



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. Keep in mind that some grant reviewers prefer to print out the proposal, so please check to be sure that a printed version would be legible.

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 employee costs that the institution is presently providing for vocational exploration activities. Grant proposals should, however, include additional buyouts of faculty and staff time in pursuit of project aims.

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 \$2,000 per speaker per day. Guest speaker travel expenses should be a separate line item from speaker honoraria. Further details about this policy may be found in the relevant 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. Proposals that show evidence that the writers have not carefully read and thoroughly followed the requirements in this document run the risk of not being entered into the review process.

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 support development of new programs is expected. This expense should be a buy-out of time to fund other institutional employees (adjunct instructors or staff members, as appropriate) to perform some fraction of the project leader's (or leaders') contracted duties in order to ensure that leaders have adequate time and space to bring grant-funded projects to success. The budget should include the number of project leaders and/or administrative assistants, the cost per person, and a subtotal. Compensation in the form of released time must be limited to amounts that the institution will spend to replace those duties (i.e., *not* merely as a percentage of the salary of the person being granted released time). **Please note:** *Budgets should not allocate a fractional time of any employee's work without a clear description of who will take up that percentage of duties and how that person will be compensated.* The presidential letter of support should indicate the institution's commitment to follow through with any reallocation of duties.
- In rare cases, a stipend may be the most fitting support for project leaders, given the specifics of the proposed project and the contours of their institutional context. If a stipend (rather than a buy-out) is requested as a means of supporting project leaders, reasons that justify that choice should be included in the proposal narrative and/or the budget notes.
- When stipends are to be paid to employees of the institution (or to current students), 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.
- Budgets must include support for robust assessment efforts (led by someone outside the institution), yielding a written report that tracks and explains progress on specific expected outcomes. The proposal should name those who will lead proposed assessment efforts, provide an outline of the institutional-vocation-related outcomes that will be tracked, and offer an initial description of the assessment tools that which will be used.
- 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. Additional information on guest speakers is included below.
- 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. Four separate sets of line items should be provided—one for each period of grant funding: the six-month ramp-up period, the first and the second year of primary project activities, and the six-month finalization period. Please note that, although there are four distinct periods, the funding is provided in two equal disbursements: the first disbursement (50% of the total) will cover the first 18 months (the ramp-up period and the first year of project work) and the second (of the remaining 50%) will cover the remaining 18-months (the second year of project work and the 6-month finalization period). Columns should be organized as follows:

- *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 18-month period, please include a statement that the institution will cover amounts over 50% until the second disbursement is scheduled to occur. (Regardless of how the budget is divided between the two periods, grant funds will be disbursed in two equal payments at the beginning and half-way point of the grant, as noted above.)
- *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). 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:* If an institutional support column is included, a third column should be added that provides the sum of each row of the budget.

In addition, please provide an additional row at the end of each grant period’s expenditures, showing the sum of each column; this should be provided for each of the four sets of line items (i.e., for the ramp-up period, the first and the second year of the main project, and the finalization period). At the end of the entire budget spreadsheet, please also provide a final row representing totals for each column for the entire 3-year grant period. See the budget sample for further details. **Round all amounts to whole dollars;** i.e., do not include cents. The overall grant total should ideally be a round number, to avoid arithmetical errors in the disbursement of funds.

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 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. Any such case needs to demonstrate that the use of the third-party program is intended as a pilot project only; budgets should indicate that the institution will take on an increasing share of the cost during the grant period and will cover the entire cost after the grant ends.

Third-party programs covered by this requirement include, but are not limited to, large-scale subcontracting of any substantive element of the project. Participation in external programs or events that would be considered part of the institution's ongoing operations are not eligible for grant funding. Third-party agreements for the publication of a book or the construction of a permanent campus exhibit are acceptable, if they amount to a reasonably small amount of the overall budget and are limited to physical production costs; however, applicants are expected to consider in-house options when possible, or to explain why this is not a viable option. In any case, the creative work of designing, writing, and similar aspects of the intellectual effort required to produce the product cannot be assigned to subcontractors.

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

NetVUE limits honoraria to \$2,000 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 \$2,000 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 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, visits to other campuses, or NetVUE-led workshops?

No. NetVUE provides a separate process to apply for funding for campus consultants, visits to other campuses, and other professional development opportunities. See the NetVUE website for details or contact Rachael Baker, NetVUE director of professional development, at rbaker@cic.edu or (616) 632-1060.

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. Grantees encountering insoluble problems in completing spending on time should contact the NetVUE grants director as early as possible.

