



Central Next Generation Student Success, Innovation, and Community Engagement

Request for Proposals for 2026-2027

In the 2022-2023 academic year, Central Connecticut State University established the **Next Generation Student Success, Innovation, and Community Engagement Grant Program** to support new initiatives that focus on educating career-ready graduates who are well-informed, civic-minded citizens prepared to contribute to the needs of our society. Over the last four years, the grant has provided over \$870,000 in funding to 42 programs that advance student success, innovation and community engagement as we strive to become an agile institution of higher education, able to adapt to changing trends and emerging opportunities.

This program is overseen and administered by the Advisory Board, and the Office of Grants and Funded Research, in consultation with the Faculty Senate. The program encourages faculty and staff to develop and implement innovative, pedagogical, and sustainable projects. These applied learning projects will enrich the faculty and staff connection with students, industry, the communities we serve, and the University as a whole. Projects must address one or more of the following areas. **In addition, this year we are focusing on two projects –Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Interdisciplinary Projects– which will be evaluated based on Competitive Priorities.**

Academic

Excellence

Innovation

Community Engagement

Preparing Graduates to Thrive in a Changing Economy

Access to Higher Education

Ensuring Student Success

Fostering an Inclusive and Safe Campus Culture

Encouraging all to participate in a Free and Respectful Exchange of Ideas

Advancing Scholarship, Service Learning and Community Development for the Public Good

Assuring Sustainability for the Future

Competitive Priorities

For the 2026-2027 Year, extra scoring points will be granted for proposals that focus on either *Artificial Intelligence (AI)* or *Interdisciplinary Projects*, particularly those exploring AI in pedagogy and strategies for keeping higher education relevant, impactful, and innovative. These priorities reflect Central's commitment to preparing students for success in an increasingly AI-driven workforce, where integrating knowledge and skills across disciplines is essential for addressing complex, real-world challenges.

Artificial Intelligence – Academic Integration; Collaboration and Partnerships; Operational Efficiency/Administrative Automation; Academic Integration focused on Pedagogy; Infrastructure and Resources

Interdisciplinary Projects - Projects that demonstrate intentional and meaningful collaboration across the University, departments, and/or academic programs. Proposals should reflect genuine partnership, with clear evidence of full and equitable participation from all collaborators. Successful projects will either launch innovative new initiatives or significantly enhance existing programs on campus.

Specifications/Eligibility

Academic departments, other collections of full-time faculty and staff, and/or individual full-time faculty and staff members are invited to apply for funding to implement a project that incorporates student success, innovation, and/or community engagement. Each grant will be considered for **one year**, but applicants who are proposing a multi-year project, up to three years, will need to outline the plans (including sustainability) and projected budget for subsequent years. Subsequent year, projected budgets may be amended based on prior year experience. Applicants will need to report on outcomes and reapply annually. On average, up to \$30,000 per year will be awarded to support development and/or implementation of the project; however, consideration will be given to initiatives in need of additional funding.

If you are suggesting a multi-year project, you will be required to submit a new application each year; in addition, a progress report will be required at the end of the first year before funding can be released for the continuation of the initiative. *In addition, if you are requesting a renewal of a previous grant, you must detail how this renewal will lead to sustainability beyond the terms of the grant.*

Important Dates

Wednesday, September 10, 2025, 4:00-5:00 p.m., Davidson 107: A Pre-proposal forum will be held for faculty and staff members interested in submitting a proposal. Recipients are encouraged to develop cohorts and participate with others working on similar goals in an early planning workshop, a mid-program workshop, and an end of the year symposium. Awardees submit written reports summarizing the learning outcomes of their specific initiative and will present their findings at the end of year symposium. Location to be determined.

Friday, December 19, 2025, by 12:00 p.m. (noon): Letters of Intent (LOI) are due and should describe, in no more than 500 words, a description of the project and how the initiative is expected to impact student success, innovation, and/or community engagement. In addition, if you are addressing one or both of the Competitive Priorities, please indicate that here.

Letters of Intent should be electronically sent as a single PDF document by **12:00 p.m. (noon) on Friday, December 19, 2025** to the Grants Office (CCSUgrants@ccsu.edu). *No late letters of intent will be accepted.*

Friday, March 6, 2026: Proposals are due. Applications should be electronically sent as a single PDF document by **12:00 p.m. (noon) on Friday, March 6, 2026**, to the Grants Office (CCSUgrants@ccsu.edu). *No late proposals will be accepted.*

Proposal Submission Guidelines

In order to be considered, please make your proposal consistent with the guidelines below.

