

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

Center for Community Engagement | Office for Public Good Strategy & Research
AY 2026-2027

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." To achieve 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 that promotes and increases community-engaged research and creative work involving faculty and the community. In the 2026-2027 academic year, we anticipate funding up to three proposals up to \$25,000.

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 to see samples from successful applications.

Funding Amount

In AY 2026-2027, 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

All appointed faculty members are eligible to apply for Public Good. This includes faculty members from the Tenure-Line Professorial Series, Professorial Series in University Libraries, Teaching Professorial Series, Clinical Professorial Series, and 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 Investigator (PI). If two or more faculty members co-lead the project, they are co-PIs.
- Co-investigators (co-Is) are faculty collaborators who are not leading the project.
- The PI and/or co-PIs 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 start date for this award, whichever is first. To close out a project, you must spend or return all funds. If you have a current award, include a timeline for closing it out in your application.
- If projects have co-PIs from different departments, identify one department to administer the grant.

Use of the Funds

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 grant award date. Award notifications are usually made within 8-10 weeks of the proposal deadline. For planning purposes, June 15 is a reasonable start date. If you need additional time beyond the proposed end date, you must submit a written request for an extension. Submit a written request to the CCESL Executive Director that includes the remaining dollar amount, the reason for the extension, and a revised timeline.

Funding & Institutional Policies

Any use of Public Good Funds must comply 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; and the Technology Acquisition policy must be followed for the 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 project period closes. 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 Form](#) (note that *some prompts only appear after you select “Public Good Fund” as your Grant Type, as they are dependent upon your response*).
- Note: The Final Report must be submitted, and all budget charges finalized before the applicant is eligible to apply for future funding from the Public Good Fund Distribution Committee.

Submission Deadline

Grants are reviewed once a year. The **proposal deadline is Monday, March 1, 2027 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. Award notices are usually sent to applicants within 8-10 weeks of the deadline.

Application Materials and Submission Process

Submit the main application through this [online application](#). As described in detail below, the main application includes several parts:

1. Faculty PI/Co-PI Information, including a description of Previous or Other Funding
2. Project Information and Narrative
3. Budget and Budget Justification (uploaded in the online application and should follow the template below; downloadable version available [here](#))
4. 2-page CV for faculty PI/co-PIs (uploaded in the online application)
5. Appendix (optional; uploaded in the online application)

Applicants will enter/upload these directly into the application form (we recommend preparing responses offline and then copying/pasting the final versions into the application form).

In addition, applicants must also request that the following brief letters be sent to 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 the project's potential benefits to the community.

Interested applicants with questions about how to best develop a proposal are encouraged to watch a pre-recorded info session found [here](#). Note that the recording is from 2023; the only differences are the due date for the current academic year (March 1, 2027) and the maximum request (\$25,000). For other questions, please contact ccesl@du.edu.

Part 1: FACULTY PI/Co-PI INFORMATION (enter your responses in the [online application](#)).

For each faculty member serving as a PI, include:

- Name
- Email
- Department/School/Center
- Academic Series (select one):
 - Tenure-Line Professorial Series
 - Professorial Series in University Libraries
 - Teaching Professorial Series
 - Clinical Professorial Series
 - Professor of the Practice Series
- Academic Rank
 - Assistant
 - Associate
 - Full
- If more than one PI, which department will administer the grant?
- Have you applied for or received PROF funding for costs related to this project?
 - No
 - Yes, application under review
 - Yes, funding received. Please provide a brief description of what these grant funds cover relative to this proposal (e.g. how are they different).
- Have you applied for or received any other funding for costs related to this project?
 - No
 - Yes, application(s) under review by (list funders): _____
 - Yes, funding received by (list funders): _____. Amount received: _____. Please provide a brief description of what these grant funds cover relative to this proposal (e.g. how are they different).
- Have you or your Co-PI(s) previously received a Public Good Fund award? If yes, you must directly address how this proposal differs from previously funded projects.
 - No
 - Yes
 - Project title(s) and date(s): _____
 - Will the prior grant activity be finished by June 15th of this academic year? E.g. will funds spent (or unused funds returned) and the final report submitted.
 - Yes – the project has already closed
 - Yes – the project is still active, but will finish by June 15th
 - No
 - If this proposal is funded, any prior award for which you (and/or your co-PIs on this current proposal) were a PI or co-PI must be closed out by June 15 or before the start date for this award, whichever is first. Please provide a timeline for closing out that award here. The Review Committee will consider the feasibility of this timeline when making its award decision. If the prior award is not closed out by the new award start date, the new award will not be funded. Up to 2200 characters (approximately 300 words)
- I understand that any use of Public Good Funds must comply with institutional policies as detailed at <https://www.du.edu/policy/find-policy>.
 - YES
 - NO

Part 2: CURRENT PROJECT INFORMATION (enter your responses in the [online application](#)).

Title: _____ **Amount Requested: \$** _____
Community Partner(s): _____ **Preferred Project Start Date:** _____
Additional Faculty Co-Investigators (names and department): _____ **Project End Date¹:** _____

Please respond to each prompt within the word limits. Your responses should be specific, clear, concise and accessible to an interdisciplinary review committee. The narrative must provide evidence that this project qualifies as community-engaged scholarship. For example, your responses should demonstrate the co-development or co-implementation of the project with the community partner(s).

Project Abstract: Provide a brief summary of the project for a general audience. This abstract will be posted on the CCESL website if your project is funded. Up to 1200 characters (approximately 150 words).

Keywords: Provide 3 keywords to describe the proposal topic.

Definition of public problem. Define the public problem to be addressed. Your definition should illustrate both the community and academic importance of the issue. Up to 2200 characters (approximately 300 words).

