

Johnson C. Smith University
Smith Institute for Applied Research

2014-2015 STAR Program

**Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL)
and Applied Research (AR) Grants Program**

The Smith Institute for Applied Research at Johnson C. Smith University concentrates on specific research questions that address some of the most pressing issues of our day. The Institute supports faculty to help students master academic excellence required for success in academia and the workplace.

To achieve this goal, this year Smith Institute is implementing the inaugural STAR Grants Program. The goals of this program are to support faculty to conduct research on aspects of teaching and learning in higher education that will benefit the JCSU community and/or to conduct applied research that contributes to the knowledge base and benefits society. Projects that examine and reflect upon the teaching and learning practices within a discipline or across disciplines in a systematic way by using research methods and by making the results known to the campus community and beyond will be considered for funding. In addition, projects that aim to identify and/or address needs in the local community through applied research will also be considered for funding. All proposals *must* include students as researchers.

PURPOSE OF FUNDING

The purpose of the STAR Grants program is threefold:

1. To fund instructional research projects that will benefit the JCSU teaching and learning community
2. To ensure that the results of the instructional research projects are shared and disseminated among the JCSU community
3. To support and build a culture of applied research that benefits the JCSU community

In essence, you are applying for funding for an instructional project that personally interests you or your proposal team and that benefits the JCSU community (including students, staff, faculty, partners, and local residents). Grant recipients will be expected to participate in sharing the results of their project in a public forum, including but not limited to a poster session or a presentation, journals, and conferences. The leaders of funded projects must commit to presenting the results of their research at a teaching, learning, and applied research showcase to be held on campus in Fall 2015.

Faculty or staff should propose projects that aim to:

- make significant curricular reforms, including designing new curricula;
- conduct research that informs teaching and learning at the course, department, college, or university level with the aim to improve the quality of instruction;
- initiate and evaluate activities designed to contribute to the retention of undergraduate and graduate students; or
- conduct applied research that addresses an issue of importance to the Northwest Corridor or broader society.

SoTL-focused proposals may investigate best practice sharing, fundamentals of tertiary teaching and learning, adult learning theories, different learning styles, student engagement, authentic learning experiences, what works in specific disciplines, undergraduates involved in research (teaching/research nexus), or service learning.

AR-focused proposals may investigate issues currently affecting the local community such as food deserts, ground water contamination, diversity, local small businesses, health disparities, or criminal justice.

Priority will be given to newly-developed projects that aim to provide foundations for larger project ideas, although people who have ongoing SoTL or AR projects may apply for funding to continue their work as long as the project addresses one of the priorities of this program.

ELIGIBILITY

The STAR Program is available to all full-time faculty and staff. A recipient may hold only one (1) STAR grant during any single award period.

Deans are eligible to apply. Faculty members appointed to the Review Committee are eligible to apply; however, they neither rank nor participate in the discussion of their proposals during the review committee meeting.

Emeritus Professors of JCSU are eligible to apply.

Faculty or staff who are no longer employed at JCSU during the project term must give up the remaining funds.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS & DEADLINES

Faculty or staff should email an electronic copy (in PDF format) to sminslow@jcsu.edu with an email copy to your department chair and dean. Name your file in the following manner: Last name_first name_YEAR. (ex. Minslow_Sarah_2014). The subject line of the email message should read "STAR Grant Proposal." ***If you do not adhere to these submission instructions, your proposal may be returned without review.***

Projects should begin by November 10, 2014 and be finalized by May 15, 2015. The maximum amount awarded to a single project will be **\$5,000**. The committee reserves the right to award less than the requested amount to project teams if there is not an appropriate budget justification for the requested amount.

The deadline for proposal submission is **5:00 pm on October 15, 2014**. Recipients will be notified of the award by October 30, 2014.

PROPOSAL PREPARATION REQUIREMENTS

Proposals to the STAR Grant Program should adhere strictly to the following guidelines, procedures, and deadlines. ***Proposals that do not conform to these guidelines will be returned without review.***

A **proposal preparation workshop** will be held on Tuesday, October 7, 2014 in the BRICK Lab from 1-2pm. To RSVP for the workshop, please email Dr. Sarah Minslow.