Proposals: Proposals should be in the form of a single PDF document including:

- Cover sheet (Please use the fillable form for this RFP found attached))
- Narrative
- Budget form (Please use the fillable form for this RFP found attached)
- Supporting documentation (if any)

Cover Sheet: The cover sheet will include the date of submission, descriptive title of proposal, and the name(s) and department(s) of applicant(s).

Narrative: The narrative shall be **no more than six single-spaced pages** and include the following:

- **Description** of proposed project, including how it addresses the purpose of the initiative as described above, and a timeline demonstrating completion of project. This will include any Competitive Priorities you are addressing.
- **Goals** of the proposed project clearly stated.
- **Significance** of project to students, department(s), the university, the community, or other relevant entities, including how the project addresses Student Success, Innovation, and/or Community Engagement and which areas will be impacted.
- **Methodology** of proposed activity, tasks to be completed, and a timeline of anticipated completion of significant tasks and timelines.
- **Outcomes Measurement** in no more than 300 words describing how the success of the initiative will be evaluated, including the process(es) that will be applied to identify baseline measures for success as well as project outcomes.
- **Explanation of Initiative's Sustainability** beyond the initial funding period, as well as any plans to seek external funding.

Budget: A clear and complete budget itemizing expenses, justifying each item, and documenting each item's cost when possible. (Please include projected budgets for additional years if multi-year project).

Eligible Expenses:

- Faculty Stipend of \$1,200.00 maximum, payable in 2 installments (December 2026 and June 2027) dependent on receipt of a brief progress report. **NOTE: If the activity takes place within a class where the faculty member is receiving load credit, no stipend will be considered.**
- Student Workers (students are paid an hourly wage).
- Travel
- Materials and supplies
- Consultants

Ineligible Expenses:

- Contractual arrangements with an outside agency, whether a business, or a Community Partner. We cannot pay an outside organization, but can pay individual consultants.
- Release time. If desired, please apply for reassigned time through your Dean's office

Supporting Documentation: Proposals should be accompanied by any supporting documentation necessary for consideration of the project. (I.e. screenshots of expenses, travel documentation, letters of support.)

Applicants are encouraged to address all of the required elements above, as they will be the basis of the rubric upon which applications are scored.

Scoring and Selection Process

Applicants will be scored based on their adherence to the above proposal requirements, as well as their ability to address the elements of Student Success, Innovation and/or Community Engagement. The sustainability of the proposed programs, as well as the potential for external funding will also be considered as part of the proposal evaluation process. Please refer to the attached Scoring Rubric.

Proposals will be reviewed by the Advisory Board. Members of the Advisory Board who are connected to any of the proposed projects will recuse themselves from the review and recommendation process. The Advisory Board will forward its recommendations regarding awards to The President who will consult with the Provost and Deans prior to making final decisions. Final decisions will be made by the end of the Spring semester.

Full Project Timeline

REQUIREMENT	DEADLINE
Pre-Proposal Forum	Wednesday, September 10, 2025, 4:00-5:00 p.m. Davidson Hall, Room 107
Letter of Intent Submission Deadline	Friday, December 19, 2025
Final Proposal Deadline	Friday, March 6, 2026
End Of Year Symposium for 2025-2026 Grantees	Friday, April 24, 2026, 9:00-11:00 a.m. Barnard Community Rooms 101-102
REQUIREMENTS LOOKING AHEAD FOR 2026-2027 GRANTEES	
Early Planning Workshop	Wednesday, September 16, 2026, 3:00-4:00 p.m. Philbrick Meeting Room, Student Center
Mid-Program Workshop	Wednesday, January 27, 2027, 4:00-5:00 p.m. Davidson Hall, Room 107
End Of Year Symposium for 2026-2027 Grantees	Friday, April 23, 2027, 9:00-11:00 a.m. Barnard Community Rooms 101-102

**2026-2027 Next Generation Student Success, Innovation
and Community Engagement
PROPOSAL COVER SHEET**

SUBMISSION DATE	
Primary Faculty Applicant	Name: ID #: Email Address: Department:
TITLE OF PROPOSAL	
Faculty Co-Applciant(s)	Name: ID #: Email Address: Department:
Faculty Co-Applciant(s)	Name: ID #: Email Address: Department:

Applicant's Signature _____

Dean or Supervisor's Signature _____

AMOUNT REQUESTED:

\$	
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NEXT GEN GRANT BUDGET TEMPLATE

Budget Item	Amount	Justification Briefly describe proposed expenditures, their adequacy, appropriateness and importance.
TRAVEL		
Transportation Fee Lodging Fee		
Per Diem		
Student Workers		Please indicate if student(s) is currently employed by the state of CT.
Stipend		
Materials and Supplies		
Consultants/Contractual		
Other (Please Describe):		
Total Request		

If you are proposing a multi-year project, please fill in this chart.

