrative should specifically address each section in the order presented using the subheadings as they appear. Narratives should be no more than approximately 1,500 words. Narratives in excess of the word limit may be disqualified. Supporting CVs, existing brochures and publications should not be included with the proposal.

1. **VIA Goals, Purpose, and Outcomes.** State the purpose of the project in a concise introductory paragraph. Describe **exactly** what outcomes are anticipated. The Project Director must indicate which VIA goal(s) are being met by funding the project. If applying for a Transformational Grant the Director must present evidence on how the project will have transformational value to TCU.
2. **Project Background.** If appropriate, a review of the pertinent previous work or programs in existence either at TCU or other campuses which you believe to be important to the evaluation of your application. You must explain why this project is important to TCU's future.
3. **Project Potential.** Provide an explanation of (1) how this project will contribute to raising TCU's Academic Profile, (2) if the project will allow you to seek external funding, and if so how you expect to seek the funding, and (3) the potential for publication, or other appropriate form of external recognition, based on the activities of the project.
4. **Methods.** Provide a description of the project activities, making it clear how these activities will allow you to reach the purpose described in Item 1. The methods section should include a clear articulation of the timeline, and benchmarks.
5. **Assessment.** The assessment methodology should be clearly explained. Multi-year applications will be reviewed annually in June and renewed funding will be dependent on the assessment of outcomes.

## **ADMINISTRATION**

1. It is the responsibility of the project director on each project to assure that available grant resources are used judiciously to accomplish the objectives

specified in the proposal and that expenditures remain within the approved budget.

2. Funds received for one purpose may not be used for another purpose unless prior approval is received.