

Academic *Innovation* Fund

Phase 4 2021-22 Application Guidelines

Background

The Academic Innovation Fund (AIF) was created in 2010 to encourage innovation in teaching, learning and the student experience. The purpose of the Fund is to support the implementation of projects to advance York's institutional priorities that are articulated in York's University Academic Plan, Strategic Mandate Agreement and the Institutional Integrated Resource Plan in relation to eLearning, experiential education, student success and retention strategies within the curriculum, and internationalization. It is intended to encourage innovation and change at York by supporting new initiatives or those that extend current initiatives in significant new ways. A focus for the upcoming year will be the embedding of strategies that explicitly advance the Sustainable Development Goals within the curriculum in alignment with the AIF priority areas stated below, refer to the [Sustainable Development Goals guide for information](#). There will be three categories of funding: **Category I funding** will support academic innovation projects, **Category II funding** will support course development projects, and **Category III funding** will support the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) projects.

The 2021-2022 call for proposals will prioritize the following areas:

- embedding eLearning within undergraduate or graduate degree programs using *blended or fully online strategies* (see [eLearning Common Language document](#)) and/or
- embedding Experiential Education within undergraduate or graduate degree programs through *community focused and/or work focused EE strategies with a focus on virtual and remote EE approaches* (see [EE Common Language document](#)), which might include or focus on entrepreneurialism in the curriculum, and/or
- embedding student success and retention strategies within the curriculum in undergraduate degree programs in all years of study (see [First Year Experience \(curricular\)](#) for guidance, this framework can be applied for all years of study), and/or
- embedding internationalization within undergraduate or graduate degree programs; internationalization of curriculum implies integrating an intercultural dimension into the learning and teaching process so that students can acquire an appreciation and understanding of international perspectives and competencies.

Some ways to achieve internationalization of the curriculum are:

- by integrating intercultural or comparative focus with existing courses and/or degree programs
- designing summer abroad courses, programs, field schools and integrating international internships
- developing and implementing technological tools to support internationalization of the curriculum

The success of AIF initiatives funded thus far has allowed York to build pan-University strategies and systems supporting the further growth and development of curricular innovation. Many of our students are currently benefiting from these innovations. Information about the projects that were funded can be found on the [AIF website](#).

AIF Funding Categories (2021-22)

There will be three categories of funding for 2021-2022. **Category I funding** will support initiatives by Schools, Departments and/or Faculties to strategically embed one or more of the four indicated institutional priorities - [eLearning](#), [Experiential Education \(EE\)](#), Student Success and Retention Strategies, and internationalization within the curriculum - in undergraduate or graduate degrees. For eLearning, the development of new programs or certificates and redesign of existing programs or certificates to fully online delivery format will be prioritized. All new program proposals must have received appropriate governance approval or approval in principle prior to submission. It is anticipated that the majority of the funded activity for eLearning will be focused on developing online versions of new or existing courses. It is possible that some courses already exist in an online format, and the proposal maps out the work to complete the development of the fully online program. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Internationalization in the curriculum, virtual and remote EE approaches and building entrepreneurialism into curriculum might also be considered by applicants for proposals embedding EE strategies. **Category II funding** will provide individual grants to full-time and contract faculty members who wish to redevelop their courses using eLearning (e.g. blended or fully online), selected EE strategies and/or international perspectives/opportunities. All new course proposals must have received appropriate governance approval or approval in principle prior to submission. **Category III funding** will provide individual grants to full-time and contract faculty members who wish to conduct a research project designed to explore or test an approach to teaching and learning, otherwise known as Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL).

All projects are required to incorporate universal design principles and to make curriculum more accessible for students with accommodation needs and/or disabilities. Projects that are developed through AIF must comply with Ontario's accessibility requirements and [York's guidelines for ethical research](#). Any educational materials developed through AIF are expected to be deposited in [YorkSpace](#), the digital repository maintained by York University Libraries and any equipment purchased through AIF will also be deposited into the new Tech Library following project completion which will facilitate the re-use of equipment by other faculty members. More information about these strategies can be found on the [AIF website](#).

