Request for Proposals:

Graduate Student & Faculty Professional Development Mini-Grant Program

The Graduate School is excited to announce the annual **Graduate Student & Faculty Professional Development Mini-Grant Program.** To complement the professional development opportunities offered by the Graduate School's Graduate and Postdoctoral Success center, we are providing funding for student and faculty-led professional development projects. This program is designed to encourage teams of graduate students and faculty to develop innovative approaches to professional development activities that will impact multiple graduate students – whether an entire program or cohort within a program.

Goal: Many graduate students are interested in career pathways beyond traditional academic positions. Careers in the private sector, in government and non-profit organizations, and in primarily undergraduate institutions require transferable skills that are not emphasized in traditional academic training. The Graduate School provides multiple professional development opportunities university-wide for our students such as support for travel, training in giving presentations, writing assistance, and hosting speakers with experience in a variety of careers (see past and upcoming events here: https://graduateschool.utsa.edu/gps/). To encourage new approaches to professional development that may be discipline or career-specific, we are requesting proposals for pilot projects aimed at supporting the professional development of graduate students.

Requirements: Proposals must be submitted jointly by teams including at least one UTSA faculty member and at least one graduate student who will be enrolled at UTSA for the duration of the project. Examples of potential projects could include:

- Activities designed to encourage exploration of careers outside of academia for multiple students (e.g., field trips)
- Workshops for groups of students to provide training in specific, transferable skills
- Development of additional micro-credentials (see currently available badges here: https://www.credly.com/organizations/university-of-texas-at-san-antonio/badges)
- Assessment of program alumni in non-academic careers to determine most valuable skills

Funding: We anticipate making competitive awards to up to 10 proposals, depending on funding requested. We expect most projects to be funded for $2,500 to $5,000. The maximum funding available for any one project is $10,000. Funds for all project-related costs will be paid from the Graduate School's cost center. Please note that funds **cannot** be used for faculty or student stipends.

SUBMISSION DETAILS AND TIMELINE

Team formation: Teams must consist of at least one UTSA faculty member and one UTSA graduate student. Faculty and students do not need to be from the same program or college. Teams may also include postdoctoral trainees and/or staff but must include at least one faculty member and one graduate student.

Eligibility: Faculty must be full-time tenured/tenure-track or FTT at UTSA. Graduate students must be enrolled at the time of the proposal and expect to remain enrolled for the duration of the project. Applicants may not participate in more than one proposal to this program.

Proposals due: June 3, 2024. See required deliverables below.

Awards Announced: July 15, 2024

Project Implementation Dates: August 15, 2024 – August 1, 2025. Projects are not expected to take a full year for implementation but may be carried out at any point within this time frame.

Final Report due: December 1, 2025. See deliverables below.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Proposals should be submitted on June 3, 2024 by 5pm to Graduate.VPDean@utsa.edu. All proposal elements should be included in a single, text-searchable Adobe Acrobat pdf file.

The proposal must include the following, in 12-point Times New Roman font and one-inch margins in the order listed below:

1. Cover Page (see example below)
    a. Proposal title
    b. All team members listed, including full name, department, program, and email address
    c. 250-word abstract that summarizes the essential content of the proposed project, including objectives, benefits, and significance

2. Project Description – 3-page maximum, single spaced
    a. Rationale for the project
        i. How many students will be impacted and what are their program(s)
        ii. How will it support graduate students' professional development
    b. Detailed description of the project
        i. What will be done and by who?
        ii. How will other students participate?
        iii. What is the time period for the project?
    c. Evaluation of impact and potential to expand to a larger audience

3. Budget with justification – 1-page maximum summarizing all expected costs for the project. Note that stipends for faculty and/or students are not allowable costs.

4. Key references – 1-page maximum

If any items requested above are not included at the time of submission, the proposal will be deemed non-compliant and will not be reviewed. Appendices may be included; however, reviewers are not obligated to read this supplemental material. If two or more appendices are included in a proposal, they should be designated Appendix A, Appendix B, etc. A violation of this format will disqualify the proposal from review.

MINI-GRANT REVIEW

Applications will be reviewed by a Review Committee established by the Graduate School. Committee members will be from a variety of academic backgrounds.

As such, *proposals should be clearly written in a way that the goals, rationale and methods of the proposed project can be understood by all reviewers.* Avoid field specific terminology as much as possible.

Proposals will be evaluated on a 100-point scale. The team is expected to include all required proposal components and to fully and clearly address each criterion.

Proposals will be evaluated using the following criteria:	
Are the goals, objectives, and anticipated results stated clearly and aligned with the professional development goals of this opportunity? Is this project clearly led by graduate students with faculty in a supporting role? Is the project expected to have an impact on an entire program or cohort of students in a program?	**25**
Is the significance and merit of the project clearly documented?	**25**
Are the methods outlined likely to have the expected effect?	**25**
Is the project clearly taking a novel approach to providing professional development opportunities or providing exposure to career paths beyond academia?	**15**
Number of graduate students impacted by proposed project relative to cost	**10**

For more information on this opportunity, please contact Rebecca Weston at Rebecca.Weston@utsa.edu.

EXAMPLE COVER PAGE

PROJECT TITLE

Team Member 1 Name
abc123, email@utsa.edu
Department and Program

Team Member 2 Name
abc123, email@utsa.edu
Department and Program

Team Member 3 Name (if applicable)
abc123, email@utsa.edu
Department and Program

Team Member 4 Name (if applicable)
abc123, email@utsa.edu
Department and Program

Abstract

Abstracts should be a maximum of 250 words and serve as a succinct summary of the proposed project. Appendices may be included; however, reviewers are not obligated to read this supplemental material. If two or more appendices are included in a proposal, they should be designated Appendix A, Appendix B, etc. A violation of this format will disqualify the proposal from review. Graduate and Postdoctoral Success (GPS) is here to help master's students, doctoral students and postdoctoral associates successfully navigate their career. We seek to enhance training opportunities for early career scholars and researchers that prepare them for a variety of career options in a dynamic workforce. Through innovative and quality educational offerings, we aim to increase the confidence and motivation of trainees to identify and pursue their career goals, and to reduce training time to more efficiently direct their efforts. Importantly GPS programming is structured to allow for a high degree of flexibility, ensuring that trainees can meet their own self-defined learning needs within career exploration, professional development and academic scholarship.