

The Teagle Foundation

Request for Proposals / December 2005

COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS IN VALUE-ADDED ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING

The Teagle Foundation has budgeted up to \$1.8 million over the next three years to help colleges collaborate in the development of faculty-led projects to assess student learning. An initial round of grants for six collaboratives in value-added assessment proved so promising that we have allocated these additional funds to support another six at up to \$300,000 each.

Goals:

1. To enhance student learning in private undergraduate colleges through the use of value-added assessment.
2. To increase knowledge of how value-added assessment can enhance student learning in private undergraduate colleges.
3. To encourage sharing of ideas and resources among institutions of similar mission sharing an interest in value-added assessment.
4. To assist faculty in taking the lead in the development and implementation of value-added assessment.

Eligibility: Private colleges and universities with a strong commitment to the liberal arts, high academic standards and stable finances, as well as associations that support such institutions, are eligible to apply. Institutions in a collaborative already funded for a three-year value-added assessment project are not eligible.

Means: Several colleges (typically 4 – 10) agree to collaborate by establishing a joint working group composed of concerned faculty and administrators. This group meets with some frequency, electronically and face to face, surveys what is already being achieved on the campuses, and what might be achieved through additional efforts, including the study of existing data, the collection of new information, the administration of appropriate instruments of assessment, shared visits by specialists in the field, and the development and evaluation of new courses and curricula, etc.

Prior to developing proposals, prospective collaboratives should consult the Foundation's website for examples of existing collaboratives pursuing value-added assessment (<http://www.teaglefoundation.org/grantmaking/grantees/vaa.aspx>). While the Foundation will not fund proposals that duplicate the focus of these existing collaboratives, the structure and organization of their projects may be instructive. Further, while its plans are developing, the collaborative may wish to consult the "Resources" page of the Foundation's website, which includes a section on Outcomes and Assessment (<http://www.teaglefoundation.org/learning/resources.aspx>).

Proposal: An original plus three copies of proposals should be sent to the address given at the end of this RFP. Proposals must include:

1. A 3-4 page narrative describing the project. Note that all project activities should be completed by June 30, 2009, and final reports submitted by September 1, 2009.
2. Budget:

- The maximum grant is \$300,000 payable over three years.
 - Appropriate for inclusion are all direct expenses associated with the project, including travel, meals and accommodation expenses associated with meetings of the participants, the costs of consultants or advisers with special expertise in value-added assessment, release time or summer stipends for the development of courses and curricula using value-added assessment, the costs of acquiring, administering and evaluating existing instruments of assessment, or designing new ways of assessing student learning, and the preparation and dissemination of reports on results achieved, etc.
 - The budget should show the total cost of the project (excluding indirect costs) and contributions from each participating institution (for example, travel costs of its participants, costs of hosting meetings, etc.), as well as a column for funds requested from the Teagle Foundation.
3. A cover sheet that gives:
 - The name of the primary contact person for the collaborative, his or her mailing address, e-mail address and phone number;
 - The project title and a one-paragraph project summary that we can post on our website if the project is funded;
 - The project's start and end dates;
 - The project's total cost (see budget guidelines below).
 4. President's letters:
 - A cover letter from the president of the campus administering the grant, endorsing the project and speaking to his or her willingness to see the grant housed on campus.
 - Letters of endorsement from the presidents of all other colleges participating in the collaborative.
 5. A c.v. and statement from the principal investigator on the campus that is administering the grant indicating the activities that are anticipated as the project begins.
 6. Indicators of faculty participation:
 - A list of a few faculty members from each of the participating colleges who are committing themselves to work on this project;
 - A c.v. and brief letter of commitment from each of those faculty members.

Note: Foundation staff will read drafts of proposals on request, and if time permits.

Reports: Brief narrative and financial reports are required by the first of September after each year's activities. Funds for the next year will not be released until these reports are received.

We believe that successful collaboratives will have an important story to tell to other institutions in higher education and to a wider public that is increasingly concerned with accountability, and with what constitutes effective teaching and learning. The final narrative report should be written with these audiences in mind, and will be posted on the Foundation's website. The Foundation also requires a final financial report that details receipt and spending of all funds received, presented in a form consistent with that of the original proposal.

Program Evaluation: The foundation will work closely with grant recipients to develop good ways of assessing the effectiveness of their projects. We expect, however, that grant recipients will define at the outset a baseline that can be used to measure results at a later stage.

Timeline:

March 30, 2006:	Applications due
Late May 2006:	Notification of awards
September 1, 2007:	First year's report due
September 1, 2008:	Second year's report due
September 1, 2009:	Final report due

Where to Send Proposals: The original proposal plus three copies should be sent to:

The Teagle Foundation
10 Rockefeller Plaza, Room 920
New York, NY 10020-1903