VENTUREWELL™
idea to impact

Course & Program Grant Guidelines

(Fall 2023)

Introduction

VentureWell is on a mission to cultivate a diverse and inclusive pipeline of inventors, innovators, and entrepreneurs driven to solve the world's biggest challenges and create lasting impact. We have pursued this work—at the intersection of science and technology (S&T) and innovation and entrepreneurship (I&E)—for over 27 years. We strive to do so in a way that fosters institutional change in I&E ecosystems; more intentionally advances diversity and inclusion; promotes environmental and social sustainability; and consistently upholds our organizational values: to collaborate for impact, to live innovation, to bring integrity always, to interact with consideration and candor, and to deliver excellence.

Commitment to Sustainability, Advancing Equity, and Inclusive Innovation

Environmental and social sustainability has long been a core tenet of our work (see Appendix for more information and definitions). Course and Program Grants are intended to support the efforts of faculty and student innovators in the advancement of an entrepreneurial mindset and ecosystem building on campus and within the regional community that will help to solve humanity's most pressing environmental and social challenges. As climate change intensifies, we have advanced our organizational commitment to sustainability, and have made social and environmental impact a priority on ALL of our faculty grants, as well as prioritized curricular efforts that encourage student innovation and entrepreneurship that integrate environmental and social sustainability.

Solving today's complex social and environmental problems requires diverse perspectives and focused efforts to dismantle the systemic barriers that have limited access to science and technology innovation and entrepreneurship. To advance our organizational commitment to advancing equity, we have made diversity, equity, and inclusion a priority on ALL of our faculty grants. Successful VentureWell C&P grantees must make clear how funding will increase access and broaden the participation of traditionally underrepresented, underestimated, and emerging groups, specifically those who identify as Black, Latinx, and Indigenous, women from all backgrounds, individuals who identify as

coming from low-income backgrounds, and others who are marginalized due to racism, sexism, classism, and/or other forms of marginalization (referenced throughout this document as URGs; see definitions in Appendix). We especially encourage faculty and staff applicants from URGs or from Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs), including Tribal Colleges, Historically Black Colleges & Universities (HBCUs), Hispanic-Serving Institutions, etc., and other institutions that demonstrate clear support for students from URGs in S&T I&E.

Program Description

VentureWell Course and Program (C&P) Grants of up to $30,000 are given to U.S. higher education institutions to expand and strengthen STEM innovation and entrepreneurship (I&E) ecosystems, with the end goal of accelerating sustainable and inclusive innovation.

C&P grant proposals may include plans to create or improve an individual course, course sequence, minor, major, certificate program, or other co- and extracurricular programs that are directly tied to and support I&E-focused curricula. Programs are defined as a set of organized, planned activities or structures that occur on an ongoing basis and are intended to work in collaboration with departments and degree pathways (e.g., engaging with a Tech Transfer Office, Office of Sustainability, Office of Entrepreneurship, Certificate Programs, Community-based Learning Programs, etc.).

Proposals are required to address the following core components:

- **Inclusive Innovation** (The pursuit of innovation motivated by environmental and societal aims, with problem-owners – often working with multiple stakeholders – responding to challenges experienced in their local context [Klingler-Vidra, et al.]. See VentureWell's Advancing Equity resources for more ideas.)
    - Develop a plan for how to recruit, mentor, and support students who have been traditionally underrepresented, underestimated, and/or under-resourced within Science & Technology innovation and entrepreneurship

    - Develop a curriculum that includes the promotion of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the student experience and serves students with varied lived experiences through explicit inclusion strategies

    - Develop a curriculum where innovative thinking and problem-solving are grounded in a participatory framework in collaboration with stakeholders

- **Sustainability** (sustainable technologies, materials, and processes; climate change solutions; technological support for communities most impacted by climate change, etc.)

    - Develop a curriculum that includes science and technology projects that have a strong focus and positive, enduring impact on society, and/or the environment

- **I&E Ecosystem Building** (Building a network of interconnected partners, institutions, and resources that collaborate to support the creation and operations of entrepreneurial colleges and universities in STEM ecosystems. Make a copy of the Innovation, Commercialization, and Entrepreneurship Ecosystem Mapping rubric for a guide in determining where your institution is in the maturity of its I&E ecosystem building.)

