



MEMORANDUM

INNOVATION FUND INITIATIVE - RFP

To: URI Faculty & Staff

From: Donald H. DeHayes, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Date: March 8, 2016

The Office of the Provost at the University of Rhode Island is pleased to announce a new Innovation Fund II to support **big new innovative ideas aligned with the new 2016-21 Academic Strategic Plan**. The new Innovation Fund II will **award the top 1-3 most innovative big idea(s) in amounts ranging from \$25,000 to \$95,000 as recommended by a review panel**. To receive support, the ideas must be truly new, innovative, and represent potential real and viable advancements. Furthermore, the great new idea should be ready for or near ready for implementation when the work associated with the Innovation Fund II award is completed.

The Innovation Fund I was announced during the 2016 January 22 Academic Summit where four ideas were awarded \$2500 of seed money totaling a \$10,000 investment. Those four ideas are currently being developed by groups of faculty and they, in an advanced state, along with any other new ideas proposed by faculty and/or staff, will be eligible to apply for these new Innovation fund II grants, which will be awarded by June 1 and expendable through June 30, 2017.

Goals for the Innovation Fund II

The new Innovation Fund II is intended to jumpstart the University of Rhode Island's new 2016-21 Academic Strategic Plan, *Innovation with Impact*, and to advance the University in a meaningful way. The overall goal of the Innovation Fund II is to support:

- Engaging and innovative pedagogies, research, and/or programs that foster learning and understanding in matters of critical importance in the world
- Exciting and relevant collaborations deeply rooted in innovation that push the frontiers of learning, discovery, and problem solving that improve the human condition
- New applications of technology that promote innovation, engagement, efficiency, and effectiveness
- Innovative models and processes that promote agility, efficiency, and responsiveness
- The goals of the 2016-21 Academic Plan: Innovation with Impact

Any and all interested faculty and staff are encouraged to work with other faculty and staff to submit a proposal. **The deadline for submission is April 15, 2016 to officeofprovost@etal.uri.edu**. A panel will be formed to review the submissions and make recommendations to the Provost. Please see the enclosed RFP for proposal submission and specific criteria.

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Innovation Fund II proposals should meet the stated goals (above) and address one of the following areas:

A. Innovations in learning – pedagogy and/or programs that are developed collaboratively across disciplines/units and increasingly informed by the science of learning, with greater emphasis on student-engaged pedagogies, master of key competencies, assessments closely aligned to learning goals, social and civic learning, and/or real-world engagement and assessments. Innovative learning approaches may include the following or other innovative learning practices:

- Learning approaches designed to include simulations, virtual technology, animations;
- Personalized adaptive learning that might include embedded remediation and personalized learning pathways;
- Instruction that utilizes data analytics and learning “dashboards” that is focused on meeting student needs in real time, monitoring student progress in the course, and improving courses;
- A new undergraduate/graduate program (certificate, minor, online) that responds to State and/or world issues and needs for continuing learners and specific competencies;
- A structure that optimizes class time through use of web enhanced or blended classes, and/or collaborative assessment;
- E-learning with higher levels of interaction through collaborative learning, as well as animations, educational gaming, immersive-learning environments, hands-on simulation, and/or virtual learning;
- Student assessments based on digital stories, student-written annotated texts and encyclopedias, or multimedia projects like virtual tours;
- Learning that advances student entrepreneurship;
- A co-academic/co-curricular program that addresses student competencies, promotes student success and/or professional development;
- Other innovative programs/approaches to advance student learning.

B. Innovative and impactful research, scholarship, creative work developed by faculty across disciplines that tackles critically important societal and/or global problems. Initiatives might reflect any of the following or other innovative forms of impactful research/scholarship/creative work:

- Research that addresses or informs social, civic, economic, environmental, or health policy or leadership
- New statistical or analytical approaches to explore and provide solutions for one or more of the most important societal challenges worthy of intensive translational research
- Complicated experiments or study of real world problems and/or development of solutions
- “Grand challenge” research projects that cross disciplines, or partner with external organization, and/or involve students
- Other innovative research approaches

C. Innovative strategies, applications, and/or organizational structures that would enhance efficiency and effectiveness and reduce bureaucracy in university processes or procedures. Examples might include truly innovative and transformational changes, such as:

- A data analytics approach to improve the accessibility and efficacy of data in order to enhance efficiency and/or improve a service experience, and/or reduce operating costs within an area or across units
- An innovative approach that would transform a University process or system, creating a significantly improved service for faculty, staff, and/or students.
- A re-invention of an educational model or program to allow students to earn degrees more quickly without a drop in quality, standards, or expectations
- A new approach that creates internal efficiencies that free up staff time and allows our institution to become more nimble and able to respond to needed changes
- Other innovative approaches to enhance efficiency and effectiveness

Please complete the following RFP template to submit your proposal:

1. Identify the project title and collaborating departments, colleges, partner agencies/organizations, etc.) and which area it is addressing (A, B, or C above)
2. Overview (**less than 1 page**). Briefly describe the primary focus and goals of your proposed big innovative idea, and explain why/how it is both a “big” and “innovative” idea.
3. Background and Plan (**no more than 3 pages**).
 - a. Describe how the project relates to the criteria on page 1 and any within the topic area (A, B, and C listed criteria) as well as other relevant criteria.
4. List individuals expected to be involved in the project with position/department and contact information and briefly what they are expected to contribute to the project.

The first listing will be the primary contact person. Use the following format for each person.

 - a. Name, Department/Position:
 - b. Email/Telephone:
 - c. Expected contribution:
 - d. Signature:
5. Describe the expected project outcome(s). How will the outcome be reported, implemented, and accounted for? How might the progress be sustained and/or advanced after initial funding? (**no more than 2 pages**)
6. Provide a budget page showing how these funds would be used.
7. Appendices (**up to 10 pages**). Provide any relevant work to support the proposal.

All proposals must be submitted by 4:30 p.m. on Friday April 15, 2016 to: officeofprovost@etal.uri.edu