



Grant Budget Guidelines

NetVUE Program Development Grants

This document provides important information about the development of proposals and the preparation of budgets for NetVUE Program Development Grants. 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. 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.

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 should, however, include additional buyouts of faculty and staff time in pursuit of the aims of the project, particularly with respect to primary project leader(s). In general, grant funds are intended to offset one-time costs to deepen, refresh, or otherwise strengthen programs for vocational exploration and discernment that the institution is already undertaking (or has recently designed with the support of another NetVUE grant).

In addition, please note the following important budget 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. Direct support for undergraduate

students in the form of internships, scholarships, or stipends will be considered only if these expenses constitute a small part of the overall budget, and only if the institution can demonstrate, in concrete terms, how it will sustain these programs at the same level after the end of the grant period. As noted in the Invitation for Applications, statements to the effect that the institution “hopes to raise funds” to sustain the program will not be considered sufficient in such cases.

The remainder of this document is devoted to frequently asked questions concerning grant proposal budgets. 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 on the project described in the proposal. Typical budget categories are listed below and in the sample budget at the end of this document. On a separate page within the application document, please provide budget notes that explain the basis of the calculation for each item in the budget. For example:

- Released time for current employees to support development of new programs is strongly encouraged. 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, thereby ensuring 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 (by proportion of salary related to released time), and a subtotal. Budgets should not allocate 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. Compensation in the form of released time 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). *Budgets should not allocate 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. Please note that the presidential letter of support should indicate the institution’s commitment to follow through with this 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, with a brief mention of these reasons in the budget notes.
- When stipends are to be paid to current 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 as FICA, currently 7.65%), which is paid by the institution on 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 leadership roster and, if at all possible, outside the institution), yielding a written report that

tracks and explains progress on specific expected outcomes. Budgets should support the specific assessment efforts described in the proposal, which should name leaders of the work, provide an outline of the vocation-related outcomes that will be tracked, and offer an initial explanation of the assessment tools which will be used.

- The costs of lodging, meals, and transportation for retreats (and similar events) may be included. 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 and refreshments 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 per vehicle, if carpooling), number of persons, and a subtotal.
- Speaker honoraria should indicate the number of speakers, amount per speaker, and a subtotal. See the section below on speaker honoraria.
- Expenditures listed for books, other materials, or supplies should indicate the number of copies of the texts, documents, or other items, and a subtotal.
- 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).** Please do not simply write “same as year one” in a budget line. Note also that reviewers tend to be suspicious of year two budgets that simply duplicate year one; the second year’s budget should show some progress in terms of institutional support or other changes that demonstrate an integration of the program into the campus culture.

- *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 should be added with this designation for each year (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 Budget:* If institutional support is included, provide a separate column that indicates the sum of each row of the budget.

In addition, 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, also provide a final row representing totals for each column for the entire grant period. See the budget sample for further details. Please round all amounts to whole dollars; i.e., do not include cents.

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 per-student fees for assessment instruments or costs for certifying staff to administer a particular program or assessment instrument) will be considered only as a pilot project or as a one-time expenditure to significantly expand an existing program that the institution will sustain at this expanded level. Any expenditure for such programs should constitute a relatively small proportion of the budget—typically less than 20 percent. Third-party programs covered by this requirement include, but are not limited to, per-student fees for assessment instruments, attendance at professional conferences (even if directly to the grant), costs for certifying staff to administer a particular program or assessment instrument, or outsourcing any elements of the intellectual or creative work involved in carrying out 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.

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 campus, a higher honorarium may be offered; however, any amount beyond \$2,000 per person per day 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. In general, honoraria are intended to support single visits to the institution.

What types of expenses are not allowed?

Grant funds may not be used for:

- Ongoing faculty and staff costs that the institution is presently providing, except as buy-outs for work related to the grant-funded project;
- 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 (FICA);
- 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 its many professional development programs, including campus consultants, visits to other NetVUE institutions, on-campus workshops, and national seminars. See the NetVUE website for details; if you have questions not answered there, contact Rachael Baker, NetVUE director of professional development, at rbaker@cic.edu or (616) 632-2190.

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, the modest registration fees and the participants' travel expenses for these events 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 the grant spending or fundraising deadlines be extended?

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 \$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. Please print the budget documents to check for legibility, as some reviewers use printed versions.

NetVUE Program Development Grant Sample Budget

<u>Year One:</u>	NetVUE Request	Institutional Funds	TOTAL
Faculty/staff retreat:			
Meals: 24 participants for 4 days @ \$75/day	\$7,200		\$7,200
Lodging: 24 participants staying 3 nights @ \$115/night	\$8,280		\$8,280
Transportation: 150 miles for 8 vehicles @ \$.70/mile		\$840	\$840
Chapel speaker series:			
Honoraria: 3 speakers@ \$1,500/speaker	\$4,500		\$4,500
Travel, meals, and lodging: 3 speakers @ \$1000/speaker	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$3,000
Materials and supplies:			
2 books for 25 participants @ \$30/book/participant		\$1,500	\$1,500
Summer workshop faculty stipends:			
12 participants @ \$1000/participant	\$12,000		\$12,000
FICA at .0765 per stipend dollar		\$918	\$918
Vocation-Centered Academic Advising Workshop:			
Workshop Leader Honorarium	\$2,000		\$2,000
Attendee Stipends: 20 participants, 2 days, \$150 per day	\$6,000		\$6,000
Stipends for Academic Advisors to Pilot New Tools: \$1000 for four participants		\$4,000	\$4,000
Snacks for All-Faculty Gathering to Share Learnings from Advising Pilots	\$120	\$880	\$1,000
Project oversight:			
2 co-directors @ \$4,200/one course replacement each	\$8,400		\$8,400
FICA (7.65%) for two course replacements		\$643	\$643
Other:			
Faculty/staff book discussion lunches: 48 @\$15 each		\$720	\$720
Year One Total	\$50,000	\$11,001	\$61,001