    - Make connections to the existing entrepreneurial ecosystem (faculty, colleges, departments, centers) that can support student entrepreneurship OR shows how the course/program will contribute to entrepreneurial ecosystem development

    - Describe how grant funding could be a catalyst to build a stronger entrepreneurial ecosystem.

- **Stakeholder collaboration** (student teams participating in curricular, co-curricular, extracurricular and/or off campus I&E activities; students and faculty connecting with on and off campus resources such as sustainability and entrepreneurship offices, accelerators, small business associations; etc.)

- Develop a curriculum that includes experiential learning and encourages student teams that extend beyond the classroom
- Connect students and faculty across disciplines
- Connect students with stakeholders as part of the innovation and entrepreneurship process

- **Project Team & Resources**
  - Include faculty PI, teaching team, mentors, partners, advisors, and/or external consultants and resources with the disciplinary/domain expertise necessary to oversee, advise and support the project
  - Include multiple leaders, administrators, and/or partners that support program objectives

- **Long-term Financial Plan & Deliverables**
  - Outline a work plan and budget that are aligned with the proposed impact goals, and clear and measurable educational outcomes
  - Describe a complete and realistic plan for how the course or program will be financially sustained beyond the grant period.
  - Describe an example of a tangible work product, program, or model as a result of this work that could be publicly shared for the benefit of other educators.

Proposals may also include the following:

- General invention-oriented (science- and technology-based) entrepreneurship

- Emergent industries in your region that solve social and environmental problems (i.e. biomedical and healthcare innovation, clean energies, agriculture, educational technologies, etc.)

- Interdisciplinary innovation & entrepreneurship with a STEM component

Examples of past C&P grant recipients (See the full list):

- Salish Kootenai College: An initiative to integrate entrepreneurship into the Life Sciences curriculum. Through experiential coursework, students will learn how to employ entrepreneurship to positively impact the socio-economic status of their Tribal communities, preparing them to move into leadership positions in government, non-profits, and established businesses in the Life Sciences.

- Jackson State University: A new minor in entrepreneurship for non-business majors that will go beyond theory to experientially engage student teams in pursuit of scalable solutions to real world problems. Students will gain a core understanding of entrepreneurship and the skills to develop and launch venture teams.

- Old Dominion: A new sustainability certificate program and two additional courses. Students will be prepared for careers in sustainability, and faculty will be trained through workshops in order to learn how to integrate I&E into their curricula.

- Morningside University: A new minor in entrepreneurship and two new interdisciplinary courses partnering the Applied Agriculture and Food Science and School of Business departments. Student teams will learn entrepreneurial skills through developing ventures aimed at solving urban food desert conditions.

- Northern Kentucky University: A new addition to a course in the College of Informatics that incorporates social and technology entrepreneurship. Students will develop innovation projects that address challenges in accessibility and sustainability.

- University of Colorado at Boulder: A new project to integrate an engineering program into the I&E ecosystem in Gunnison, Colorado. Engineering students will

learn how to solve challenges in the local community and support rural economic development through their innovations.

- Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center: A new course in the Health Sciences Center to grow the student-led organization Sling Health. Student teams will develop an innovation and learn how to de-risk their technology, test the customer ecosystem, and hypothesize a product-market fit.

Examples of projects that are *not a fit* for the program:

- Courses or programs that do not directly encourage development of innovations and technologies that have a positive environmental and social impact
- Courses or programs that do not include student collaboration as part of an experiential learning pedagogy
- Pure research or single project courses (i.e., where there is no student ownership)
- Courses or programs that are unlikely to continue beyond the grant period
- Existing courses or programs where there is little change or improvement proposed (i.e., ongoing support requests)
- Proposals that focus solely on extracurricular activities (e.g. hack-a-thons, business plan competitions, etc.) without a clearly stated connection to existing curriculum or other coursework
- Courses or programs that are disconnected from other campus and community-based resources (i.e., without a description of how the course/program is part of a larger plan for entrepreneurial ecosystem development)
- Proposals that do not demonstrate support for the most promising technologies and teams to move beyond the classroom, lab, or club

- Proposals that do not include a plan to address both supporting diversity and inclusion, and environmental and social sustainability in S&T I&E

Additional Requirements

Pre-Conference Workshop at OPEN 2024

If you are selected, **two members of your grant team will be required to attend OPEN 2024, March 18-20 in San Diego, California**, to participate in a pre-conference workshop for C&P grant recipients and the conference that follows. Plan to schedule your travel on Sunday, March 17, to ensure you have time to settle in before the workshop. OPEN conference registration fees will be waived for C&P grantees, and the pre-conference workshop is free of charge. Each team member will be given a $2,500 stipend to cover lodging and travel expenses (up to two team members). The C&P pre-conference workshop will provide you with resources and activities relevant to your grant project and will connect you with other institutions doing similar work.

