

## CALL FOR PROPOSALS

### VILLANOVA INSTITUTE FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING (VITAL) MINIGRANTS FOR 2026 – 2027

**SUBMISSION DEADLINE – FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 13 BY 5:00 P.M.**



VILLANOVA INSTITUTE FOR  
TEACHING AND LEARNING

#### PURPOSE OF GRANT PROGRAM

*The Villanova Institute for Teaching and Learning (VITAL) is pleased to announce the continuation of its internal Minigrant program. The purpose of these instructional grants is to support full-time Villanova faculty members in advancing undergraduate and graduate teaching and learning at Villanova, implementing the [University](#) and College learning goals, and exploring the use of new instructional approaches.*

#### WHAT TYPES OF PROJECTS ARE FUNDED?

The main goal of the grants is to support the **integration of new teaching and learning approaches in existing courses**. As faculty members differ in their pedagogical practices, VITAL invites proposals that reflect instructional strategies that are **new to the faculty member(s) or to the department/academic program and that attend to student learning challenge(s) and needs and/or address curricular change(s)**. The proposal does not have to include the development of “cutting edge” instructional innovations, although these are also encouraged. **Evidence of the sustainability** of proposed projects is a central condition for potential funding; that is, continued course offering and student enrollment. Projects that pertain to suggested educational areas are of special interest.

*To support submission of strong projects, interested faculty members are highly encouraged to contact Dr. Gabriele Bauer, Sr. Director, VITAL, e-mail [gabriele.bauer@villanova.edu](mailto:gabriele.bauer@villanova.edu) with proposal ideas **before submitting a full proposal**.*

**Note. Forty percent of the funds available for 2026-2027 instructional grant projects will be dedicated to enriching graduate courses and/or graduate programs.**

#### WHAT ABOUT THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW COURSES?

Proposals for new course development **per se are not supported** by VITAL Minigrants. If the course proposal includes **new teaching and learning approaches along with new content**, however, the project will be considered for funding. **Evidence of the sustainability** of new courses constitutes a critical condition for funding considerations; that is, significance/relevance of the new course, continued course offering and expected student enrollment.

#### WHAT IS THE PROBABILITY OF BEING AWARDED A MINIGRANT?

In the past five years, approximately 80% of the Minigrant proposals submitted were funded. In general, non-funded proposals failed to carefully adhere to the guidelines and criteria outlined in the Call for Proposals. Please refer to the [Grant Proposal Peer Review Form](#) for a listing of criteria that guide the peer review process. You may review successful past proposal submissions in the VITAL office, 106 Vasey Hall, by appointment.

#### HOW MUCH ARE THE GRANTS WORTH?

The VITAL Minigrant program offers grants of up to **\$6,900** per individual (maximum summer support **\$6,900** per individual) or up to **\$9,000** for teams of faculty. **Requests for summer funding need to explain** how the project represents efforts **above and beyond** typical instruction-related activities expected of a faculty member. Total funding requested in non-stipend budget categories **cannot exceed \$2,000** for the project.

**Note.** Please refer to “Proposal Guidelines” on page 4 for details.

## HOW MUCH ARE THE GRANTS WORTH? cont.

In your budget request, please ensure that the funding requested is **appropriate** to the nature and scope of the instructional project. Indicate why each requested budget item is **essential** to the project. Not all grants are funded for the amount requested.

## SUGGESTED EDUCATIONAL AREAS FOR VITAL MINIGRANT FUNDING

Of interest are proposals that address the educational areas outlined below. Compelling and relevant proposals that fall outside these areas are invited.

