

CENTER FOR INNOVATION INNOVATION FELLOWS PROGRAM

SUMMARY

In a world that is increasingly diverse, complex, and interdependent, Xavier's Center for Innovation (CFI) seeks to engage the Xavier community with mission-aligned innovative approaches and learning at the university.

Per the interest and intent of the Center for Innovation (CFI) donors to expand the scope and scale of innovation, the CFI is continuing a program called the "Innovation Fellows." This program will serve as an institutional incubator and will offer professional development funds to support innovation projects that will be proposed by our faculty, staff, and students. Up to 6 projects total will be supported annually.

Proposals may be made for up to \$5,000.

PROPOSALS FOR THE 2025-2026 INNOVATION FELLOWS WILL BE DUE ON:

JANUARY 30, 2026

**COMPLETED PROPOSALS SHOULD BE SUBMITTED ELECTRONICALLY
AT CFI@XAVIER.EDU.**

OVERVIEW OF PURPOSE

Innovation Fellows should have a clear understanding of the CFI's mission and pillars which are described in greater detail on <https://www.xavier.edu/center-for-innovation/mission>.

Proposals should clearly convey how the innovation project matches and advances the CFI's objectives.

Innovation Fellow Awards can be used to fund new initiatives and pilot programs. Examples include innovations that lead to (i) a mission-aligned small business launch or (ii) innovative signature programs to enhance student success or (iii) concrete strategies that define new innovative models in higher education.

ELIGIBILITY

Persons or groups who may apply to be Innovation Fellows include:

- Faculty members (Principle or Participating),
- Full-time University staff members in any department, and
- Current Xavier students.

Collaborative proposals: Groups (faculty, staff, or students) may collaborate with one another and thus request additional funds.

Previous Innovation Fellows may apply again but will need to wait 2 years since the completion of their previous funding year. Continuation projects will not be prioritized above new proposals.

CFI Fellow projects and funding intended to support University departments and organizations

(such as clubs) will be considered. In such proposals, a detailed explanation of the support from these larger entities must be provided.

TIMELINES

Start Date: All proposals should clearly indicate the desired start date for the project which must be within nine months (283 days) of the award date.

End date: The project funding will expire thirteen months after the start date. Hence, applicants should choose a start date appropriate to the project needs. All funds unused at the end of the project will revert back to the CFI.

Outcome: Within four months after the end of the project, Innovation Fellows should report the outcomes of their projects. The outcomes may not all be positive but, in all cases, lessons learned should be clearly outlined. For a group project only one report needs to be submitted, but all recipients share the responsibility for submitting the report. Fellows will present their projects to the campus community at an event hosted by Center for Innovation. *Failure to submit a final report will preclude the awardee(s) from being eligible to submit future Innovation Fellow proposals.*

EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

A committee consisting of an odd number of at least five persons will evaluate proposals. This committee may consist of:

- One representative from each College,
- The current CFI Coordinator, and
- Representative(s) of any non-academic department.

At least two of these committee members must be directly involved in the leadership of the CFI.

One alternate member will be available to evaluate applications in the event that a committee member has applied for an award.

The committee will forward their recommendations to the Associate Provost for Academic Affairs for review. The Associate Provost for Academic Affairs has the final voice in approving projects. The Innovation Fellow Committee will be informed of the recipients of the awards.

Special consideration will be given to proposals that do one or more of the following:

- Address problems that challenge the status quo,
- Have the potential to create innovative outcomes,
- Create positive, ideally lasting, impacts on the Xavier community,
- Focus on Xavier's core Jesuit values and ethical approaches,
- Are interdisciplinary/inter-departmental in nature, and/or
- Are collaborative across different units.

AWARD AMOUNTS

Requested award amounts should be appropriate for the needs of the project, not more and not less. To that end, each proposal must contain a detailed budget outlining the need or use, the amount, and a rationale for each expense requested. Individual requests for more than \$5,000 will not be considered. Award money may not be used for stipends or to compensate student

workers.

Appropriate requests for funds may include:

- Travel and conference attendance expenses,
- Advancing learning regarding innovative thinking, design, and/or planning, entrepreneurship, or skill development (this includes travel for meetings, observations, etc.),
- The purchase of specific books, learning aids, classes, or media,
- Funds for events to be hosted by the Fellow (i.e. retreats, conferences, hackathons, workshops, tours, guest speakers, etc.) that relate to the CFI's mission and goals,
- Seed money for student entrepreneurship ventures (both for and non-profit in nature will be considered), and/or
- Continuation of existing projects that are in line with the CFI's mission and goals.

Guideline Revisions: When necessary, the Innovation Fellow committee will recommend revisions of these guidelines to the Associate Provost for Academic Affairs.

APPLICATION FORMAT

1. Cover Page (should have the following information in the following order):
 - Name of applicant(s),
 - Department(s)/organization(s),
 - Title of project: Include: "Proposal for Innovation Fellow,"
 - Project start month/year,
 - Anticipated reach of the project (who will be impacted as a result of the effort),
 - Total amount of funding requested, and
 - Abstract of proposed project not to exceed 150 words.
2. Budget Page: Should include a detailed list of expected expenses with amounts, rationale for the expense, and an explanation of how the requested funds will be spent within the time frame of the project.
3. Narrative: This section must be limited to two single-spaced typewritten pages. The importance and distinctiveness of the proposed project should be clearly articulated, as should an explanation of the anticipated outcome and beneficiaries.

Including evidence of the following factors in the project description will be required:

- What factors led you to pursue the proposed project?
 - What evidence demonstrates the need for the project?
 - Do you have previous accomplishments related to the project?
 - What is the project's connection to the CFI's mission and goals?
 - What are some tangible expected outcomes from this project?
4. Additional information:
 - If applicable, brochures or other information concerning the conference, workshop, or program for which funding is being requested should be submitted.
 - If applicable, a brief description of previous awards received and their outcomes should be submitted.
 - Any other pertinent information that the Center for Innovation Fellow committee should have.
 - Application must be submitted electronically by the due date at cfi@xavier.edu.