SPRING 2018 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

VentureWell awards faculty grants to colleges and universities for the purpose of strengthening existing curricular programs and/or building new courses and programs in invention, innovation, and entrepreneurship. Through these grant funds, VentureWell supports educational courses or programs at the intersection of invention, innovation, and entrepreneurship that lead to the creation and support of student teams working on technology solutions to real-world problems.

Many colleges and universities are lacking the integration of sustainable design principles into courses and programs that teach innovation and entrepreneurship. Because of this, faculty and staff are not aware or do not have the resources to integrate this content into their courses or programs.

A recent study was commissioned by [The Lemelson Foundation](#) about the state of "environmentally responsible" practices in I&E curricula in higher education. The study involved 20+ organizations working in the fields of entrepreneurship, engineering, design, business strategy, green chemistry, and social innovation. From the survey they found that many faculty/staff are unaware of ways to integrate sustainability into curricula, but are eager to learn.

In addition there is also student demand for these topics. In a recent survey of E-Team grantees, 70% of participants stated that personal sustainability practices were of the utmost importance in their daily lives (saving electricity, recycling, etc.), yet only 40% had even considered the environmental sustainability impacts of the designs for their inventions. Further evaluation showed that students felt inspired to explore new business models and inputs, and were eager for more resources that could turn awareness into action.

In response, VentureWell is pleased to announce a special Spring Faculty Grant opportunity and is seeking proposals for innovative ideas to create new or transform existing courses and programs that focus on sustainable technology or sustainable design, including, but not limited to:

- Sustainability
- Climate change
- Cleantech/renewable energy innovation

- Green design: efficiency, materials selection
- Green chemistry
- Novel approaches to integration with materials science, biomedical engineering, or other disciplines

Please note: For this Spring 2018 cycle, VentureWell is currently accepting proposals ONLY for sustainable design or sustainable technology. If you would like to submit a proposal on another topic, please submit to the Fall 2018 cycle (deadline November 7).

TIMELINE

May 23, 2018: Submission deadline (extensions will not be allowed)
Early July 2018: Final decisions and notifications made
July 1, 2018: Grant start date
Summer 2018: Funds disbursed

PROPOSAL FACTS

- Grants of up to $30,000 (two or three years in duration) may be requested
- Limit two proposals per institution. If more than two proposals are received, only the first two will be reviewed

Funded faculty or staff will be part of a community of practice with the opportunity to:

- Participate in quarterly virtual meetups to discuss emergent needs and challenges, share best practices and materials, and other topics of interest
- Present your work at the VentureWell OPEN conference
- Become a thought-leader in teaching sustainability or principles of sustainable design/technology to early-stage innovators

Proposals should be specific, clear, and compelling. VentureWell grants are competitive, and successful proposals should include the following:

- Technology entrepreneurship with a focus on sustainable technology or incorporating principles of sustainable design (especially for applications or industries not typically considered "green")
- Experiential learning by doing, and creative pedagogical approaches to solving real-world problems.
- The formation of student teams focused on technology invention, innovation, and entrepreneurship with a positive social/environmental impact. An intention to encourage the best teams to apply to the VentureWell E-Team Grant Program.
- A supportive entrepreneurial ecosystem for the most promising student teams to pursue commercialization beyond the proposed course or program.
- A plan for continuation (and financial sustainability) of the course or program post-VentureWell funding.

- If the program focus is outside the campus community or the US, a local partner must be identified.
- A simple work plan/table that outlines major milestones during the grant period.
- A multidisciplinary approaches is preferred but not required.

Examples of projects that are not strong candidates for faculty grant funding include:

- Courses and/or programs without a focus on technology innovation and/or entrepreneurship.
- Pure research projects.
- Courses and/or programs that are unlikely to continue beyond the grant period.
- Existing programs where there is little change or improvement proposed (i.e., ongoing support requests).
- Course and/or programs that are disconnected from the entrepreneurial ecosystem on campus or in the community.
- Courses and/or programs that do not lead to the creation of student teams.
- Proposals that do not demonstrate support for the most promising technologies and teams beyond the classroom/lab/club.

