



## Experiential Learning Seed Grant Application Guidelines

### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

The Experiential Learning Seed Grant (ELSG) Program is a competitive internal funding program for Valdosta State University faculty and staff. It is financially supported by the VSU Planning and Budget Council and President's Cabinet, and managed and administered by the QEP Coordinator and QEP Advisory Committee.

#### *Program Objectives*

- To off-set project costs associated with Experiential Learning activities for Valdosta State University students.
- To assist faculty and staff in implementing Experiential Learning activities for Valdosta State University students through development support.

### AWARD INFORMATION:

Subject to continued funding, a total of \$20,000 per fiscal year is available for the ELSG program this year. It is anticipated that a total of 3 – 5 proposals will be awarded.

A call will be distributed to campus whereby a sponsor can request funding for a project, up to \$4,000 total per annual award. Sponsors may request a budget to cover development support for implementing activities, off-set project costs, and or need-based student financial support.

Maximum award amounts are as follows:

- Single Experiential Learning Activity: \$4,000/annual award (award can be utilized over two terms, ex. Fall, Spring course sections)

### APPLICATION DEADLINES:

The call for proposals is in October and November this year. Funds awarded through the ELSG competition must be spent or encumbered prior to April 30th. Funds not spent by April 30th must be encumbered by that date through eProcurement. If funds are awarded in an October/November competition, those funds will be available to grantees by January 1st.

### ELIGIBILITY:

All full-time staff, full-time lecturers, tenure-track faculty and all tenured faculty at the instructor, assistant professor, associate professor, or professor level are eligible for ELSG funding, including those with administrative assignments. Applicants may apply individually or collaboratively. Collaborations may involve only other eligible VSU faculty and staff members.

Part-time staff, full-time temporary instructors, visiting faculty, part-time personnel, Department Heads, and Deans are not eligible for ELSG funding.

Any faculty or staff member who received a ELSG award for the previous fiscal year is ineligible to apply (i.e., a faculty member is eligible for an award only every other year).



A faculty or staff member who previously received an Experiential Learning Seed Grant who is delinquent on any reports is ineligible.

**INELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES:**

*ELSG funding is not intended to support the following:*

- Faculty development activities, such as learning a new technique, language, or methodology or completing a thesis or dissertation
- Departmental curriculum development, such as preparation of curriculum materials, curriculum modifications, and student interest surveys
- Professional or public service or provision of consulting services
- Projects judged to be profit-oriented (i.e. production of a textbook or development of works intended for sale)
- Institutional research (i.e., studies related directly to the operation of the University that are not generalizable and have little application beyond VSU)
- Research that is conducted by a graduate student to meet thesis or dissertation requirements.

**ALLOWABLE EXPENDITURES:**

*ELSG funds may be used for the following types of expenditures:*

- Travel required to conduct the Experiential Learning opportunity
- Supplies and materials that are directly related to conduct of the project, such as postage, photocopying, datasets, illustrations and photographs, art and performance supplies, chemicals and other expendables, software, and small equipment items (<\$3,000 per unit), etc.
- Contractual services provided by an external vendor, such as transcription services, data entry assistance, analytical services, editing and indexing services, etc.
- Telecommunications costs for telephone surveys or for Internet survey services
- Equipment (>\$3,000 per unit) that is specific to the proposed project, not normally provided by the department or other university departments, and/or is not an appropriate request for the University's equipment pools (requires explanation with signature of department head)
- Repair of used equipment donated to the University in the current fiscal year, provided the equipment is required for completion of the proposed project

*ELSG funds may **not** be used for the following types of expenditures:*

- Faculty reassignment time or summer compensation
- Graduate assistant salary
- General supplies and items that normally are or should be provided by the applicant's department
- Literature searches
- Journal subscriptions or book purchases
- Memberships in professional organizations



- General conference travel and travel for presentation/dissemination of project results or performances
- Dissemination of research results or creative works
- General telecommunications
- Repair of donated equipment in inventory before the beginning of the current fiscal year
- Routine or ongoing maintenance of equipment.

**REVIEW PROCESS AND EVALUATION CRITERIA:**

*Late proposals will not be accepted.* In order to be eligible for review, a proposal must be complete and in a single package (either a single PDF file or a one-sided hardcopy). Questions about eligibility for review will be decided by the QEP Coordinator and QEP Advisory Committee upon proposal submission. QEP Advisory Committee members will independently review eligible proposals and assign a preliminary score to each based on the criteria below. Preliminary scores will be averaged for each proposal and a preliminary ranking will be established. The committee will meet to discuss the applications, using the preliminary rankings to guide discussion. Following the group discussion, committee members will independently finalize their scores. A final average score will be calculated for each proposal and a final rank order established.

The maximum proposal score is 100. Proposals will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- Alignment of the project with ELSG program goal and objectives (maximum 30 points)
- Intellectual merit of the proposed project (maximum 30 points)
- Clarity and appropriateness of the research/project design and procedures (maximum 20 points)
- Appropriateness of the budget and strength of the budget justification (maximum 20 points)

Only those proposals with an average score of 70 and higher will be automatically eligible for funding. Awards will be made in rank order until available funds are exhausted or until all proposals scoring 70 or higher are funded, whichever occurs first. The size of the award may be decreased at the committee's discretion based on the nature of the work and the budget justification provided.

Following the selection process, all applicants will be informed of funding decisions and the final average proposal score will be provided to each applicant. The funding decisions of the QEP Advisory Committee are final and cannot be appealed.

**OTHER TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF AWARD:**

- For collaborative proposals, the faculty or staff member whose name first appears on the Application Cover Page will be responsible for financial management of the award and reporting.



- All ELSG funds must be expended in accordance with University policy and procedures by the close of fiscal year (June 30). Unexpended funds cannot be carried over to the next fiscal year.
- If a proposal is withdrawn before the QEP Coordinator and QEP Advisory Committee makes a final funding decision, the submission is not counted.
- Awards may not be deferred to a future fiscal year. If funds cannot be used in the year for which they are awarded, they will be de-obligated and, if possible, awarded to another applicant. The faculty or staff member may reapply in a future year, subject to the limitation on proposal resubmission.
- ELSG recipients must acknowledge support of the activity by the Valdosta State University Experiential Learning Seed Grant program in any publication or presentation of results.
- In the event a project funded by the ELSG program generates unanticipated sales or royalty income for the faculty or staff member at any time in the future, the faculty or staff member agrees to report such income to the QEP Coordinator and QEP Advising Team and to reimburse the University the amount of the award from the first proceeds received.