



Program Development Grants

Invitation for Applications

Deadline: September 15, 2023

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 vocational reflection, exploration, and discernment.

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.

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NetVUE Program Development Grants may be requested in amounts ranging from \$40,000 to \$60,000 for use over two years to deepen, expand, or otherwise strengthen vocation programs that are already underway. 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 or revise courses to include greater engagement with vocational reflection;
- A program that brings faculty members and administrative staff (from, for example, career services, student life, or campus ministry) into partnership for vocational exploration in advising and mentoring and in experiential learning opportunities;
- A project to integrate reflection on calling and vocational discernment into an institution's general education requirements, or to help specific academic departments infuse 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, including specific goals for these efforts; and (d) the ways in which NetVUE-supported initiatives would be sustained by the institution after the grant period. Programs consisting mainly of direct financial support for students in the form of internships, scholarships, or stipends will be considered only if the institution can demonstrate how it will sustain the proposed programs after 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 Grants that they held were concluded no later than June 2021.

This is the eleventh round of selection for NetVUE Program Development Grants. In the first ten rounds, CIC awarded more than 200 grants to NetVUE members. The application deadline is **September 15, 2023**. Decisions will be announced in December 2023. Funds will be disbursed in two equal payments: the first half by May 1, 2024, and the second half by May 1, 2025 (following the approval of an interim report). Spending must be completed by April 30, 2026.

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, 2025—that is, toward the end of the first year of grant activities;

- Provide final narrative and financial reports to CIC by June 15, 2026, over the signature of the president or chief academic officer, which describe the outcomes of the project, indicate the degree to which project goals were met, reflect on the effectiveness of the initiatives, and chart directions for the future;
- Participate in efforts by CIC and NetVUE to assess grant-funded activities, including (but not limited to) participation in surveys, virtual focus groups, and virtual gatherings of grant directors;
- 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 2024 and 2026 NetVUE Conferences.

Application Guidelines

Proposals should be submitted online as a single document. For the benefit of grant reviewers, please use a standard 12-point font with reasonable margins, such that the proposal may be printed if necessary. It should consist of the following elements:

A One-Paragraph Executive Summary of the Proposal

A Brief Public Description of the project (120 words, 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 Four- to Five-Page Narrative that provides, in clearly marked sections, the following:

- 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 description of the institution’s strategy for encouraging broad participation across demographic and socio-economic categories, and for building institutional capacity to

promote vocation-related work among underrepresented, disadvantaged, or marginalized groups;

- 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 description 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 (including phone number and email address) 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) other individuals who will help carry out the project, including a one-sentence description of each person's role.

A Concise Budget (typically one to two pages), as an Excel spreadsheet, describing the main expense categories for each project year, including programmatic expenses and, as needed, stipends for faculty members and staff, honoraria for speakers, meals and travel for meetings, and costs of materials and supplies. The budget should include a separate column showing the institution's financial support for the project. Details about eligible expenses and the construction of the budget, as well as answers to frequently asked 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 2024 and 2026 NetVUE Conferences.

Application Deadline

The application deadline is **September 15, 2023**. 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 Carter Aikin, NetVUE grants director, at caikin@cic.edu or (217) 854-5619.