WHO MAY APPLY

Faculty Grants are awarded to US-based colleges and universities. Faculty and staff from VentureWell-member colleges and universities are eligible to apply. Proposals may include non-member partners from education, nonprofits, industry, NGOs, governments and/or the investment community, etc. If you have questions about the status of your institution's VentureWell membership, please click here:
https://venturewell.org/venturewell-member-list/

HOW TO APPLY

All applications, consisting of a five page narrative, work plan, budget, resumes, letter(s) of support and other supporting documents, must be submitted using the VentureWell Community Portal. Anyone on the team may serve as the applicant. All proposal deadlines end at **11:59pm Eastern Time** on the specified due date. To start, you'll need to have a VentureWell account. Creating an account is easy, and anyone can do it. To access an existing account or to create a new one, go here:
https://community.venturewell.org/VWCommunitiesLogin?target=proposal. You may start, save, stop, and return to your online proposal at anytime before submitting.

PROPOSAL COMPONENTS

Institutional Support
VentureWell requires proof of institutional support of your proposal.

Applicants should contact their Office of Sponsored Research or the equivalent <u>well ahead of the grant deadline</u> to inform them their intention to submit a proposal. Most universities require a full proposal for administrative review and approval before it can be submitted to VentureWell.

The following institutional representatives must verify their support of your proposal by responding to an automated email request from the grants system and entering their initials online. (This process is triggered within the online proposal process). Faculty grant proposals CANNOT be submitted until these required advisors have verified their support. If you have any questions or concerns about this sign-off process, please contact us.

Principal Investigator (PI) The Principal Investigator takes primary responsibility for the proposal and will have overall responsibility for the grant and reporting. Ideally, a tenured or tenure-track faculty and/or staff member serves as the Principal Investigator. Co-PIs are allowed, but one lead PI must be identified. Students may not serve as Principal Investigators.

Administrative Contact (AC) VentureWell defines the Administrative Contact as a grants administrator or fiscal officer authorized to commit the institution to the terms of the grant. Often, the AC is someone in your institution's Office of Sponsored Programs/Research or an administrator able to manage grant funding within a department or school. Principal Investigators, other faculty, and students may not serve as the AC.

Department Chair (DC) The Department Chair (or equivalent) will need to indicate his/her awareness of and support for your proposal as a demonstration of institutional commitment to the proposal. S/he has no other direct grant responsibilities beyond this support.

Dean of Faculty (DF) The Dean of Faculty (or equivalent) will need to indicate his/her awareness of and support for your proposal as a demonstration of institutional commitment to the proposal. S/he has no other direct grant responsibilities beyond this support.

<u>**PROPOSAL PARTS**</u>
Please combine all required proposal components into a single PDF:

1. REQUIRED: NARRATIVE: In 5-pages maximum, 12-pt Times New Roman font, and 1-inch margins please tell the reviewers a story: what currently exists? Where are the gaps? What are you proposing to create and what are the hoped-for outcomes? In other words, why this idea now?

   a) What are you proposing? Is it a course or a program? Is it new or an expansion of an existing course or program?

b) Differentiate between what already exists versus what you are asking for funding to support. Emphasis should be placed on what you are proposing, not on what already exists.

c) What is the technology invention/innovation area of focus?

d) How will you incorporate sustainability principles into the course or program? Will you develop your own content? Where will the content come from? *(For some materials resources see [HERE](#) and [HERE](#))*

e) Is there potential for educational, social and/or environmental impact?

f) Explain the process: how will the proposed course or program lead to the creation of student teams? How will teams be formed and where will the ideas come from?

g) Is there an experiential learning opportunity for students?

h) How will your entrepreneurship ecosystem support the most promising teams and technologies towards commercialization?

History and Context

a. What gap(s) are you addressing on your campus? What do you feel is missing?

b. What have you accomplished so far, if anything? Have you received other support for this work? *Please limit this to one paragraph.*

Team and Partners

a. Describe the role of each key individual involved with delivering and/or supporting the proposed course or program. *Keep each description to 1-2 short sentences.*

b. Identify partners on your campus or beyond: who will help promising teams commercialize any resulting technologies? If the proposal focus is outside the campus community or outside the U.S., please note that an off-campus, local partner is required.

c. Describe the "entrepreneurial ecosystem" on your campus and in the community and how your students will access these resources (other faculty, mentors, departments, entrepreneurship centers, incubators, accelerators, industry, NGOs, governments etc.).