Questions about the suitability of a proposal may be directed to Dr. Sarah Minslow, Research and Grants Award Specialist, Smith Institute for Applied Research, sminslow@jcsu.edu or ext. 1306

*Project proposals are limited to **seven (7) pages**. Pages should have 1" margins and use 12-pt. type in either Arial or Times New Roman. All pages should be numbered. Use clear headings as indicated by the bolded words below.*

The proposal must include the following:

- ✓ **Project Abstract** (1 paragraph)
- ✓ **Overview** that includes the background of the project idea, clear aims and objectives, and the significance of the project to the institution (This section should include some literature review). (~ 1.5 pages)
- ✓ **Project team members***, the qualifications and the roles and responsibilities of each person (~ 1 page)
- ✓ **Methodology/Project Plan** (~2.5 pages)
- ✓ **Evaluation Plan** (~ .5 page) (SoTL Project) OR **Discussion of Results** (Research Project)
- ✓ **Dissemination Plan** (~ .5 page)
- ✓ **Timeline for Completion** (~ 1 page)

In addition, proposals should include **an additional two (2) pages** for the budget and budget justification.

*If students who will participate in the research have already been selected, include their name(s) and justification for their inclusion. If students have not been selected, include a brief statement describing how they will be recruited.

BUDGET REQUIREMENTS

The budget section of a proposal should reflect the PI's best estimate of the actual cost of conducting the scope of work outlined in the text of the proposal. Your budget is the fiscal representation of the project. While you should attempt to be as accurate as possible, amounts should be in whole dollars (do not use cents).

In addition to the budget itself, faculty researchers are also required to submit a "budget justification". A budget justification will follow the budget, line item by item, and explain in a narrative format how the cost of each item was developed. For example, while the budget might simply have \$35,000 as a line item for salary, the budget justification might state that \$25,000 is 50% of Professor Joan Ford's academic year salary and \$10,000 additional is for her summer salary for July and August at \$5,000 per month. All budget documents should be submitted along with the final project application for STAR program grant funds.

Budget Items

There are two categories of types of costs applicable to contract and grant awards:

- **Direct costs** are expenditures which are specifically identifiable to a particular project and which can be charged directly to that contract or grant. Examples of direct costs include: salaries and fringe benefits of personnel working on the project; supplies and materials; equipment; travel; subcontracts to outside entities, etc.

If seeking additional funding from outside foundations or agencies, faculty researchers should check the specific funding guidelines for that agency. It is **highly** recommended that you seek external funding to continue the work after the STAR grant program completion date. For advice regarding external funding, please contact the GSPAR Office.

Personnel: Salaries, Benefits, Stipends, and Consultants

Salaries and wages are monetary compensation paid to Johnson C. University employees working on a project. Personnel may include faculty, researchers, visiting scholars, staff, and undergraduate and graduate students. If possible, all personnel who will participate in the research project should be identified by name and by title

or category of employment. Investigators/personnel from other institutions must be listed in either the Consultant category or as part of a Subcontract, depending on the applicability of their role in the project. Since they are not hired by the University, they do not receive University salaries.

Stipends

Stipends are fixed payments made to individuals under a fellowship or training grant in accordance with pre-established levels to provide for the individual's living expenses during the period of training.

Supplies and Materials

Identify as specifically as possible any and all consumable supplies needed for the project. Supplies are defined as items of expendable equipment that do not meet the definition of permanent equipment. These include office and laboratory supplies, chemicals, glassware, books, computers, computer software, repair parts/replacement components for equipment, and equipment items with an acquisition cost of less than \$5,000. Costs for commonly used supplies may be based on previous experience and can include paper, copying, staples, etc. Telephone and postage are usually separate items.

REVIEW OF PROPOSALS

Proposals will be reviewed by the **STAR Mentoring Group**.

The Smith Institute for Applied Research STAR Mentoring Group will provide support and advice for faculty or staff who submit projects through the STAR program. The group may consist of faculty members from each college who are able to serve as faculty experts in specific realms of the research process, ethical practice, discipline-specific criteria, and institutional resources. Members of the STAR Mentoring Group will be responsible for the following:

- a) Review submitted proposals for the STAR Grant Program and determine which projects are funded;
- b) Ensure submission guidelines are satisfactory, meet ethical standards, and are representative of the overall mission of JCSU;
- c) Enforce the adherence of university policy in the construction of research projects that will be disseminated throughout the surrounding community;
- d) Promote and support the overall mission of the Smith Institute through providing continuous support to faculty and students throughout the academic and research processes;
- e) Maintain working knowledge of additional resources (university and departmental) available to students and faculty which may aid in the progression of all projects.

