

TEG LEARNING IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS FY 2020
CALL FOR PROPOSALS

I PURPOSE

The TEG provides monetary support for scholarly projects that investigate and aim to improve instructional, pedagogical, curriculum, and assessment practices so as to advance students' understanding. The grant is intended to promote a reflective approach to university teaching and student learning. It is further expected that the results from these projects will be made public in appropriate ways so as to improve institutional practice.

The TEG will support the following types of projects:

Type	Category	Project Period	Maximum Grant amount per project
Learning Improvement Projects	<u>Short-term</u> projects and activities that have potential to enhance teaching and learning	1-year / 1.5 years [†] (Aug 2020–Jul/Dec 2021)	\$10,000 / \$15,000 [†]
	<u>Long-term</u> projects that will significantly enhance teaching and learning, such as more extensive programme reviews or longitudinal projects that track students' learning over time	2–3 years / 3.5 years [†] (Aug 2020–Jul/Dec 2022/2023)	\$25,000 / \$30,000 [†]

[†] Projects that include a travel grant can attract an additional \$5,000 in funding and can be extended for 6 months.

II ELIGIBILITY

Application is open to all faculty teaching members of NUS, working either individually or in small groups, whether inter-department or inter-faculty.

III SELECTION CRITERIA

- a. TEG proposals should *identify* a problem relating to actual teaching and learning practice, propose a specific *course of action* for addressing this problem, and formulate a plan for *evaluating* the project. In other words, proposals should be written in a way that is similar to proposals involving any other research. They should (i) be problem based and hypothesis driven, (ii) build on prior, related research relevant to the topic, (iii) be oriented to educational practice, and (iv) have a clear and rigorous plan to collect and analyse, whether quantitatively, qualitatively, or through a mixed-methods approach, direct evidence of the impact of the project on student learning using actual work done by students (where appropriate). While surveys of how students felt about the intervention can provide useful evidence, it will remain at most indirect. *Given how important an evaluation plan is, and the specialized nature of such evaluation, investigators are strongly encouraged to consult with CDTL academic developers prior to proposal submission in order to formulate a plan (see below, Section V, a).*
- b. Relevant and adequate literature review must be included in the proposal, both to help provide a rationale for the study and a theoretical framework for the proposed project to ensure that it contributes to or advances teaching and learning in higher education. Proposals that do not properly situate the project by means of a literature review and a theoretical framework will not be considered.
- c. The educational outcomes of the proposals should go beyond surveying students' perceptions or satisfaction levels. Evaluation methods that measure higher-order student learning evidenced in terms of improved skills levels/understanding/application are preferred.
- d. Proposals that do not display rigour in terms of conceptualization, planning and collection of evidence will not be considered. Proposals that focus only on technology, whether hardware or software, and only pay limited attention to pedagogy will not be sufficient.

- e. The following criteria will be considered in the evaluation and selection of proposals:

Criteria	Description
Research Problem (20%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of the learning problem/challenge situated in the learning environment • Quality and clear articulation of the research question
Literature Review (20%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of the current literature associated with this problem • Connection with theory (where appropriate)
Method (20%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate and well-thought out methodology/approach • Discussion of the type of evidence that will be collected to measure real learning enhancement in students' skills, attitudes, and/or behaviours • Discussion of any existing local data and how it influences the evaluation method adopted (where appropriate)
Significance (40%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion on how the project will change/influence teaching practice and/or student learning

Budget is not a criterion for deciding the quality of the proposal. However, PIs should submit an appropriate budget plan that will be effective in maximizing the benefits/outcomes of the project.

- f. Where necessary, applicants' clarifications on their proposals may be sought through emails and/or chat sessions.

IV USE OF THE GRANT

- a. Funds awarded for *Learning Improvement Projects* can be used for the following:
- Engaging part-time manpower (such as student research assistants to assist in compilation of data and analysis, etc.);
Details on NUS Student Work Scheme (NSWS) for NUS Undergraduate & Graduate Students can be found at <https://nsws.nus.edu.sg/Staff/home/> [Please use the recommended hourly rates]
 - Financial assistance for conference travel presentation of project at an Education Conference (subject to existing University guidelines on Academic Staff Conferences at <https://staffportal.nus.edu.sg/iw/resources/staffportal/hr2/docs/benefits/policy-on-leave-matters-financial-assistance.pdf>)
 - Materials to build prototypes/models
 - Purchase of teaching equipment and software required for the project/activity. Applicants should be able to produce quotations when called upon to back up the cost of these budgeted items [Note: the ownership of the equipment purchased using TEG funding may stay with CDTL after completion of the project so that these assets can be channeled to other research projects/activities]
- b. The following items will not be supported for funding:
- Consumables such as stationery, ink cartridges printing/photocopying of teaching materials, reference books, etc.
 - Equipment that is available in the department, such as personal computers, laptops, printers, video cameras, mobile phones, hard disks, USB flash drives, etc.
 - Publication costs
 - Costs for organizing symposium workshops
 - Costs for training of staff or engaging professional expertise to train staff
 - Development of teaching materials/textbooks linked to a specific module or a set of modules that do not have a strong pedagogical component
 - Costs for secretariat support
 - Field trips for students

- c. It is possible that partial TEG funding will be provided for selected projects/activities and support from departmental or other sources of funding may be required.

V SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

- a. [Pre-submission] For the purpose of assisting applicants in formulating their proposals, in particular evaluation plans, applicants may schedule a consultation with CDTL (point-of-contact: Ms Aini Jaafar cdtaj@nus.edu.sg) to review their preliminary/draft proposal.
- b. Proposals are to be submitted using the appropriate prescribed forms/template at the submission portal indicated below by the closing date, **7 Apr 2020 (Tues)**:

Category	Prescribed Form	Submission Portal
Project Grant (short- and long-term)	https://vessel.nus.edu.sg/cdtl/teg/docs/project-grant-application.docx	https://vessel.nus.edu.sg/cdtl/teg/

VI TIMELINE

25 Feb 2020 (Tues)	Call for Proposals
7 Apr 2020 (Tues)	Deadline for submission of proposals
Apr 2020	Review of proposals by TEG Review Panel
May–Jun 2020	Chat sessions with shortlisted applicants, for clarifications and refinements to proposal Notification of outcome of proposals Acceptance of grant by successful applicants
Jun–Aug 2020	Application to NUS Institutional Review Board (IRB) by successful applicants/principal investigators (PI) for studies involving human subjects Notification of IRB review approval/exemption Creation of project funding WBS Release of awarded TEG funds to project WBS under PI First project meeting Project commencement

VII INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW

- a. All research conducted by NUS staff involving the use of human subjects or personal data must be reviewed and approved by the NUS Institutional Review Board (NUS-IRB) *before* the Principal Investigator (PI) commences the study/research.

- b. The PI can apply for:
- Full IRB review
 - Expedited review
 - Exemption from full IRB review

Normally, education research can be exempted from full review. PIs need to apply for either exemption or expedited review and NUS-IRB will determine the type of review, based on the information provided in the NUS-IRB application. PIs may refer to the NUS-IRB guidelines at <http://www.nus.edu.sg/irb/guidelines.html> for research that can be exempted from full IRB review or contact IRB at irb@nus.edu.sg for clarification.

Other useful links:

- General NUS Data Management Policy:
https://share.nus.edu.sg/corporate/policies/data_mgt/NUS-data-mgt-policy.pdf
- NUS Research Data Management Policy:
<http://www.nus.edu.sg/dpr/Governance/integrity.html>

- c. PIs should take note that the NUS-IRB does not conduct retrospective reviews on research/studies that have commenced or have already been completed. Not obtaining NUS-IRB approval for the research/study means that the papers arising from the study/research may not be accepted for publication in a journal or presentation at an international conference.
- d. PIs should submit their IRB application immediately upon notification of award of grant and respond to queries from IRB without delay. The IRB approval/exemption documents for their proposal must be submitted to CDTL before awarded TEG funds will be released to the PIs to commence the project. *The TEG funds awarded for their proposal will lapse if the IRB approval/exemption documents are not submitted to CDTL by **30 Sep 2020**.*
- e. Where applicable, the PI is responsible to seek regulatory approvals from relevant authorities for the research project, before proceeding with the project.

VIII POST AWARD

- a. The awarded funds will be provided in a project WBS to be drawn by the PI for the research project. PIs should note that all funds awarded must be utilized in accordance with existing NUS financial guidelines and any grant approval guidelines determined by the TEG Review Panel.
- b. The grant validity period will be 1 year (or 1.5 years if include presentation at education conference) for short-term projects and 2–3 years (or 3.5 years) for long-term projects. The grant will no longer be valid after the completion date of the project.
- c. The PI should make every effort to execute the project in accordance with the accepted proposal and to complete it by the project completion date. The PI is required to submit request for any project variation such as budget virement, project extension, changes to project scope, change in PI or co-PI, etc. to CDTL. Such requests should be supported by justifications and accompanied by evidence of satisfactory progress. Requests to increase the research grant will not be considered. The total period for grant extension shall be capped at 6 months, unless there are compelling reasons to extend for a longer period.
- d. A first meeting will be held with the PI and CDTL academic developers before project commencement. Thereafter, regular meetings (6-monthly) will be held during the course of the project to discuss project progress and issues.
- e. If the PI is unable to continue with the project (e.g. PI's employment contract is expired), the PI may submit a request to CDTL to allow the Co-PI to take over the project. In the event that there is no suitable person to take over the project or the change of PI is not approved or it is no longer possible to proceed with the project, CDTL reserves the right to terminate the funding for the project.

IX DELIVERABLES

- a. Recipients of the *Project Grant* will be expected to submit a *final report* (2000-3000 words) and Statement of Account (SAP) for the project upon completion of their project to CDTL within 1 month after the project completion date. Final reports/abstracts may be uploaded to the TEG webpages for the purpose of sharing good practices and innovations with the teaching community. A progress report and up-to-date Statement of Account (SAP) will be expected for the long-term research projects at the half-way point. The project WBS should be closed within 2 months from the project completion date. Any unutilized balance funds from the grant will be returned to the University WBS C-000-000-057-001.
- b. Recipients of both the *Project* and *Conference Grant* will be invited to share the educational outcomes of the project/research work with colleagues through CDTL poster sessions, talks, workshops and internal publications. Where appropriate, PIs are encouraged to publish their research in *AJSOTL (Asian Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning)* or other international journals.