Community partnership. Describe your community partnership(s). Your description should include your history of working with the community partner(s) as well as the role that the partner(s) will play in the proposed project. Please describe whether community partners will be compensated for their time. If so, describe this in your budget narrative. If they will not be compensated, please include a brief explanation here. Please note that community-engaged projects sometimes engage a community (for example, a neighborhood) in mutually beneficial ways instead of a particular community organization. If that is the case with your project, you must clearly demonstrate that the project is community-engaged. Projects that are community-based or for which there are implications for communities without reciprocity and mutual benefit (i.e., without their direct involvement in project design and implementation) are not eligible. Up to 2200 characters (approximately 300 words).

Goals and Methods. Define the specific goals of the project in terms of both research or creative work and community impact. Outline the steps (or methods) you will use to meet the project goals. You may include instruments, curricula, and other examples of project materials in an Appendix (**do not** use the Appendix for extra space in describing methods/procedure; use the Appendix only to provide reviewers with copies of relevant materials). Up to 3500 characters (approximately 500 words).

Results. Describe a plan to analyze the results of this project. The plan should include metrics to assess whether the project met its goals. Up to 1200 characters (approximately 150 words).

Dissemination. Describe a dissemination plan for community and academic outlets. For example, this might include op-eds, community presentations, blogs/other public communications; and examples of journals, academic conferences, policy papers. Up to 2200 characters (approximately 300 words).

Student Involvement. Describe the ways in which students (undergraduate and/or graduate) will be involved in this project, if applicable. If students are involved, describe whether they will be paid for their time or not and how involvement in the project will benefit their education. Up to 1200 characters (approximately 150 words).

Positionality. Describe potential differences in social position and power of the faculty involved as well as any other DU personnel relative to the community/community partners. Outline how you have and will continue to consider positionality throughout the project (approximately 150 words for each faculty/DU personnel). Positionality refers to how differences in social position and power shape identities and access in society. For example, the identities, institutional legacies, and experiences of scholars influence values and approaches to research/creative work, especially as it relates to collaborations with community partners (e.g., Duarte, 2017).

Prior Public Good Fund Awards. If you have received prior Public Good Fund awards, please describe how the proposed work differs from prior work. Up to 1200 characters (approximately 150 words).

¹ End dates are the date by which the final report is submitted to CCESL and all funds have been spent. Upon

receipt of the final report, unused funds will be returned to the Public Good Fund.

Part 3: BUDGET AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION. Using the template below to format your budget, include a justification for each budget item requested, including a calculation of how totals were derived. You can download a copy of an editable template [here](#). **If justification for an item is not specific the item will be deducted from the budget.** Save your budget and justification as a single document and upload into the [online application](#). Review the RFP section on “Use of Funds” for fundable and non-fundable expenses.

BUDGET TEMPLATE (downloadable version [here](#))

	DATES OF WORK (for salary/compensation requests) & JUSTIFICATION	AMOUNT REQUESTED	OTHER SUPPORT*	TOTAL BUDGET
DU SALARIES				
Student: Please refer to Student Employment's Pay Rates & Position Classifications when setting an hourly rate for student employees. Must be registered as a student for quarters working (use non-appointed for non-registered students).	<i>If students are being paid to assist with the project, please describe the expected outcomes of their work.</i>			
Faculty (Summer only)	<i>Please describe the roles and responsibilities of faculty members on the proposal and if compensation is sought, how the work goes above and beyond current DU responsibilities. If some, but not all, faculty members are being compensated for their time on the project, please explain why.</i>			
Non-appointed/Staff	<i>Describe the role of each staff member included as well as how the proposed work goes above and beyond current DU responsibilities.</i>			
DU FRINGE: Fringe must be included for any salary paid to DU employees.				
Student Fringe (typically 1.7%, use University rates available here)				
Faculty (use summer, non-benefitted University rates, which are typically 8.0%, available here)				
Non-appointed/Staff (typically 8%, use University rates available here)				
Total DU Personnel (Salaries + Fringe)				
MATERIALS & SUPPLIES				
Program materials (e.g., copying, printing, costs related to materials for dissemination of project findings)				
Equipment: If requesting computers, make clear in budget justification why needed; these funds are not intended to be used to upgrade				

computers or relieve typical computer refresh costs.		
Supplies		
Total Materials & Supplies		
TRAVEL for DU Personnel: Travel expenses in excess of 20% of total budget will generally not be considered unless there are extraordinary circumstances explained in the budget justification. Faculty travel/attendance at academic conferences is not allowable.		
Mileage		
Other Travel (airfare, hotel, meals, transportation)		
Total Travel		
COMMUNITY		
Community partner compensation	Please describe community collaborators' roles, and whether they are being compensated. If they are not compensated, please explain why compensation is not necessary. For example, community collaborator activities that fall under their current job/compensation structure would not be included for additional compensation.	
Project participant compensation (e.g., research incentives)		
Travel: This can include community partner travel, though expenses in excess of 20% of total budget will generally not be considered unless there are extraordinary circumstances explained in the budget justification.		
Other		
OTHER (please specify below)		
GRAND TOTAL		

*List any additional funding support, such as from your academic unit or other grants, for this effort (e.g., administrative support, graduate research assistant, partial departmental funding, reduction in other assignments, etc.)

Part 4: FACULTY PI CVs.

Save two-page CVs for each faculty PI as a single document and upload them to the [online application](#).

Part 5: APPENDIX (optional).

You may include instruments, curricula, and other examples of project materials in an Appendix (**do not** use the Appendix for extra space in describing methods/procedure). Upload appendices to the [online application](#).