

Faculty Improvement Grants - Guidelines

The Faculty Improvement Grant is designed to provide funding for faculty members to improve performance in the following areas: (1) Teaching, (2) Scholarly or Creative Activity, (3) Continuing Preparation and Study, (4) Contributions to Student Growth and Development, and (5) Service to the University and Community.

About the Grant

Faculty Improvement Grants are awarded to pursue, but are not limited to, the following activities:

- Workshops, institutes, seminars, symposia, and/or other interactive activities
- Course work
- Observations
- Self-designed learning activities

Faculty Improvement Grants are not intended to replace professional study and travel funds provided to faculty members through other contractual agreements. The grants are not intended to be used for participation in regularly scheduled (i.e., annual, bi annual, etc.) conferences, even if an individual is presenting a paper at such a conference. Although the committee recognizes the value of such professional activities, funds are not available to support the recurring professional conferences that all faculty members can identify related to their disciplines. Examples of other items that Faculty Improvement Grants do not support are items such as books, journals, software, or any equipment.

Faculty Improvement Grants support workshops, institutes, or one-time short courses that involve substantial, direct participation by all those enrolled. Such learning experiences are characterized by a concentrated examination of a topic. In the case of pre- conference or post- conference workshops that involve supplementary registration fees, Faculty Improvement Grants can be used for such fees as well as additional expenses for meals and lodging that the participant would incur by arriving early or leaving late in order to attend the workshop.

Faculty Improvement Grants can be used to pay tuition for graduate degrees, including dissertation credits. However, the grants will not pay for other expenses incurred in dissertation preparation or for funding for travel, meals, or lodging costs related to graduate study. This restriction includes travel to consult with advisors, defend the dissertation, or take comprehensive examinations. Faculty Improvement Grants can also be used to pay tuition for other collegiate or training courses.

Eligibility

All faculty, except adjunct faculty, are eligible to apply for funding through the Faculty Improvement Grant. A faculty member may be awarded up to one Faculty Improvement Grant every two years. The maximum grant award is \$3,000. For part-time faculty members, the \$3,000 amount shall be adjusted pro-rata. Faculty Improvement Grants are competitive. Funding for individual applicants may be adjusted due to availability of funds and the number of eligible applicants in any funding cycle.

Deadlines

There are two FIG review cycles per year, with deadlines in mid-October and mid-March. Applications must indicate that they were received in the office of the appropriate Dean on or before the date of the deadline.

Application Process

Applicants should provide fully completed application forms with descriptions of proposed activities to the Dean of their college or unit Director by the required deadline.

Applicant Statement: Applicants should include a written statement describing and justifying their activity. **The statement shall not exceed eight pages.** The statement should include a clear description of the proposed activity and timeline of when events will take place. Please note that applications will be read by committee members unfamiliar with the applicant's discipline. Clarity and completeness of the description of the activity is critical. The statement should also explain how the proposed activity will affect their performance in any of these five areas: (1) Teaching, (2) Scholarly or Creative Activity, (3) Continuing Preparation and Study, (4) Contributions to Student Growth and Development, and/or (5) Service to the University and Community.

Budget Sheet: Applicants must use the attached Budget Sheet and provide documentation/source of costs. Specific details about dates of study or travel and costs being requested must be provided.

Additional Information and Attachments:

- Attach information describing the workshop or institute showing costs to the application. Clearly identify (i.e. circle) the pertinent section and cost.
- Requests for course tuition payment should include documentation of number of credits to be taken, costs per credit, and dates of the term when credits will be earned. Attach a copy of the fee statement and other supporting documentation.
- **Applications must be received before the event occurs.** No application will be considered if the application is received in the appropriate Dean's office after participation in the activity. Please be aware that if faculty submit an application and attend an event before being notified of funding, they may be responsible for expenses if the grant is not approved.

Review Process

The Office of the Provost staff will make copies of applications to distribute to members of the Faculty Improvement Grant Sub-Committee. Committee members will individually review applications using the Faculty Improvement Grant Evaluation Form posted below. After reviewing the applications the members will convene to make recommendations to the Office of the Provost. Recommendations will be made based on clarity of the proposal and justification of its impact on improvement in any of the five areas listed above. Some preference will also be given to those who have not been awarded grants within the last seven years.

Award Information

- Following the grant period, each grant recipient shall submit a 100 – 200 word follow-up report to the Office of the Provost describing the activities supported by the Faculty Improvement Grant. Reports will be posted to the Academic Affairs Faculty Improvement Grant website. (See the website linked through the Academic Affairs home page.)
- The deadline for submission of expenses is within **5 days** after completion of the project for which the improvement grant was awarded, except for expenditures in the last month of the fiscal year which must be processed according to State of Minnesota guidelines. Claims submitted later may not be honored. There may be tax implications (see timely submission link at <https://www.mnsu.edu/busoff/travel/timely/index.html>).
- Expenditures beyond the award will not be reimbursed through the Faculty Improvement grant.
- The State of Minnesota guidelines for lodging, meals, and transportation will be observed, **with the exception that transportation expenses are limited to \$1500**. See expense reimbursement link https://www.mnsu.edu/busoff/travel/expensereimburse/01012018_12312018/ifo.html.
- When a grant is awarded, an individual cost center will be created for the applicant. The Office of the Provost staff will include this cost center in the award letter. This cost center should be used on reimbursement forms when the applicant is submitting their receipts to the Office of the Provost.

FACULTY IMPROVEMENT GRANT EVALUATION WORKSHEET										
Last Name	First Name	Dept.	College	Contr. Status	%FTE	Locations	Dates	Total Amount Requested	Transportation Cost	Eligible
1. Purpose of the Activity:										
Purpose is for activities supported by Faculty Improvement Grants (workshops, institutes, or one-time short courses, tuition for graduate degrees or other collegiate or training courses, observations, or self-designed developmental learning activities)								Yes []		No []
2. Description of the Activity:								0 = low 4 = high		
a. Description of grant activity is clear and complete								Enter 0-4:		
b. Timeline is clear, complete and logical								Enter 0-4:		
c. Includes clear explanation of how the proposed activity will benefit one or more of the following:								Enter 0-4:		
1. Teaching										
2. Scholarly or Creative Activity										
3. Continuing Preparation and Study										
4. Contributions to Student Growth and Development										
5. Service to the University and Community										
4. Budget:										
a. Documentation of costs supports proposed budget								Enter 0-4:		
b. Budget conforms to FIG guidelines								Enter 0-4:		
5. Overall Project Evaluation:										
a. Overall clarity of the proposal and justificaiton of the grant activity's impact on one or more of the five areas listed in 2(c) above								Enter 0-4:		
6. Overall Proposal: Which of the following three categories does the project fall into?										
Should Be Funded [] Possibly Funded [] Not Funded []										
Comments: Note, this worksheet is solely used to assist the committee to review FIG applications.										