*Note: Proposals should go beyond listing entrepreneurial support resources and demonstrate that a structured path is available for some teams to further develop a path to market.

Work Plan: Create a simple table in the narrative that includes:

a. A list of the milestones and a timeline for accomplishing each during the grant period.

b. The number of estimated student teams formed and/or supported each year and the number of participating students.

Outcomes

a. What does success look like? Complete this sentence: We will be successful if/when...
b. How will the course or program be sustained beyond the end of the grant period?

2. REQUIRED: PROPOSED BUDGET: Your budget demonstrates to reviewers how you intend to achieve the objectives proposed in your 5-page narrative.

VentureWell requires you to use the provided faculty grants budget template: http://bit.ly/2dRolYZ

Justifying your proposed budget including specific budget justifications is a critical piece in helping reviewers understand how you intend to spend grant funds. Provide your justifications in the "justifications" section in the budget template or in a separate sheet; the more detail in the justifications the better. Grant funds may be proposed for expenses related to curricular development and course or program realization. Equipment and other resources purchased with grant funds become the property of the institution.

Eligible Expenses Examples:
- Equipment expenses: VentureWell will typically not fund the purchase of equipment that is considered part of college or university infrastructure such as computers, tablets, 3D printers, or furniture for makerspaces or labs. *Equipment expenses should be no more than 10% of the total proposed budget and relate directly to the proposal.*
- Personnel costs up to $5,000 total for US-based proposals and up to $10,000 total for global proposals (may be divided or proposed for 1 person, and can include the cost of any applicable fringe benefits).
- Expenses related to the technical development of student team innovations, including (but not limited to) materials and supplies, prototyping, technical services, and testing.
- Expenses related to students performing patent searches, creating marketing analyses, and business plans.
- Travel expenses (requests may include expenses related to one participant attending OPEN, the VentureWell annual conference, for one year only).

Ineligible Expenses Examples:
- Overhead: VentureWell does not cover institutional overhead.
- Expenses that are unlikely to be sustained beyond the proposed grant period, such as competition prize money, and lengthy student internships.
- Personnel costs over the maximums mentioned above.
- Equipment expenses totaling more than 10% of the total proposed budget.
- Speaker honoraria over $200.
- Wages for students during the academic year.
- Legal and other expenses of business formation or operation.
- Publicity expenses.

3. REQUIRED: LETTER(S) OF SUPPORT: At least **one** letter is required and should demonstrate to reviewers that there is ongoing institutional support for your project and/or technical competence and market opportunity in the proposed work. Letters can also serve to verify partnerships discussed in your proposal narrative or verify additional funding to complement the proposed budget. More weight will be given to letters of support from key administrators and/or community partners. Note that if the proposal focus is outside the campus community or outside the US, at least one off-campus local partner is required, and a letter of support from this partner should be provided.

4. REQUIRED: RESUMES: Include resumes from the Principal Investigator and any other key collaborators. We do not need resumes for the Administrative Contact or non-key team members/collaborators. Up to 4 resumes are allowed and they should be no more than 3 pages each.

REVIEW AND NOTIFICATION PROCESS

Proposals will be reviewed by a group of external reviewers against structured criteria. All Principal Investigators will receive notification **via email in early July** as to whether or not their proposal has been selected for funding. VentureWell will send an approved budget and award letter agreement for signature to the Administrative Contact identified in the proposal. Once this award letter is signed and returned to VentureWell, funds can be disbursed.

REPORTING FOR GRANTEES

Reporting requirements will be outlined in the award letter. Principal Investigators for VentureWell grants are prompted via email (once each year) to complete reports online. Failure to submit reports may jeopardize your institution's eligibility for future grants and pending payments. If you receive a grant, reporting deadlines will be detailed in your award letter.

QUESTIONS

If you have any questions please contact **Patricia Boynton**, Grants Manager, at 413-587-2172 x115 or grants@venturewell.org.