A total of \$1.5 million will be available annually over each of the next three years (i.e. 2021-22, 2022-23 and 2023-24). Category I project proposals may request one, two or three years of funding support. Approval in principle will be given for Year Two and Three funding requests and final approval will be based on the degree to which the project has met its agreed deliverables for Year One.

Category	Description	Funding Available
Category I Open to full-time faculty/staff members	<i>Academic Innovation Projects:</i> Proposals will be considered that are curricular in nature and will assist with the embedding of eLearning, EE, Student Success and Retention within the curriculum, and/or internationalization strategies in degree programs.	Up to \$50,000 per year*

	<p>Highest priority will be given to proposals that demonstrate that they are sustainable, scalable and affordable. High priority will be given to grant requests from schools, departments or Faculties that have documented EE, and eLearning plans.</p> <p>Category I proposals include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Pan-University proposals</i>: Initiatives intended to have an impact across the University and/or that are a collaborative effort by two or more Faculties. • <i>Faculty-based proposals</i>: Initiatives which apply wholly or primarily within a particular Faculty. • <i>Individual or group proposals</i>: Initiatives submitted by faculty or staff, individually or in groups. <p><i>*Note: funding requests up to \$100,000 will be considered for initiatives that have large scale impact. A detailed rationale for this budget requirement must be provided along with the project plan and budget template.</i></p>	
<p>Category II</p> <p>Open to full-time and contract faculty members</p>	<p><i>Curricular Innovation Grants</i>: Faculty members will be invited to submit proposals for redesigned courses using eLearning, EE, and/or internationalization strategies. There are two subcategories:</p> <p>II A: <i>Curricular Grants for eLearning will support course redesign incorporating blended learning, fully online learning or the flipped classroom. Grants for EE will support the embedding of the following EE Strategies: Classroom Focused, Community Focused and Course Based Placements, with a focus on virtual and remote EE approaches. Grants for Internationalization will support the embedding of international perspectives/opportunities.</i></p> <p>II B: <i>Curricular Grants for course innovations in line with the Perpetual Course Model: The integration of diverse instructional innovations within one course, namely – Self-paced learning options, flexible learning pathways, competency-based learning outcomes, and authentic assessment methods that involve the measurement of both skill acquisition as well as knowledge assets.</i></p> <p>High priority will be given to grant requests from schools, departments or Faculties that have documented EE and/or eLearning plans, which identify priorities for embedding strategies within degree programs. Proposals for the creation of program based placements, internship or co-operative education programs must be submitted under Category I.</p>	<p>\$5,000 per course</p>
<p>Category III</p>	<p><i>SoTL projects</i>: Faculty members will be invited to submit proposals for a research project investigating an aspect of teaching and learning grounded in their own teaching.</p>	<p>Up to \$5,000 per research project</p>

Open to full-time and contract faculty members	The grant supports projects that propose a systematic investigation of approaches, strategies, and tools aiming to enhance student learning and/or the student experience. Such projects are informed by the literature, include a research methodology and data collection technique(s), and aim to disseminate results publicly. More information about various forms of evidence-informed teaching practices is available in the Engaged Teaching at York University document.	
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Assessment Process and Criteria

All proposals will be reviewed, approved and ranked by the Office of the Dean before being submitted to the Office of the Provost. Faculties are encouraged to set their own internal deadlines.

The [AIF Steering Committee](#), chaired by the Associate Vice-President Teaching and Learning, will review all proposals and provide its recommendations to the Provost, who will make final decisions.

All applicants will be expected to use the common language and definitions for [EE](#) and [eLearning](#), in the writing of their proposals, where appropriate. Applicants may also be interested to consult [First Year Experience \(curricular\)](#), [Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#), [Engaged Teaching at York](#), and the [York International website](#) for guidance.

Category I Application Process and Assessment Criteria

Please see the attached [AIF Category I Grant application form](#). Please note that previously funded AIF projects are not eligible for new funding. Also note that the following expenditures are excluded from funding support: capital construction, building renovations, furnishings, release time and student financial aid.

The following criteria will be used to assess all Category I *Academic Innovation* project proposals.