Year 1 Budget	Year 2 Budget	Year 3 Budget

CCSU Next Generation Student Success, Innovation, and Community Engagement – SCORING RUBRIC

CRITERION	5 STRONG	3 SATISFACTORY	1 DEVELOPING	COMMENTS
ORIGINALITY AND PURPOSE	The project proposes implementation of a new idea and the potential benefits of change are clearly stated.	The project proposes implementation of an emerging innovation or trend with potential benefits clearly stated, OR the project represents implementation of a new idea but benefits are not clear.	The project proposes implementation of an idea that is based on commonplace practices with well- established benefits.	
SIGNIFICANCE	The applicants clearly explain how the proposed projects will advance faculty connection with students, industry, the communities we serve, and the university as a whole.	The applicants explain how the proposed projects will advance faculty connection with students, industry, the communities we serve, and the university as a whole but the explanation lacks clarity or specificity.	The applicants fail to explain how the proposed projects will advance faculty connection with students, industry, the communities we serve, and the university as a whole.	
LINK TO STUDENT SUCCESS, INNOVATION, OR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	The applicants clearly explain how the project outcomes address more than one of the following: Student success, innovation, and community engagement.	The applicants clearly explain how the project outcomes address one of the following: Student success, innovation, and community engagement.	The applicants fail to explain how the project outcomes address student success, innovation, or community engagement.	
RELATIONSHIP TO MISSION, VISION, AND GOALS	The project outcomes align with more than one of the goals and the proposal clearly addresses the impact on student success, innovation and/or community engagement.	The project outcomes align with one of the goals and the proposal clearly addresses the impact on student success, innovation and/or community engagement, OR the outcomes align with more than one of the goals but the impact is not clearly stated.	Project does not align with the goals or the impact is not clearly stated.	
METHODOLOGY	The applicants provide a clear and detailed description of the proposed project and plan of action.	The applicants provide a description of the proposed project and plan of action that is unclear or lacks appropriate details.	The applicants fail to provide a clear and detailed description of the proposed project and plan of action.	

OUTCOMES	The anticipated outcomes are reasonable, well-defined, and clearly outlined.	The anticipated outcomes are reasonable and well-defined but need further clarification.	The anticipated outcomes are unreasonable or not well-defined.	
FEASIBILITY AND TIMELINE	Project plan of action and resource needs align with project description and outcomes, are feasible, and are likely to result in accomplishment of objectives within the grant period.	Project plan of action and resource needs align with project description and outcomes, but are not feasible or not likely to result in accomplishment of objectives within the grant period.	Project plan of action and resource needs do not align with project description.	
IMPACT	The anticipated outcomes will provide meaningful and substantive development of one or more of the grant specification initiatives.	The anticipated outcomes will provide moderate development of one or more of the grant specification initiatives.	The anticipated outcomes will not provide meaningful and substantive development of one of the grant specification initiatives.	
OUTCOMES MEASUREMENT	Applicants provide a clear picture of how data will be collected and used to demonstrate achievement of proposed outcomes, including the process(es) that will be applied to identify baseline measures.	Applicants provide a picture of how data will be collected and used to demonstrate achievement of proposed outcomes, but the description lacks clarity.	Applicants do not describe how data will be collected and used to demonstrate achievement of proposed outcomes.	
EFFICIENCY AND SUSTAINABILITY	Project leverages or contributes to existing infrastructure or precedents AND design appears scalable or replicable.	Project leverages or contributes to existing infrastructure or precedents OR design appears scalable or replicable.	Project does not leverage or contribute to existing infrastructure or precedents and design does not appear to be scalable or replicable.	
BUDGET	The requested resources and budget are clearly stated, realistic, justifiable, fiscally responsible, and relevant to the proposed activities.	The requested resources and budget are clearly stated, but may be unrealistic or irrelevant.	The requested resources and budget are unclear, unrealistic, or irrelevant to the proposed activities.	
TOTAL SCORE				

COMPETITIVE PRIORITY	YES/NO
RECOMMEND FUNDING?	
ADDITIONAL COMMENTS	