Communities of Practice

At the end of the OPEN pre-conference workshop, you will join a Community of Practice that you'll meet with over the next year.

Wenger (2011) describes Communities of Practice (CoPs) as, "groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly."

This definition succinctly captures the three fundamental features of a CoP:

- The shared concern or passion of the participants
- The regular interactions among participants
- The learning and the improvements in "doing" that result

Please select two members of your grant team who can attend monthly CoP meetings via Zoom from April 2024 to March 2025. These meetings are designed by grantees to support your grant work in the first year, with the goal of connecting to resources, solutions to challenges, and others doing similar work.

Key Dates

- September 7, 2023 — First day submissions are accepted
- September 27, 2023 – Informational webinar (optional)
- October 10, 2023 – Informational webinar (optional)
- November 8, 2023 — Last day submissions are accepted
- January 2024 — Final decisions are made and applicants are notified
- February 1, 2024 — Grant period begins
- March 18, 2024 from 9am to 4pm — OPEN Pre-Conference Workshop

Eligibility

Course & Program Grants are awarded to colleges and universities that are:

- **US-based.** We do not accept proposals from international universities at this time, but international partners are allowed. Proposals may also include non-member partners from education, nonprofits, industry, non-governmental organizations, governments, and/or the investment community, etc. If the program focus is outside the campus community or outside the US, a local partner must be identified.
- **VentureWell members.** Membership in VentureWell's network of higher-education institutions is currently available at **no cost**. If you are unsure whether your

institution has an active membership, check your status in our Membership Directory. If you have questions or need assistance, please contact membership@venturewell.org.

The following additional eligibility requirements apply:

- We accept **no more than two proposals per institution** per cycle. If more than two are received, only the two submitted first will be reviewed.

- Proposals may only be resubmitted once.

Proposal Preparation and Submission

Online Application

You'll need to have a VentureWell account to start your application. Creating an account is easy, no-cost, and open to all. To access your existing account or to create a new one, click here. You may start, save, stop, and return to your online proposal at any time before submitting.

All communications related to your proposal will come from grants@venturewell.org. It is advised that you add this email address to your safe sender list in order to avoid important messages regarding your proposal ending up in spam or other email filters.

Objectives

Objectives should act as a roadmap for your project, indicating what your intended goals and impacts are. In the application you will be asked to list at least two objectives (up to three). A well-written objective will describe the ideal and intended measurable outcomes of your work by the end of the grant period.

Examples of objectives include:

- By the end of year 1, develop a new I&E course that provides students in the engineering program with experiential learning opportunities and connects them with governmental and industry partners.

- By the end of year 2, create an I&E forestry curriculum that strengthens 2nd year bachelor students' entrepreneurial mindsets, knowledge, and skills regarding how to transition STEM innovations to industry commercialization.

- By the end of year 3, complete at least 6 networking activities that facilitate interdisciplinary connections and collaborations between colleges to strengthen the university's I&E ecosystem and accelerate students' I&E activity.

Institutional Support

VentureWell requires proof of institutional support for your proposal. Because many campus administrative offices have moved to a remote model of work, the timeline for obtaining institutional support may be longer than usual. We strongly recommend that you reach out to your Office of Sponsored Programs/Research to inform them of your intention to submit a proposal, and to your institutional supporters (see below) well before the deadline date in order to obtain the verifications of support in time.

Most universities require a full proposal for administrative review and approval 10 days to two weeks in advance before it can be submitted.

