

# University of Denver Public Good Fund Request for Proposals (RFP)

Center for Community Engagement | Office for Public Good Strategy & Research  
AY 2025-2026

Click here to access the [online application](#).

## Background

The University of Denver's vision is to be "a great private university dedicated to the public good." As a means to achieving this vision, the Center for Community Engagement to advance Scholarship and Learning (CCESL) and the Office for Public Good Strategy & Research (OPG) oversee an annual fund whose goal is to promote and increase community-engaged research and creative work that involves faculty and community. In the 2025-2026 academic year, \$75,000 will be available.

More on [CCESL](#)

- Vision: A university collaborating with communities to improve lives.
- Mission: To activate university and community potential through partnership.
- Values: Collaboration for the public good characterized by mutual benefit, fierce optimism, tenacity, rigor, democratic participation, equity, and inclusion.

More on [OPG](#)

The OPG advances faculty community-engaged scholarship to seed discovery and public good impact while promoting student learning and collaboration.

## Community-Engaged Scholarship at the University of Denver

Community-engaged scholarship:

- Addresses public problems;
- Emphasizes the co-production of knowledge in the context of reciprocal and mutually beneficial partnerships with community stakeholders;
- Values critical approaches that strive for equity and inclusion;
- Demonstrates strong collaboration with community partners in all stages of the research or creative work process, from proposal and project development to implementation and dissemination. *Community is defined broadly* and partners could be nonprofits, grassroots organizations, *government* agencies or entrepreneurs/businesses. Community partners are not typically collaborators from other universities;
- Includes dissemination to multiple audiences (e.g., traditional academic audiences, community audiences).

Only projects that meet the definition and criteria of community-engaged scholarship will be funded. Visit the [Public Good Fund webpage](#) for a list of past awardees, search CCESL's [Public Good Impact blog](#) to read

faculty posts about their Public Good Fund projects, or contact [cara.dienno@du.edu](mailto:cara.dienno@du.edu) to see samples from successful applications.

## Funding Amount

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In AY 2025-2026, Public Good Grants will be awarded.

**Public Good Grants:** Grants up to \$25,000 are available for projects that will result in public impact through community-engaged research or creative work that is conducted in the context of mutually-beneficial and reciprocal community partnership.

## Eligibility

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All appointed faculty members are eligible to apply for Public Good. This includes faculty members from Tenure-Line Professorial Series, Professorial Series in University Libraries, Teaching Professorial Series, Clinical Professorial Series, Professor of the Practice Series. Adjunct faculty, Visiting faculty, and graduate students are not eligible to apply.

## Investigator Roles

- The primary scholar leading the project is the Principal Investigators (PI). If two or more faculty members co-lead the project, then the faculty are co-PIs.
- Co-investigators (co-Is) are faculty collaborators who are not leading the project.
- The PI and/or coPIs must be appointed faculty members. While involvement of undergraduate and/or graduate students in the project is encouraged and valued, proposals must reflect work for which the faculty is the primary scholar. Projects for which undergraduate and/or graduate students are the primary scholars (e.g., PI or co-PI) are not eligible.

### **Please note:**

- Faculty who have received prior Public Good Fund grants must make clear in the Project Narrative how this proposal differs from the work that was previously funded.
- **Faculty may serve as a PI or Co-PI on only one Public Good Fund award at the same time.** If this proposal is funded, any prior award for which you were PI or co-PI must be closed out by **June 15** or before the state date for this award, whichever is first. To close out a project, all funds must be spent or returned. If you have a current award, you must provide a timeline for closing out of that award in your application.
- If projects have co-PIs from different departments, one department must be identified to administer the grant.

## Use of the Funds

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Grants are intended to cover faculty expenses beyond normal departmental support. They are not intended to relieve departmental budgets or to relieve the budgets of community partners. Most expenses for research and creative activity are eligible.

## Examples of Fundable Expenses

- **Summer salary:** Faculty members may apply for up to one month of summer salary for appropriate project-related work. For summer pay, total faculty salary cannot exceed 12 months of full pay. The proper calculation for one month summer salary is 1/9 of a 9 month salary;

- *Project-related travel expenses* (e.g., transportation, housing, and meals): Travel expenses in excess of 20% of total budget will generally not be considered unless there are extraordinary circumstances explained in the budget narrative;
- *Student and Community Partner Compensation*: research assistant pay, honoraria or gift cards for community partners;
- *Other fundable expenses include*: materials, specialized equipment, costs for interview transcription and data coding, duplicating and mailing questionnaires.