Year Two:

Faculty/staff retreat:			
Meals: 24 participants for 4 days @ \$75/day	\$7,200		\$7,200

Lodging: 24 participants staying 3 nights @ \$115/night	\$8,280		\$8,280
Transportation: 150 miles for 8 vehicles @ \$.70/mile		\$840	\$840
Community engagement dinners:			
Speaker Honoraria: 2 dinners @ \$2,000/speaker	\$4,000		\$4,000
Meals: 50 students for 2 dinners @ \$35/dinner	\$3,500		\$3,500
Materials and Supplies:			
20 documents, texts, and resources @ \$50/participant	\$1,000		\$1,000
Staff stipends for mentors of interfaith student club:			
4 staff stipends@ \$1,000/leader	\$4,000		\$4,000
FICA on staff mentor stipends @ .0765/stipend dollar	\$306		\$306
Vocation Beyond the Major Curriculum Workshop			
Workshop Leader Honorarium	\$2,000		\$2,000
Attendee Stipends: 20 participants,2 days, \$300 per day	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$12,000
Mini-Grants for Piloting Vocation Beyond the Major: \$1,000	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$8,000
Snacks for All-Faculty Gathering to Share Learnings from Curriculum Pilots	\$671	\$329	\$1,000
Project oversight:			
2 co-directors@ \$4,200/one course replacement each	\$8,400		\$8,400
FICA (7.65%) for two course replacements	\$643		\$643
Other:			
Refreshment budget: interfaith student club		\$500	\$500
Year Two Total	\$50,000	\$11,669	\$61,669
TOTAL: Two-Year Budget	\$100,000	\$22,670	\$122,669

**NetVUE Program Development Grant
Sample Budget Notes**

Year One

Faculty/Staff retreat

- Lodging and meals for a three-day project initiation retreat for faculty and staff at a nearby conference facility. We anticipate attendance by 24 faculty members and staff, including two project co-directors. Mileage reimbursement to participants will be covered by institutional resources.

Chapel Speaker series

- We anticipate bringing three speakers from different religious traditions to participate in a quarterly interreligious chapel service, to meet with project leaders, and to present to students in our first-year transitions course. Travel expenses for speakers will be split between institutional resources and grant funding. Please see the grant narrative for further details.

Materials and supplies

- *Called Beyond Our Selves* and *The Purpose Gap* at \$30/book (discounted price and shipping per book, average) x 25 copies for workshop, retreat, and book discussion use.

Summer workshop faculty stipends

- 12 faculty instructors of the sophomore-year course will be selected to participate in a monthly workshop series to continue to refine assignments and readings for fall and spring semester sections. FICA for these stipends to be covered by institutional resources.

Vocation-Centered Academic Advising Workshop and Pilots

- A guest workshop leader will offer a presentation on the first day of this two-day workshop. Grant project leaders will facilitate group work on the second day.
- Attendees will be offered a modest stipend at \$150 per day for attendance.
- Attendees will be offered the chance to propose projects to pilot in student advising sessions. Up to four participants will be granted stipends for testing ideas generated in workshops.
- Stipend recipients for advising pilots will be required to share out what they tried and learned to an all-faculty gathering, for which snacks will be provided.

Project Oversight

- Project directors each receive one course release each per year, to be replaced by part-time visiting faculty at \$4,200 per course per year. FICA at 7.65% for each.

Other

- Two lunches per semester (a total of four lunches) for 12 summer workshop participants to meet and discuss emerging issues and questions. Lunch will be provided at \$15 per person per luncheon.

Year Two

Faculty/Staff retreat and Project Oversight: As in year one

Community Engagement Dinners

- We anticipate one community engagement dinner per semester for project leaders, a speaker from a local organization, and selected student participants enrolled in community-engaged learning courses.

Materials and Supplies

- These will be provided at the institution's expense, to support both the interfaith student club and the community-engaged learning courses.

Staff Stipends

- Stipends to support additional staff time to mentor the interfaith student club and to assist them in developing programming surrounding interfaith engagement and vocational discernment. These staff will be members of the year-one faculty/staff seminar cohort.

Vocation Beyond the Major Curriculum Workshop

- This is an effort to coordinate and expand vocation learning within the general education curriculum. We plan to invite a NetVUE curriculum expert to conduct a workshop during the first day of this two-day series.
- Attendees will be offered a modest stipend of \$300 per day for each day of participation.
- Up to 8 participants will be granted the opportunity to make use of learnings from the workshop by piloting ideas in general education classes. As a condition of the stipend, participants will be expected to report what was tried and learned at a full faculty meeting.
- Refreshments will be provided for that all-faculty meeting.