- **Enrichment of Graduate Students' Learning Experiences** across all delivery modes (in-person, blended, and online courses.) For example, cross-disciplinary model for career preparation, mentoring program, research seminar that integrates digital scholarship methods and tools.
- **Engaged Student Learning**, including approaches such as project-based learning, service-learning, and flipped learning, especially in (but not limited to) the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) disciplines. Revision and/or enrichment of discussion-based, case-based, presentation-based, performance-based, and writing-intensive courses, especially in (but not limited to) the arts, humanities, and social sciences.
- **Inclusive Learning Environments/Social Justice/Multicultural/International Curricula** – Integration of teaching approaches that support inclusive learning environments and neurodivergent learners. Learning activities that are designed to bring multicultural and/or international perspectives into existing course and/or program curriculum. Projects that extend inclusive and social justice initiatives at the department/academic program level.
- **Intentional Use of Technologies in Support of Engaged Learning Across all Modalities** – Teaching with technology/social media/Office 365 tools, permeates in-person, blended, and online course offerings. What aspects of student learning in your course/program might be supported via the intentional integration of technology? For example, assignments with multimedia focus, or instructional video development with embedded assessment. Please [consult with Dr. Stefan Perun](#), Associate Director for Digital Learning Pedagogies, VITAL.
- **Digital Scholarship** extends traditional methods of research by leveraging technologies (such as visualization, GIS mapping, text, and data mining) to advance research, collaboration, teaching, and learning across disciplines. How might students' research experience benefit from integrating digital scholarship methods and tools? Priority will be given to proposals that foreground collaborations with colleagues at Falvey Memorial Library. Please [consult with Erica Hayes](#), Digital Scholarship Librarian or visit the [Digital Scholarship Lab](#).
- **Open Educational Resources (OER)** – Expensive textbooks present students with challenges and difficult choices. OER provides free to use, accessible, and openly licensed digital or print materials to students. How might your course be enhanced by finding OER materials to use or adopting existing OER materials? Please consult with your Subject Librarian; [Find your Subject Librarian](#)
- **New Instructional Approaches that Advance Villanova's Mission** to promote interfaith dialog, integrate moral and ethical values or the impact of various religious faiths on society, public policy, and/or the human condition, especially but not limited to those inherent in Villanova's Catholic Augustinian heritage.

## WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

Full-time tenured, tenure-track, and continuing non-tenure track faculty are eligible. Faculty who hold secondary administrative appointments making them full time are also eligible. Tenure-track and continuing non-tenure track faculty who are in their first year at Villanova are encouraged to co-apply with a senior colleague(s). **First year faculty** who will receive **summer research funding** are encouraged to consult with

## WHO IS ELIGIBLE? cont.

their department chair/program director prior to application and discuss in their proposal how they will dedicate time to both summer projects, if funded.

Full-time professional staff that, per their appointment, hold core teaching responsibilities in the department/academic program, visiting faculty, and postdoctoral teaching fellows may be co-applicants, if there is a primary and/or co-applicant with full eligibility. Full-time faculty who have a **sabbatical** during the 2026-2027 academic year are **not eligible** to apply.

An individual may only apply for one Minigrant each year. Minigrant recipients are not eligible to apply for two consecutive years following the award. Individuals who apply for subsequent grants must have fulfilled the conditions of their previous VITAL Minigrant(s) and must have demonstrated the success of those projects.

**Note.** Grant applications will **not be considered for funding** if the applicant has received a 2026 University summer grant from the Office of the Provost. Funds dedicated from the Office of the Provost support summer funding from only one Villanova source. Applicants to other University or College-sponsored grant programs, or outside funding sources need to indicate such applications on the Cover Page. **By accepting the VITAL minigrant, recipients agree to forego other summer funding in support of full engagement.**

**Exception to funding restrictions:** Applicants who continue to receive external summer funding that was awarded in year(s) prior to the current minigrant cycle.

## HOW MAY GRANT FUNDS BE USED?

Grant funds may be used for faculty summer stipend (9-month faculty), honoraria (12-month faculty), project-related travel expenses of applicant(s) **except** meals and accommodations, registration for virtual and/or in-person participation in professional instructional development program, external guest speakers' or consultants' fees; graduate and/or undergraduate student support (research and/or technical), and limited equipment and supply expenses or other resources needed to complete, implement, and evaluate the VITAL Minigrant project.

**Note.** Please refer to "Administrative Policies," page 6, item #4.

## WHOM MAY I CONSULT BEFORE I SUBMIT A FULL PROPOSAL?

*To support submission of strong projects, interested faculty members are highly encouraged to contact Dr. Gabriele Bauer, Sr. Director, VITAL, e-mail [gabriele.bauer@villanova.edu](mailto:gabriele.bauer@villanova.edu) with proposal ideas **before submitting a full proposal**. Please refer to the listing of suggested educational areas, and carefully review the grant application process. Please do **not** send grant inquiries to VITAL's e-mail account.*

*We strongly recommend that applicants **consult past grant recipients** (AY 2025-2026 and [AY 2020-2025](#)) and/or a member of the [Faculty Review Committee](#) while developing their proposals.*

## APPLICATION PROCESS

Applicants for a VITAL Minigrant should submit the completed proposal **with appropriate signatures as a single PDF file** via e-mail to the VITAL office at [vitalinfo@villanova.edu](mailto:vitalinfo@villanova.edu) by February 13. Signatures of both applicant(s) and department chair/academic program director are required. Please note "VITAL Minigrants for 2026-2027" in the subject line. You will receive an electronic confirmation of receipt of your proposal.