## Non-Fundable Expenses

- Faculty attendance/travel to academic conferences
- Routine office expenses
- Expenses that have already been incurred
- Student tuition
- Compensation of students for academic, credit-bearing service

## Funding Timeline & Extension Requests

Funds must ordinarily be spent within 12-24 months of the date on which the grant was awarded. Award notifications are usually made within 8-10 weeks of the proposal deadline. For planning purposes, June 15 is a reasonable start date. If additional time is needed beyond the proposed end date, a request for extension must be submitted in writing. A written request must be submitted to the CCESL Executive Director that includes the dollar amount remaining, the reason for the extension, and a revised timeline.

## Funding & Institutional Policies

Any use of Public Good Funds must be in accordance with institutional policies as detailed at <https://www.du.edu/policy/find-policy>. For example (but not limited to): research involving human or animal subjects must be reviewed by the DU Institutional Review Board; international travel must be registered with the university in advance; driving using institutional funds must comply with university driving procedures; following the Technology Acquisition policy for purchase of software and hardware.

## Selection Process and Criteria

The available funds are distributed across proposals that are deemed most fundable by the Public Good Fund Distribution Committee. The Committee, comprised of interdisciplinary faculty and 1-2 community members, undergoes an orientation to this RFP and community-engaged methods before conducting reviews. The Committee bases its selection on the strength of responses to project information questions and letters. The Committee also considers the overall balance of the Public Good portfolio in order to support high quality projects across disciplines and faculty rank as well as to support faculty who have not previously received Public Good Fund grants.

## Expectations if Funded

In addition to carrying out the proposed project, recipients are expected to complete tasks in each of the following three categories:

- Scholarship (one of the following)
  - Submit at least one abstract to present your engaged scholarship at a regional, national or international conference;
  - Submit at least one scholarly or community-based essay or journal article on your engaged scholarship;
  - Prepare a grant proposal to continue/sustain your engaged scholarship.
- Institutionalization

- Work with CCESL to disseminate information about your engaged scholarship (e.g., through *Public Good Impact*, the CCESL newsletter; research-sharing events).
- Reporting
  - Submit a Final Report to the Public Good Fund Distribution Committee after the close of the project period (templates linked below). The report must detail completion of the scholarship and institutionalization expectations listed above. In most cases, CCESL publishes Final Reports in *Public Good Impact*, the CCESL newsletter.
    - [Final Project Report Template for Public Good Grants](#)
    - Note: The Final Report must be submitted and all budget charges finalized before the applicant is eligible to submit an application for future funding from the Public Good Fund Distribution Committee.

## Submission Deadline

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Grants are reviewed once a year. The **deadline for proposals is Monday, March 2, 2026 at noon**. Email confirmations of receipt of applications are sent; if you do not receive an email confirmation within 48 hours of submitting materials, please email [ccesl@du.edu](mailto:ccesl@du.edu). Award notices are usually sent to applications within 8-10 weeks of the deadline.

## Application Materials and Submission Process

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The main application must be submitted via this [online application](#). As described in detail below, the main application includes several parts:

1. Faculty PI Information, including a 2-page CV for faculty PI/co-PIs (uploaded in the online application)
2. Description of Previous or Other Funding
3. Project Information
4. Project Narrative
5. Budget and Budget Justification (uploaded in the online application and should follow the template below)
6. Closing Acknowledgements

These will be entered/uploaded directly by applicants into the application form (we recommend that applicants prepare their responses offline and then copy/paste the final versions into the application form).

In addition, applicants must also request that the following brief letters be sent to [ccesl@du.edu](mailto:ccesl@du.edu) by the application due date:

1. A letter of support from the Chair or Dean of each faculty PI on the proposal
2. A letter of collaboration from your community partner(s). This brief letter should describe the community partner's assessment of the collaboration and potential benefits of the project to the community.

***Interested applicants with questions about how to best develop a proposal are encouraged to contact [ccesl@du.edu](mailto:ccesl@du.edu). Please also watch for an information session.***