VentureWell requires that certain institutional representatives verify their support for your proposal by responding to an automated email request from our proposal system and entering their initials online (this process is triggered within the online proposal process). The system will not allow you to submit your proposal until support has been verified from each of the following individuals:

- **Principal Investigator (PI):** The Principal Investigator should be the person who takes primary responsibility for the proposal and project, and will have overall responsibility for the grant and reporting. Ideally, the PI will also be the Instructor of Record, if applicable. VentureWell is eager to support personnel that are new to I&E, so we strongly encourage junior faculty, tenure-track faculty, and/or staff to be listed

as a PI. We have learned that for many PIs, a VentureWell Course & Program Grant will be one of the first nationally-recognized awards a PI will receive. As a result, the most credentialed person on the team need not be the listed PI. Co-PIs are allowed, but one lead PI must be identified. Students may not serve as PIs.

- **Administrative Contact (AC):** VentureWell defines the Administrative Contact as a grants administrator or fiscal officer authorized to sign the award letter and commit the institution to the terms of the grant. The AC should be someone in your institution's Office of Sponsored Programs/Research or who manages grants at your institution. Principal Investigators, other faculty, or students may not serve as the AC.

- **Department Chair (DC):** The Department Chair (or equivalent) will need to affirm their awareness of and support for your proposal as a demonstration of institutional commitment to the proposal. They have no other direct grant responsibilities beyond this support.

- **Executive Administrator (EA):** The Dean, Provost, Academic Affairs officer, VP of Research, or another senior administrator will need to affirm their awareness of and support for your proposal as a demonstration of institutional commitment to the proposal. They have no other direct grant responsibilities beyond this support.

Proposal Components

The following components are required and should be combined into a single PDF file:

1. Project narrative, limited to six pages.

2. Proposed budget and justification, limited to one page.

3. Letter(s) of support—at least one is required, and up to three will be accepted

4. Resumes of the PI and Co-PIs (if applicable)—up to five resumes total, no more than three pages each.

Additionally, you may include other supporting documents in an optional Appendix, separate from the single PDF file above.

1. Proposal Narrative

Your proposal narrative may not exceed six pages in length. Title page and references are not counted as part of your page limit. The more specific, clear, and compelling your narrative is, the more competitive your proposal will be. Tell the reviewers a story: what efforts and opportunities currently exist at your institution, where are the gaps, what are you proposing to create, and what are the intended student and institutional outcomes? In other words, why this idea, and why now?

Your narrative should include the following (page lengths are approximate and suggestions only):

Context (one page):

- Differentiate between what already exists vs. what you are asking for funding to support. Emphasis should be placed on what you are proposing; however, it is important to briefly share what already exists to support I&E on your campus (e.g. institutional resources, personnel support, makerspaces, competitions, etc.).

- What gap(s) are you addressing on your campus? What do you feel is missing to support I&E? How will this enhance your university's I&E ecosystem?

- What are the goals and objectives of this proposal? List 2-3 specific objectives.

- What have you accomplished so far, if anything? Have you received other support for this work (e.g., financial, stakeholder, etc.)?

Proposed Initiative (2-3 pages):

- Tell us more about what you are proposing. Is it a course or a program? Is it a new offering or an expansion of existing courses/programs? How will the grant funding be used to support this initiative? If you are proposing a co-curricular or extracurricular offering, how will it be directly tied to, support, and improve existing I&E-focused curriculum?

- Describe the initiative's potential for positive educational, environmental, and/or social impact. Is there a focus on solutions to support social and/or environmental impact?

- Who is/are your target audience(s)? How will your work support student innovators from URGs in invention, innovation, and entrepreneurship? As part of the narrative, include a specific plan that articulates how you will broaden participation in your course/program by answering the following questions:

    - How will you market to and recruit students from URGs to participate in the proposed course/program?

    - How will you recruit mentors that will reflect the student participants?

    - How will you mentor students to ensure inclusivity?

    - How will you create an inclusive curriculum? How else will you support these students' success in I&E?

    - How will you measure success? (Share metrics.)

- Explain the process: How will the proposed course or program lead to stakeholder collaboration? How will students collaborate? Where will the S&T ideas come from?

- Describe the experiential learning opportunity for students.

- How will your entrepreneurial ecosystem support the most promising students to further explore entrepreneurship during and after the proposed course/program?

- How will your initiative strengthen the I&E ecosystem on your campus and within your local and regional communities?

Team and Partners (half page):

- Describe the role of each key individual involved with delivering and supporting the proposed course or program. Keep each description to 1-2 short sentences.

