

Harvard Initiative for Learning and Teaching: 2012-2013 Hauser Fund Grants

Grant Guidelines

Description

The Harvard Initiative for Learning and Teaching, inaugurated through a generous gift from Rita and Gustave Hauser, aims to be a catalyst for transforming students' educational experiences across the University and to expand Harvard's leadership in the research, application, and assessment of innovative pedagogy in Cambridge and around the world.

One dimension of this gift will be a grants program that, in year one, will award support to cultivate and advance learning and teaching innovations across Harvard's schools. The goal is to promote effective teaching and learning across the University by funding pedagogical activities – or documentation of those activities – that might not otherwise occur, that are innovative, and that are sophisticatedly evidence-based.

A broad range of proposals are welcomed from across the University, including but not limited to those that:

- address the changing needs and expectations of students
- develop instructional methods, tools, and assignments that contextualize learning in real-world and global situations
- develop connections between research and teaching
- promote the retention and transfer of learning
- capture creatively a broad range of educational outcomes
- gauge the intellectual, civic, professional and/or economic impact of instruction on students at the course, curricular, or programmatic levels
- develop courses or programs that are at the intersection of or work across boundaries (curricular, disciplinary, programmatic, and administrative)
- integrate pedagogical scholarship into pedagogical practice
- effectively incorporate technology and social media into teaching and learning activities

These grants are understood as an initial phase in a multi-year grant program. Applications and awards will be used to inform and prepare for subsequent elements of the larger grant program and the Initiative overall. Applicants considering long-term projects in need of support are encouraged to use the Hauser Fund Grants to develop needed expertise, infrastructure, and analytic tools.

Guidelines

Three general principles will guide award decisions, the degree to which projects are:

- ***Innovative.*** Grants should enable new educational practices and policies. Innovation is defined broadly—not meant to signal preferential weight to technological tools or as being limited to instructional design. Experimental, creative, investigative, and entrepreneurial ideas, and extensions of current activities that will lead to better understanding of student learning (again, broadly defined), are encouraged.
- ***Evidenced-based.*** When possible, projects should ground their motivation, innovation, and evaluation with evidence. Applicants should strive to address documented challenges faced by higher education in a manner not dependent solely on intuition or anecdote. As appropriate given the nature and scope of the proposal, applicants should consider how qualitative or quantitative data might inform their projects' impact on students.
- ***Extendable.*** Projects should have extendable impact. They should develop ideas, tools, programs that are worth sharing—not singular solutions to narrow problems. In this spirit, awardees will be offered support and expertise to develop and implement projects, and will be connected to others who have applied for grants to do similar or related activities. Collaborative projects, those that are at the intersection of or work across boundaries (curricular, disciplinary, programmatic, and administrative) are encouraged. Grants should result in insights, expertise, and/or documentation that can be meaningfully shared, and that will help to build community around evidence-based learning and teaching. Proposals with a robust evaluative dimension are encouraged, especially those that can be clearly related to longer-term efforts, and that will be of interest both within and beyond Harvard.

Grants as small as \$5000 and up to \$50,000 will be considered. Exceptions for larger grants will be considered for high-impact proposals with highest-level decanal support. It is expected that requests for funds will align with the potential for impact and rigor of plan development, and that proposed uses of funds will be appropriately sparse. Funding can be requested for term staff and release time for existing staff (including graduate students), technical tools and equipment, and outsourced services. Funding for teaching relief or business-as-usual processes will not be considered.

Harvard University faculty, students, Deans, administrators, and postdocs with instructional roles are eligible to submit Letters of Intent, individually or as groups. An endorsement, or when possible, a plan for concurrent support (e.g., matching funds or reduced course load) from relevant Departments, Programs, or Schools is encouraged.

Both informational seminars on the science of teaching, learning, and educational assessment and consultative services for instructional technology, pedagogical training, and assessment will be made available; awardees will be encouraged to avail themselves of these resources.

The following are examples of fundable projects, meant to illustrate the breadth of desired proposals but not constrain applicants' freedom to "think outside the box" in developing proposals of their own:

- *Learning and teaching app development*
- *Forums for learning and teaching discussions and demonstrations*
- *Development of learning objectives in foundational courses*
- *Curricular redesign*
- *Pilot projects in the scholarship of learning and teaching*
- *Reconfiguration of existing classroom into "experimental" space*
- *Planning for larger-scale learning and teaching projects by departments, programs, or schools*
- *Scaling-up of existing, demonstrably successful programs*

Application Process

Applicants should first indicate their interest through a Letter of Intent. Letters (1-3 pages) should briefly outline goals, essential components, and an approximate budget. Although the threshold for awarding grants will be appropriately high, applicants without fully-formed projects are encouraged to submit Letters and use the application process to develop their ideas. Individuals can submit more than one Letter of Intent for different proposals. Students are strongly encouraged to collaborate with faculty and school administrators whenever possible. Likewise, all applicants are strongly encouraged to notify their local departments and/or dean's office. Departmental, programmatic, or decanal support is not expected for the Letters of Intent, but is encouraged at the later, full application stage.

Letters may be submitted to hilt_grants@harvard.edu, and should include relevant contact information (contact person, position, campus address, email address, and phone number).

Program staff will review each Letter of Intent, correspond with applicants to clarify any key uncertainties, and collaborate with selected applicants to develop a full application. In evaluating proposals, staff will consult with relevant deans and administrators from each applicant's school.

Final award decisions will be deliberated by a selection committee comprised of Faculty from across the University.

Timing

Deadline for Letters of Intent	November 18, 2011
Review, vetting, meetings to discuss, provision of feedback as necessary	November-January
Full application due (applications tailored to size of grant)	January 20, 2012
Awards announced	February 3, 2012