

**TEG Learning Communities (LC) FY 2022/2023
Call for Proposals**

I. Purpose

Teaching Enhancement Grants (TEG) provide financial support for scholarly work to improve the quality of teaching and learning at NUS. This initiative, TEG Learning Communities, seeks to strengthen connections and create supportive networks for teaching in NUS through the establishment of funded Learning Communities.

TEG Learning Communities (LC) will engage in focused and sustained discussions of a topic related to university teaching, which is of mutual concern to the group. The group can potentially comprise of educators and other interested participants, including where possible, students and non-academic staff. Although the Learning Communities can take membership from across the institution, projects may want to focus on a topic that is important for a particular Unit, Department or Faculty. That said, there exists huge changes which are currently taking place in the Higher Education landscape both locally and internationally, and it is crucial that we consider how these changes may affect NUS. It is our hope that these TEG Learning Communities will provide a space for colleagues to discuss and develop appropriate solutions to issues that genuinely matter, resulting in significant positive impact on university teaching at NUS.

To support the above, TEG Learning Community grants will provide financial assistance for 1 year for a maximum of \$6,000.

II. Themes

The FY 2022/2023 TEG Learning Community grant call invites proposals that address either of the following themes:

a) Interdisciplinary Education (IE)

NUS started spearheading integrative, interdisciplinary education since Aug 2021. The emphasis on interdisciplinary studies is one of the keys to NUS' mission of shaping the future of education as a world-class university and it involves changing the way academic teachers approach and deliver education, and transforming mindsets to adapt to the needs of the changing world. This thematic focus encourages TEG Learning Communities to explore and deliberate on teaching and learning practices related to interdisciplinary education.

b) Science of Learning

The *Science of Learning* refers to an accumulated body of knowledge about the nature and processes of student learning that has been derived through scientifically sound, empirical research. It promotes our scientific understanding about how learning occurs and how to apply the research evidence into educational practices.

How students learn is underpinned by theoretical and empirical research which integrates insights from multiple fields, such as neuroscience, cognitive science,

psychology, sociology, education and other areas, to help us make sense of learning as consisting of a complex, ecological, multi-levelled and dynamic system. A key question to address is 'Given what we know about human development and learning, as well as educational research into learning, what can we as educators do to create environments that bring about a more holistic development in our students?'

Faculty members are invited to propose Learning Communities that bring colleagues together to engage in meaningful conversations about the *Science of Learning* and how it can be applied to enhance our understanding of how students learn and how best to support learning through:

- supportive environmental conditions that foster strong relationships and community;
- productive instructional and assessment strategies that support motivation, competence, and self-directed learning;
- social and emotional learning that fosters skills, habits, and positive mindsets; and
- system of supports that enable healthy development and student wellbeing.

c) Open Category

Proposals that do not address either of the above themes are also welcomed, and can be submitted under this category, which would be then considered accordingly.

III. Eligibility

Application is open to all teaching staff of NUS, whether academic or professional. TEG Learning Communities are a result of collaborative efforts, hence each proposal to form a TEG Learning Community should consist of ONE principal facilitator and ONE co-facilitator.

Members of the TEG Learning Community can include faculty teaching members, professional staff, research assistants, and undergraduate and postgraduate NUS students. The optimal size of a TEG Learning Community is 8–12 people, and it is preferable to include participants at different levels and stages of their careers.

Existing TEG Learning Community projects could also make a subsequent application to sustain their initiatives and to propose any new endeavours with justifications.

IV. Selection Criteria

TEG Learning Community proposals will be reviewed and evaluated by the CDTL TEG Review Team. These proposals will be reviewed and evaluated based on the following criteria. In the proposal, applicants should consider the following guiding questions associated with each of these criteria.

Criteria	Guiding questions
Relevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What teaching and learning issue at NUS will the learning community address?
Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you plan to study your teaching and learning issue? • How would you organise your learning community? • How would you evaluate the success of your learning community?
Influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you anticipate will be the significance of your learning community for the wider NUS community?
Sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you plan to share your findings with the wider NUS community?

V. Timeline

The deadline for submission of Learning Community project proposals is **Monday, 16 January 2023**. Applicants should submit their completed proposal form to CDTL at [link](#).

Important dates:

Briefing (on zoom)	9 Dec 2022, 10am-11am
Deadline for submission	16 Jan 2023
Notification of award	15 Feb 2023
Recruitment of members	15 Feb - 31 March 2023
Kick-off meeting of facilitators	Mar 2023
First meetings of Learning Communities	Mar-Early Apr 2023

VI. Support from CDTL

Academic developers from CDTL will work with the Facilitators prior to the first meetings of the awarded TEG Learning Communities to provide guidance and to support the recruitment of members. These academic developers will then act as Coordinators to support the TEG Learning Communities facilitators. Dr Lee Li Neng, Associate Director of CDTL, will act as the Programme Coordinator and will call for further meetings of the facilitators during the year as and when necessary.

VII. Expectations

The TEG Learning Community is expected to meet regularly on an approximately monthly basis over the year of support. Although each TEG Learning Community may organise their meetings differently, every group should have a structure and well-defined goals. During meetings, it is expected that facilitators will moderate the sessions by initiating tasks and activities to encourage everyone's engagement. During the year, the TEG Learning Community will work towards creating an output that will be of use both to the members of the group and to colleagues in NUS. At the end of the year, the TEG Learning Community will share what they have learnt with the wider NUS community on CDTL [Teaching Connections](#) (blogs/infographics/videos) and seminars/workshops.

VIII. Use of the Grant

Funds awarded for TEG Learning Community projects can be used for, amongst other things, the following:

- Refreshments for meetings;¹
- Inviting experts to speak online or when appropriate, on campus;
- Purchasing relevant books, materials and software/online tools;
- Organising events to share the group's work;
- Engaging part-time student research assistance;² and,
- Support for attending relevant workshops or conferences³.

IX. Post Award

The awarded funds will be provided in a project WBS to be drawn by the Principal Facilitator for the TEG Learning Community project. Principal Facilitators should note that all funds awarded must be utilized in accordance with existing NUS financial guidelines and any grant approval guidelines determined by CDTL. The grant will be valid for the period of one year (1 Apr 2023 – 31 Mar 2024).

Approval from CDTL will be sought for *any* project variation such as budget virement, project extension, etc. The Principal Facilitator will submit a final Statement of Account of the project WBS at the end of the TEG Learning Community project. Any unutilized funds in the project WBS will be returned to the University OOE WBS E-000-00-0005-02 and the project WBS will be closed within 2 months.

X. Example Learning Communities

CDTL started this initiative in FY 2019/2020. A list of supported TEG Learning Communities can be found [here](#).

Since TEG Learning Communities can come under different names and guises, the following websites from the Universities of Arizona, Miami and San Francisco provide some examples that may be helpful in your application. As noted in the University of San Francisco website, a key to a successful Learning Community is “to make a topic broad enough to invite participation across disciplines and schools, but narrow enough to lead to significant benefits for faculty and students”.

University of Arizona: <https://academicaffairs.arizona.edu/flc-cohorts>

University of Miami: <https://miamioh.edu/cte/faculty-staff/flcs/index.html>

University of San Francisco:

<https://myusf.usfca.edu/cte/programs-and-resources/faculty-learning-communities>

¹ No more than \$5 per member per meeting.

² Please see [details](#) and the [recommended hourly rates](#) for the NUS Student Work Scheme (NSWS) for NUS Undergraduate and Graduate Students relevant for Learning Communities interested in engaging research assistance

³ Up to a maximum \$5,000 and subject to CDTL approval