- How might the backgrounds, experiences, and identities of the PI and/or Co-PI(s) support the goals of this grant?

- Identify partners on campus or beyond who will help to broaden participation among students from URGs (e.g. for improved student recruitment and retention).

- Multidisciplinary faculty teams are highly encouraged.

Entrepreneurial Ecosystem (up to a page):

Describe the “entrepreneurial ecosystem” on your campus and in the community, and how your students will access these resources (i.e., centers, incubator/accelerator programs, other faculty, mentors, departments, etc.). Your proposal should go beyond a listing of entrepreneurial support resources to explain how the students will engage with those resources. Describe how students who wish to continue on the commercialization path to market will be able to leverage other entrepreneurial resources.

Schools that are just beginning to grow their I&E ecosystems are encouraged to apply—please describe how this course/program is part of a larger plan for entrepreneurial ecosystem development. A letter of support from an administrator acknowledging this effort is highly recommended.

Work Plan (half page):

Create a simple table in the narrative that includes:

- A list of the milestones and a timeline for accomplishing each during the grant period
- The estimated number of participating students and other collaborating stakeholders

Outcomes and Impact (half page):

- What educational and institutional outcomes do you aspire to achieve?
- What does success look like?
    - Complete this sentence: We will be successful if/when...
    - How will you measure success? What quantitative and qualitative metrics will be used to measure the progress of students and the I&E ecosystem?
- What is an example of a tangible work product that you envision sharing publicly for the benefit of other educators?
- How will the course or program be financially sustained beyond the end of the grant period?

2. Proposed Budget and Justification

Your budget and justification, limited to one page, should demonstrate to reviewers how you intend to achieve the objectives proposed in your narrative. Funds may be proposed for expenses related to curricular development and course or program realization, and should clearly align to course/program objectives. **VentureWell funding may not be used**

to cover institutional overhead, indirect costs, or Facilities & Administration (F&A). Please see below for expense categories and definitions:

- **Equipment:** Equipment is defined as an item of property that has an expected service life of more than one year. The acquisition of equipment includes modifications, attachments, and accessories necessary to make the property usable for the purpose for which it was purchased. Items of needed equipment must be adequately justified, listed individually by description and estimated cost. Proposed items must be usable only for research, medical, scientific, or technical activities, and must be items not already available for the conduct of the work. General-purpose equipment, such as a personal computer and office furnishings, are not eligible for support unless primarily or exclusively used in the actual conduct of the proposed project. Equipment and other resources purchased with grant funds become the property of the institution.

- **Personnel:** Personnel is defined as the total amount of employee salaries, wages, fees, bonuses, severance payments, and similar amounts. Fringe benefits, if included with salaries, are the contributions to the organization's employee benefit programs (such as qualified and non-qualified pension and deferred compensation plans for the year); insurance, payroll taxes, health and welfare programs; and other employee benefits.

- **Materials and supplies:** Materials and supplies are defined as tangible personal property, not equipment, that are necessary to carry out the project. The proposal budget justification should indicate the general types of expendable materials and supplies required.

- **Travel:** Travel and how it relates to the proposed activities must be specified and itemized by destination and cost. Funds may be requested for field work, attendance at meetings and conferences, and other travel associated with the proposed work. In order to qualify for support, however, attendance at meetings or conferences must be necessary to accomplish proposal objectives, or disseminate its results.

- **Other Direct Costs:** Any other direct costs not specified above must be included as other direct expenses. Such costs must be itemized and detailed in the budget justification.

Examples of ineligible expenses:

- Overhead—VentureWell funding may not be used to cover institutional overhead, indirect costs, or Facilities & Administration (F&A).
- Expenses that are unlikely to be sustained beyond the proposed grant period, such as competition prize money or lengthy student internships
- Event expenses like food, space rentals, or AV
- Legal and other expenses of business formation or operation

3. Letter(s) of Support

At least one—and up to three—letters of support may be submitted. Your required letter should demonstrate ongoing institutional support, and may also:

- Demonstrate technical expertise or competence.
- Describe the market opportunity in the area of the proposed work. Verify any partnerships discussed in your proposal narrative.
- Verify any additional funding to complement the proposed budget.
- Describe how the proposed course or program fits into or will enhance the existing entrepreneurial ecosystem.
- Describe how support for the proposed course or program will be sustained beyond the grant period.