Contribution of Project to Curricular Quality:

- The project deliverables are clearly stated in measurable terms. A description of how the project is aligned with the teaching and learning strategies: eLearning, EE, Student Success and Retention within the curriculum, and/or internationalization strategies and how the project explicitly advances the Sustainable Development Goals within the curriculum (15%)
- The implementation plan is clear and the project can be implemented in the timeframe and manner described (10%)
- Evidence that the project will be evaluated, along with a description of how the findings will be used and shared (10%)

Scalability:

- The initiative can be scaled to reach large numbers of students (15%)
- The initiative will positively impact the Faculty's and York's reputation and the results of the project will be communicated and disseminated in a meaningful way (10%)

Affordability and Sustainability:

- Evidence that the project is supported in Faculty plans for curricular innovation (10%)
- Evidence that the project will be supported by the Faculty and be sustainable beyond the period of AIF support (10%)

Qualifications and Experience:

- The proposal includes, or provides for, a project work group with the relevant qualifications, knowledge and experience to ensure that the deliverables will be successfully achieved (10%)

Budget:

- The budget outlines cost projections and the numbers reflect the priorities of the project. (10%)

Category II Application Process and Assessment Criteria

Please see the attached AIF [Category II A](#) or [Category II B](#) Curricular Innovation Grant application form.

The faculty member will be provided with both a research grant and in-kind integrated professional development and technical support (including instructional design support and eClass course creation/redesign support) from the Blended and Online Learning Development (BOLD) team within Teaching Commons.

Note: The cost of any specialized approved software or any additional resources required for the redevelopment of the course will be the responsibility of the Faculty.

The following criteria will be used to assess all Category II *Curricular Innovation Grant* proposals.

Course Description:

- The student learning outcomes are clearly stated (20%) *
- The course is described in sufficient detail, including information on assessment and how this will be impacted by the course redesign (10%)

Course Redesign:

- Rationale describes how the proposal strengthens the course and the degree program while advancing York's institutional priorities in relation to teaching and learning (20%)

Scalability (eLearning only):

- Evidence that the course can be scaled to reach larger numbers of students and/or satisfies an unmet need in the degree program (20%)

Community/Industry Partners (EE only):

- Inclusion of a clear description of what interaction will take place outside the physical or virtual classroom and with whom (20%)

Affordability and Sustainability:

- Evidence that the redesigned course will be supported by the School/Department and Faculty and that it is considered integral to the quality of the degree program (20%)

Sharing Best Practices:

- Evidence that the results of the course redesign will be communicated and disseminated in a meaningful way (10%) (i.e. Teaching In Focus conference)

Category III Application Process and Assessment Criteria

Please see the attached [Category III SoTL Grant](#) application form.

The faculty member will be provided with both a research grant and in-kind integrated professional development and research support from the Teaching Commons (including individual consultation and a year-long program [EduCATE](#) – Education, Curriculum, And Teaching Excellence).

The rubric in the Category III SoTL Grant application form will be used to assess all Category III SoTL Grant proposals.

*** Teaching Commons team may assist applicants in the preparation of the proposals upon request. Please visit <http://bold.info.yorku.ca/> for eLearning proposals or email teaching@yorku.ca.**

Requirements of all Successful Project Leads

All Project Leads will be required to submit both interim and final reports. Reporting requirements are linked to project funding transfers. All Project Leads will also be required to take part in meetings and workshops that will assist them in project management or course redesign.

Application Submission Process and Deadlines

Applicants must complete the Category I, II (A or B) or III application form and submit it electronically. Supplemental material should be submitted only if it is essential to the clear presentation of the project/initiative.

Individual applicants are required to submit their proposals to the Office of the Dean to be reviewed, approved and ranked. The Office of the Dean will then submit full package to the Office of AVP Teaching and Learning. Each Faculty may have its own internal deadline. Faculty members should consult the Office of the Dean for internal submission deadlines.

Ranked application packages from the Office of the Dean are to be submitted electronically to Office of the AVP Teaching and Learning (avptl@yorku.ca) **by 4:00 PM on Friday, February 5, 2021.**