If the specific person is not available for the review committee meeting, they may nominate and organize a suitable alternate.

PRIORITIES

The *priorities* for funding align with JCSU's institutional priorities and the objectives of the Smith Institute. This year's priorities include:

1. Designing and implementing programs, courses, and curriculum that produce graduates who possess the necessary skills to succeed in a competitive workforce or graduate school;
2. Involving students in applied research that aligns with course and degree learning outcomes and addresses identified needs in the local community; and
3. Teaching and learning that engages with the local community to address pressing social issues.

In addition, ***bonus points*** will be awarded to projects that involve research on an issue related to the Northwest Corridor and to project teams that involve junior faculty. Junior faculty are those who hold non-tenured positions and who have been teaching for less than seven years.

Project leaders should indicate on the **Application Form** which priority they aim to address.

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION

Applicants are urged to write their proposal with non-experts in mind. Because the committee is comprised of faculty from across the disciplines, the best proposals are those easily understood by faculty outside the applicant's discipline.

Proposals will be evaluated by the STAR Mentoring Group using the following criteria:

- Does the project address at least one of the priorities for funding?
- Is the project a newly-developed project or an ongoing initiative?
- Does the project involve research on an issue related to the Northwest Corridor?
- Does the project team involve junior faculty and at least two student researchers?
- Has the author documented the significance of the project to the mission of JCSU and to the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning or Applied Research?
- Has the applicant placed the project aims and objectives in context with the existing scholarship? Or is there an adequate literature review?
- Are the proposed activities related well to a specific question, problem, or hypothesis?
- Does the applicant demonstrate his or her ability to carry out the project given the resources and time available?
- Does the applicant clearly explain the appropriate process and/or methodology?
- Are the project goals and design clearly and adequately aligned with the requirements of funding?
- Is the proposal intelligible to an audience outside the proposer's research discipline?
- Is the budget cost-effective?
- Does the applicant present evidence of efforts (successful or unsuccessful) to receive external funding? If not, does the applicant discuss plans to pursue future external funding for this project?
- Is a clear plan for disseminating the outcomes of the project across JCSU and/or the Northwest Corridor?
- Is there an adequate plan for evaluating the project process and outcomes?

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS FOR PUBLICATION

Any research published that has received support from a JCSU SoTL and AR Grant should have a citation as follows: *This work was supported, in part, by funds provided by the Smith Institute for Applied Research at Johnson C. Smith University.*

FINAL REPORT & SHOWCASE

A final report following the suggested format (in Microsoft Word or PDF format) and summarizing the project funded by the STAR Grants Program should be sent to sminslow@jcsu.edu no later than July 31, 2015. Faculty who fail to submit a final report will be ineligible for future funding.

In addition, project leaders who receive funding are required to present their research at a teaching and learning showcase to be held in Fall 2015.

2014-2015 STAR Grants Program

Smith Institute for Applied Research

APPLICATION FORM

Principle Investigator(s)/Project Leader(s) (PI): _____

PI's Discipline, Department, and College: _____

Other Team Members (Please put discipline in parentheses beside each name. If someone is an Early Career Professor, please put EC beside their name):

Title of Proposed Project:

Priority Addressed (Please check):

- Designing and implementing programs, courses, and curriculum that produce graduates who possess the necessary skills to succeed in a competitive workforce or graduate school;
- Involving students in applied research that aligns with course and degree learning outcomes and addresses identified needs in the local community; and
- Teaching and learning that engages with the local community to address pressing social issues.

Summary of Project (less than 200 words):

Requirements (Please initial beside each):

_____ Project must involve students as research assistants.

_____ PI's must participate in a showcase in Fall 2015.

_____ PI's must expend funds by June 31, 2015.

_____ PI's must submit a final report by July 31, 2015.

Signature: _____

Signature of Department Chair: _____

Signature of College Dean: _____