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

At the end of the grant period, residual funds of more than \$500 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.

Please see the following pages for a sample budget and budget notes. The proposal's budget and budget notes should be formatted in a fashion similar to these examples, using an Excel spreadsheet or equivalent for the budget and a Word document or equivalent for the notes. **Please do not use pre-existing institutional forms** that include categories not relevant to this grant proposal. While such forms may be required for the institution's internal accounting processes, they should not be submitted to CIC. As noted above, please ensure that the entire proposal is legible if printed.

NetVUE sample budget: Reframing the Institutional Saga

REVENUES	NetVUE	Institutional	TOTAL
NetVUE grant funds (Planning plus year one)	\$ 28,460.00		\$ 28,460.00
NetVUE grant funds (year two plus finalizing period)	\$ 31,540.00		\$ 31,540.00
Institutional funds spent during grant period		\$ 9,913.00	\$ 9,913.00
Totals	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 9,913.00	\$ 69,913.00

EXPENDITURES

<u>Ramp-up Period (first six months):</u>	NetVUE	Institutional	TOTAL
Writing Group Planning 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 @ \$.70/mile	\$840		\$840
Transport: ferry to retreat center for 11 participants	\$400		\$400
Ramp-up Period - Total	\$5,180	\$2,000	\$7,180

Year One of Primary Project:

Writing Group Meetings			
Lunch for 10 participants x 4 meetings x \$10 per meal	\$207	\$193	\$400
Writing Group Year 1 Stipends			
Spring Semester 6 participants @\$1500 each	\$9,000		\$9,000
Fall Semester 6 participants @\$1500 each	\$9,000		\$9,000
FICA for stipends	\$1,377		\$1,377
Materials and supplies			
1 book x 10 participants @ \$26 plus copying/printing of other materials	\$466		\$466
Project coordination			
Project director @ 3,000/course x 1 course	\$3,000		\$3,000
FICA (7.65%) for one course replacement	\$230		\$230
Year One of Primary Project - Total	\$23,280	\$193	\$23,473

Total Expenditures from First Disbursement	\$28,459	\$2,193	\$30,652
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Year Two of Primary Project:

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 6 participants @\$1200 each	\$7,200		\$7,200
Fall Semester Editing Stipends 2 editors @ \$1500 each	\$3,000		\$3,000
FICA for stipends	\$780		\$780
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
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Year Two of Primary Project - Total	\$20,360	\$4,600	\$24,960
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<u>Finalizing the Enduring Product and Telling Stories of Success</u>			
Wipf & Stock publication (Pickwick Imprint):			
Copyediting	\$2,400		\$2,400
Typesetting	\$1,000		\$1,000
100 bound and printed copies of 250-page manuscript	\$2,300		\$2,300
Pamphlet Printing	\$800	\$1,620	\$2,420
Website updates		\$1,500	\$1,500
Telling Our Story Community Dinners - 3 dinners for 30 @ \$52 per person	\$4,680		\$4,680
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Finalizing Product and Telling Stories (Final 6-Month Period) - Total	\$11,180	\$3,120	\$14,300
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Total Expenditures from Second Disbursement	\$31,540	\$7,720	\$39,260
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Grant Project Total	\$60,000	\$9,913	\$69,912

Numbers may not add perfectly, due to rounding.

NetVUE Grants for Reframing the Institutional Saga: Sample Budget Notes

Ramp-up Period:

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 (constituting the total number of distinct writers for years one and two) 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).

Year One of Primary Project:

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 \$3,000, 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 (discounted by Oxford University Press for NetVUE members) = \$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 Coordination

- 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 of Primary Project:

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 Coordination

- As in year one.

Finalizing Product and Telling Stories (Final 6-Month Period)

- Wipf & Stock will copyedit, typeset, bind, and print 100 copies of the 250 page manuscript. If manuscript length increases, or printing costs rise as the grant project proceeds, the institution will cover the overage (unless other areas of underspending throughout the grant period can be utilized through a budget reallocation request).
- Part of our strategy for “Telling Our Stories of Success” is to print accessible pamphlets containing summaries of project findings for use by our marketing, admissions, and advancement offices. Initial print run of 200 pamphlets quoted at \$2420, the majority of which will be covered as an institutional expense.
- Website updates are a part of our Telling Our Stories of Success as well, the cost of which will be covered by the institution.
- As a final phase, a wider invitation to share our new understandings of vocation-of-place is to share our learnings in some dinners offered to members of the wider community. We will host three such dinners, inviting up to 30 guests for each, at a cost of \$52 per person. Stories of success from this project will be shared.