- Outline what actions are being taken to broaden participation in S&T I&E for this course/program in particular and at the institution in general to demonstrate commitment to advancing equity.

More weight will be given to letters of support from key administrators (Dean, President, etc.) and/or community partners. If the proposal focus is outside the campus community or outside the US, at least one off-campus local partner is required, and a letter of support from this partner should be provided.

4. Resumes of Key Individuals

Include resumes for the Principal Investigator, Co-PIs, and any other key collaborators. Up to five resumes are allowed and they should be no more than three pages each.

Appendix

You may include appendices in your proposal, up to a maximum of 10 pages combined into a single PDF file. Any appendix materials should be referenced in the narrative. Sheer volume of material is not an asset, and reviewers are directed to use appendix materials only to supplement the six-page narrative.

Proposal Review Process

Proposals are reviewed by a group of external reviewers. We are committed to creating a more representative and diverse reviewer pool, and it is our goal that at least 50% of grant reviewers per cycle are women, URG faculty in I&E, and/or MSI representatives.

Review Criteria

1. Inclusive Innovation (The pursuit of innovation motivated by environmental and societal aims, with problem-owners – often working with multiple stakeholders – responding to challenges experienced in their local context [Klingler-Vidra, et al.])

- 1.a. Describes a plan for how to recruit, mentor, and support students who have been traditionally underrepresented, underestimated, and/or under-resourced within science & technology innovation and entrepreneurship

- 1.b. Describes a curriculum that includes the promotion of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the student experience and serves students with varied lived experiences through explicit inclusion strategies

- 1.c. Describes a curriculum where innovative thinking and problem-solving are grounded in a participatory framework in collaboration with stakeholders

2. Sustainability (sustainable technologies, materials, and processes; climate change solutions; technological support for communities most impacted by climate change, etc.)

- 2.a. Describes a curriculum that includes science and technology projects that have a strong focus and positive, enduring impact on society, and/or the environment

3. I&E Ecosystem Building (Building a network of interconnected partners, institutions, and resources that collaborate to support the creation and operations of entrepreneurial colleges and universities in STEM ecosystems.)

- 3.a. Describes a course and/or program that makes connections to the existing entrepreneurial ecosystem (faculty, colleges, departments, centers) that can support student entrepreneurship OR shows how the course/program will contribute to entrepreneurial ecosystem development

- 3.b. Describes how grant funding could be a catalyst to build a stronger entrepreneurial ecosystem.

4. Stakeholder Collaboration (student teams participating in curricular, co-curricular, extracurricular, and/or off campus I&E activities; students and faculty connecting with on- and off-campus resources such as sustainability and entrepreneurship offices, accelerators, small business associations; etc.)

- 4.a. Describes a curriculum that includes experiential learning and encourages student teams that extend beyond the classroom

- 4.b. Connects students and faculty across disciplines

- 4.c. Connects students with stakeholders as part of the innovation and entrepreneurship process

5. Project Team & Resources

- 5.a. Include faculty PI, teaching team, mentors, partners, advisors, and/or external consultants and resources with the disciplinary/domain expertise necessary to oversee, advise and support the project

- 5.b. Include multiple leaders, administrators, and/or partners that support program objectives

6. Long-term Financial Plan & Deliverables

- 6.a. Outline a work plan and budget that are aligned with the proposed impact goals, and clear and measurable educational outcomes

- 6.b. Describe a complete and realistic plan for how the course or program will be financially sustained beyond the grant period.

- 6.c. Describe an example of a tangible work product, program, or model as a result of this work that could be publicly shared for the benefit of other educators.

Proposal Selection and Notification

All PIs will be notified via email in January 2024 as to whether or not their proposal has been selected for funding. For funded proposals, we will send an approved budget and award letter agreement for signature to the Administrative Contact identified in the proposal. Grants of up to $30,000 are awarded to the institution, with a duration of up to

three years (although you may choose to spend the funds in one or two). Funds will be disbursed once the award letter is signed and returned to VentureWell.

In addition, each team member will be given a $2,500 stipend to cover lodging and travel expenses associated with OPEN 2024 (up to two team members). This stipend will be paid directly to the team members who are attending the conference.

