Graduate Equity Initiative Grant Program

Request for Proposals

The Graduate Equity Initiative Grant Program provides seed funding for programs designed by Arts & Sciences faculty to create, expand, and enhance pathways of success to, through, and beyond graduate education for scholars from underrepresented racial and ethnic backgrounds (Black/African American, Hispanic/Latinx, and Native American/ Indigenous). The Steering Committee of the Graduate Equity Initiative invites proposals from all units, disciplines and subject areas in Arts and Sciences. Preliminary draft proposals will be due by 4:00 PM on **Monday, Feb. 1, 2021**, and the deadline for final submissions is 4:00 PM on **Monday, March 8, 2021**.

Purpose and Scope

The mission of the Graduate Equity Initiative (GEI) is to encourage innovative and practicable thinking among faculty about ways to increase the number of students from underrepresented minority groups in graduate school, as well as to improve the climate of the institution and foster their successful progress through degree programs and into their subsequent careers. The GEI Grant Program is designed to support creative thinking about ways to address systemic racism and underrepresentation in the academy in the long term.

The GEI Steering Committee welcomes proposals at different scales, from focused attempts to strengthen or expand upon already-existing programs to ambitious collaborative efforts among units to build entirely new structures at Columbia. Applicants may choose to focus on a particular stage of graduate education with an eye to redressing issues of underrepresentation in a given field or fields. A partial list of possible domains of intervention might include: preparation for graduate school; MA programs with tuition subsidies and/or internship programs (whether for professional advancement or to strengthen participants' candidacies for doctoral programs); admissions and recruitment; mentorship, training, and support for students during their graduate programs; teaching support and pedagogical training; professional development and placement; and postdoctoral fellowship programs.

Funding and Eligibility

Funding is available for projects of one to three years in duration in an amount up to $175,000 per year (for an application from a single unit) and $400,000 per year (for an application from a cluster of departments, institutes, centers and programs). Each proposal must include at least one unit with its own graduate program (whether MA or Ph.D), although collaborative proposals may include any number of other units (such as centers or institutes that grant graduate certificates) as well. In order to apply, lab-funded sciences must match all funding 1:1, either directly or with a combination of direct funding and in-kind commitments.

The GEI Steering Committee will offer online information sessions in December. Applicants will submit **preliminary proposal drafts** on **February 1, 2021**, and then meet for individual consultations with members of the GEI Steering Committee and staff from the Office of Faculty Diversity and Development in Arts & Sciences and the Office of Academic Diversity & Inclusion in GSAS. GEI staff will work closely with units to develop their proposals by identifying potential areas of collaboration or resource sharing among units; assisting applicants in finding the infrastructure and staff support to implement and administer programs; and adjusting budgets to ensure the impactful and efficient use of funds.

Application Requirements

Detailed application instructions, as well as models of **already-existing programs**, are available on the GEI website at
https://fas.columbia.edu/about-faculty-arts-and-sciences/faculty-committees/graduate-diversity   [**FINAL LINK STILL TO COME**]

Preliminary proposal drafts are due by email to Jamie Bennett <jb33@columbia.edu> on **February 1, 2021. Final proposals** must be submitted by email to <jb33@columbia.edu> by the deadline of **4:00 PM on Monday, March 8, 2021**. Both preliminary and final proposals must include the following:
  1) Completed **cover page**;
  2) **Project proposal** (2500 words maximum);
  3) **Budget and budget narrative**;
  4) **Letter of support** from the Department Chair, Department Director of Graduate Studies, or Institute/Center Director, as appropriate (in the case that the lead faculty applicant does not hold one of these positions);
  5) **CV(s)** of the lead faculty applicants.

The entire application must be submitted as one PDF file, with items organized in the order of the application requirements listed above.

Selection Criteria

In evaluating project proposals, the Steering Committee will consider all of the following factors:
  1) the urgency and scale of the need addressed by the proposal;
  2) the quality of the conception and applicability of the program being proposed;
  3) the potential for impact on issues related to the representation and success especially of students from underrepresented minority groups (Black/African American; Hispanic/Latinx; Native American/Indigenous) in programs across the Arts and Sciences;
  4) the plan for assessing and refining the program over time;
  5) the post-funding plan: a consideration of ways it might be possible to sustain the program after the grant period, and more broadly, a discussion of the

proposal's aspirations for long-term impact (what value will be created by the program? how might it transform the unit's culture?);

6) the approach to issues related to climate in the unit(s) submitting the proposal, and specifically the plan for consultation or collaboration with current graduate students in the unit(s).

Graduate Equity Initiative Award

In addition to evaluating proposals according to the selection criteria above, the Steering Committee will seek ideas that are translatable and generalizable, or "scalable": i.e., that offer strategies and structures that might be applicable to other units in addition to those submitting the application. The unit(s) submitting the funded proposal judged to offer the most promise in this respect will be awarded a special one-time, $50,000 grant to be used for any purpose especially impacting current graduate students from underrepresented minority groups. (In the case of a joint submission from more than one unit, this amount will be split evenly between the applicants.) This amount will be given in the form of a budget that will roll over until it is expended. The winning unit(s) will be required submit a report detailing their plans for the use of the award.

In years three and four of its mandate (2022-23 and 2023-24), the Steering Committee will identify from among the programs it has funded those with the greatest capacity for scaling up, and, in its endeavor to support systemic change, will circulate a call asking other units to apply to adopt or expand them. Interested units will be eligible to apply for an implementation grant.

Application Timeline

In December 2020, the GEI Steering Committee will host two **information sessions** to answer questions and provide further information about the application process. These will be held over Zoom at the following dates and times:

> Thurs., Dec. 17 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM
> Fri., Dec. 18 9:30 AM - 11:30 AM

Preliminary draft proposals will be due by 4:00 PM on **Monday, Feb. 1, 2021**, and applicants will be scheduled for consultation meetings in early February. The deadline for final submissions is 4:00 PM on **Monday, March 8, 2021**. Notification of awards will go out in mid-April.

Contacts

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