Following the proposal submission, the Office of the Dean and the department/academic program will read the proposal and submit their letters of support directly to the VITAL office at [vitalinfo@villanova.edu](mailto:vitalinfo@villanova.edu).

Application deadline: **Friday, FEBRUARY 13 by 5:00 P.M.** Applications received after this time will not be considered for funding. Announcement of Award: Early April 2026.

## PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

The proposal must include all three sections in the order outlined below: (1) Cover Page, (2) Narrative, and (3) Budget Request. The applicant should prepare a **concise five (5) page maximum proposal (double-spaced pages in 12 pt. font)** along with the Cover Page and Budget Request. The entire proposal (excluding Cover Page, Budget Request, and References) should **not exceed five (5) pages**. Proposals that do not comply with the page limit guidelines will be returned without review. Please write the proposal according to the **order of items** outlined below, using the numbering provided:

### 1. COVER PAGE *(template provided at the end of the Call for Proposals)*

The cover page is the first page of the proposal application and should include a concise description of the project, including its desired impact on students' learning (i.e., how will the students' learning experience be enhanced as a result of the project), limited to **75 words**.

**All required signatures need to be provided, including acknowledgement of section IX.**

### 2. NARRATIVE *(does not include the cover page and budget request)*

Please limit to **five (5) numbered double-spaced pages in 12 pt. font**, place following the cover page. The narrative should include the following:

#### 2.1. Rationale *(1-2 pages)*:

- 3.1.1 Clearly state the teaching-learning issue or students' learning needs/challenge(s) that the proposal addresses.
- 3.1.2 Describe how the proposed approach is expected to address the issue and how the students' learning experience will be enhanced.
- 3.1.3 Explain **why** and **how** this project is important to your students' learning **and** to your instructional professional development as a faculty member. **Please give specific example(s) when addressing this item.** Support your proposal by incorporating and referencing the research-supported literature on learning, teaching, and assessment.

#### 2.2. Alignment with Educational Goals of Department and/or College *(1 paragraph)*:

Describe the ways in which the proposed project is expected to address departmental and/or College educational goals. Please refer to goal(s) **most relevant** to your proposal.

#### 2.3. Learning Goals, Instructional Activities, and Assessment of Students' Learning *(2-3 pages)*:

State specifically what the instructional project is intended to accomplish. This section should entail an outline of desired learning goals, instructional activities and assessments in support of these learning goals. Please consider the following questions:

- *Learning Goals:* What content knowledge, skills, competencies, and/or values will students be expected to be able to demonstrate as a result of their participation in this project?
- *Instructional Activities:* What teaching approaches will be most conducive to students' achieving the learning goals? How will the instructional activities support student achievement of the desired learning goals?
- *Assessment:* How will you know to what extent students achieved the intended learning goals? What assessments are most appropriate given the intended learning goals? How well do the proposed assessments support the learning goals? What evidence and analyses do you expect to provide?

Please give **examples** of the types of assignments and other measures that you might use to assess the changes and/or improvements in students' learning that you expect to result from the proposed project. **This is an important part of your proposal; please provide detailed information.** This information should include a description of how you intend to measure students' knowledge, skills, or competencies at the beginning of the project so that you can evaluate the effectiveness of the project activities at the end.

## PROPOSAL GUIDELINES cont.

- 2.4. **Time Schedule** (1-2 paragraphs, including table of proposed activities and estimated hours/week): Explain how the project represents efforts above and beyond typical instruction-related activities expected of faculty members. Outline the stages of the instructional project and its expected beginning and ending dates in the summer. Please include an **approximation of the number of hours/week** that will be spent on the project, along with a **description of the specific project-related activities** that will be conducted during that time. For projects involving multiple faculty members, list each faculty's contributions and estimated hours/week.

Please present the time schedule in table format. Please make sure the total time allocation for the project aligns with the amount requested for faculty summer funding. State the semester in which the project is expected to be offered for the first time.

**Note.** This section is critical for founding consideration. Refer to "Proposal Guidelines," page 5, item #3.1 for details.

### 3. BUDGET REQUEST (template provided at the end of the Call for Proposals)

Please provide a complete listing of all resources and financial support needed given the scope of the project, along with a **rationale** for the budget items requested. Indicate **why each requested budget item is essential** to the project.