VentureWell is committed to inclusive innovation in S&T, and diversity, equity, and inclusion are a priority in our C&P grant program. We are aware of diversity and equity gaps in our past grant cycles, and are striving to award the majority of grants to the following institution categories or groups:

- Community colleges
- Tribal Colleges; HBCUs; Predominantly Black Colleges & Universities; and Hispanic-Serving Institutions
- Teams that include one or more Co-PIs who voluntarily self-identify in their proposal narrative as members of one or more URGs in innovation and entrepreneurship, including Black, Latinx, Indigenous people, women of any racial background, and people from low-income backgrounds
- Qualified universities or colleges that have never previously received a VentureWell C&P grant

Reporting Requirements

If you receive a grant, reporting requirements and deadlines will be specified in your award letter. Course & Program Grant PIs will be prompted via email to complete required reports online (an interim report in year one, an interim report in year two, and a final report in year three). At this time you will also be asked to submit a deliverable of your choice that demonstrates the changes you have made using the grant funds, such as an updated or newly created course syllabus. Failure to submit reports may jeopardize both pending payments and your institution's eligibility for future grants.

Evaluation Participation Requirements

VentureWell's Learning and Evaluation team will review interim and final reports submitted for program evaluation purposes. In addition to these reports, VentureWell will also analyze student data by requiring you to distribute an end-of-semester survey to your students enrolled or involved in your course(s) or program(s). This survey will assess students' experiences and I&E-related outcomes, such as the development of their entrepreneurial mindsets and their participation in I&E activities.

Additionally, VentureWell may also ask you to annually complete a higher education institution ecosystem self-assessment to further our understanding of institutions' internal I&E ecosystems. More information on this will be provided following the distribution of the grant.

Contact

If you would like to discuss your idea, or if you have questions about fit or program requirements, please contact Jaime Wood-Riley, Program Officer at jwoodriley@venturewell.org

For questions related to the submission portal or award management, please contact Erik Siedow, Grants Manager at grants@venturewell.org

Appendix

Definitions

At VentureWell, we use the following definitions to guide our work:

Climate change adaptation: Innovations (in the form of products and/or ventures) that allow adaptation to the potentially adverse effects of climate change in human, environmental, and economic activities

Climate change mitigation: Innovations (in the form of products and/or ventures) that help to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and/or stabilize GHG-levels

Climate change solutions: Innovations (in the form of products and/or ventures) that address the global environmental and social challenges presented by climate change

Environmental and social sustainability: Sustainable practices, innovations, products and ventures that mitigate negative impacts, and/or enable increased positive and regenerative impacts on environmental and social systems

Sustainable designs: Products and/or ventures that have been intentionally designed to reduce negative environmental impacts

Sustainable innovations or solutions: Products and/or ventures that are striving to solve for a sustainability priority, such as the negative impacts of climate change, air or water pollution, non-renewable resource consumption, etc.

Underrepresented groups (URGs): Groups who are or have been traditionally underrepresented, underestimated, and/or under-resourced

Underrepresented groups in science & engineering (S&E): Women, people with disabilities, and people identifying as Black, Latinx, or Indigenous. The representation of these groups in S&E education and S&E employment is smaller than their overall representation in the U.S. population. National Science Foundation "Women, Minorities, and Persons with Disabilities in Science and Engineering"

Under-resourced groups in I&E: People who face systemic barriers to accessing leadership, physical assets, money, power, political will, institutions, community cohesion, and/or services

Advancing Equity: National Study and Report

In 2019 VentureWell commissioned a national study to identify promising practices and existing efforts to broaden participation among early stage innovators and entrepreneurs. We present three interrelated action areas in our report Advancing Equity: Dynamic

Strategies for Authentic Engagement in Innovation and Entrepreneurship (download the full report). As highlighted in the report, "engaging faculty as mentors" was identified as a key strategy for engaging students from URGs in S&T I&E. Mentoring for students from URGs occurred in two primary ways: vicarious mentoring (i.e. being a role model), and direct mentoring (i.e. ongoing, direct guidance). Faculty mentors provided conceptual and tactical support, including expressions of confidence and validation, sharing their lived and learned experience, and recommending information, resources, and additional support mechanisms to guide students along their entrepreneurship journeys.

We especially seek and encourage proposals that demonstrate faculty mentorship that clearly supports students from URGs in S&T I&E.