- 3.1. For faculty summer funding, the maximum amount that can be requested per project is **\$6,900**, which corresponds to a total project time commitment of 120–140 hours. Projects warranting fewer hours need to request funding proportional to the time committed. If multiple faculty members are involved, the maximum amount that can be requested per project is **\$9,000**, which corresponds to a total projected time commitment of 150–170 hours.

**Note.** Refer to "Proposal Guidelines," page 5, item #2.4 for details.

- 3.2. Total funding requested in the other budget categories cannot exceed **\$2,000** for the project.

- 3.3. Only budget items **essential** to the project should be included in the budget request.

Requested funding needs to be **relative** to the scope of the project. Funds may not be requested to purchase equipment, materials, or services already available on campus or that are expected to be provided by departments. For example, applicants should consult with colleagues at Falvey Library regarding instructional resources, books, OER materials.

### 4. LITERATURE CITED

Support your proposal by incorporating and referencing the research-supported literature on learning, teaching, and assessment pertinent to your project. References do not count toward the narrative.

## FOLLOWING PROPOSAL SUBMISSION:

The Office of the Dean and the department/academic program will be invited to read the proposal and submit their letters of support directly to VITAL at [vitalinfo@villanova.edu](mailto:vitalinfo@villanova.edu). When applications involve more than one college or department/academic program, the supporting letter of each department chair/academic program director and Dean is needed. For reference: [Link to Letter of Support Template](#) (PDF)

## CRITERIA FOR JUDGING THE MERITS OF EACH PROPOSAL

The proposal . . . .

1. includes all information requested and adheres to page limit. *Proposals that do not comply with the page limit guidelines will be returned without review.*
2. aligns strongly with the educational goals of the department and/or College.
3. offers clear rationale, i.e., explains what students' learning issue(s) the project addresses and describes how the project is expected to lead to a change and/or enhancement in students' learning.
4. outlines well-defined goals for students' learning.
5. describes instructional activities that support the desired learning goals.
6. presents assessments of students' learning that support the desired learning goals.
7. outlines proposed time schedule for grant work during the summer, including estimated hours/week along with description of specific project-related activities.
8. provides evidence of sustainability of the project, i.e., continued course offering and student enrollment.
9. describes how the scope of the project represents an effort **above and beyond** the typical instruction-related activities expected of a faculty member.
10. explains why the faculty summer stipend requested is appropriate to the scope of the project, provides a rationale for all requested budget items, and states the total number of hours and weeks spent on the project.

## METHOD OF SELECTION

The VITAL Minigrant Peer Review Committee will use the preceding criteria ([Grant Proposal Peer Review Form](#)) to evaluate all proposals submitted and make funding recommendations. The committee, chaired by the sr. director of VITAL, is composed of faculty members from each college and includes past Minigrant recipients. Final approval for funding will come from the Office of the Provost. Awards will be announced in early April and funding will begin in June 2026.

## ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES OF THE PROGRAM

1. Grants will be proposed and awarded during the 2026 spring semester for faculty grant work in the 2026 summer. Courses affected by the project must be offered during the 2026-2027 academic year, except under special circumstances.
2. Minigrant recipients are not eligible to apply for two consecutive years following the award. Individuals who apply for subsequent grants must have fulfilled the conditions of their previous VITAL Minigrant(s) and must have demonstrated the success of those projects.
3. Awards are made contingent upon the agreement of each recipient to fulfill the specific conditions noted in the award letter and to submit a final written report and evaluation of the project by July 1, in addition to any interim reports indicated in the award letter.
4. All expenditures related to the project must be handled according to University policies and procedures. In-person travel will be contingent on university policy at the time of travel.

Templates for **Cover Page** and **Budget Request** follow.



**COVER PAGE**
**Application for 2026 - 2027 Minigrant  
Villanova Institute for Teaching and Learning (VITAL)**


**I. Title of Project** \_\_\_\_\_

**II. Succinct Description of Project**, including desired impact on students' learning (*limited to 75 words*):

**III. Faculty Member(s) Submitting Proposal:**

Name (First, Last) \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Department/Academic Program \_\_\_\_\_

Name (First, Last) \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Department/Academic Program \_\_\_\_\_

**IV. Nature of Project: Please check as appropriate**

(a) Revision of Existing Course \_\_\_\_ (b) Development of New Course \_\_\_\_ (c) Other \_\_\_\_ Please explain

\_\_\_\_\_

**V. Course(s) Affiliated with Project:**

Course # \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_ # of Students Enrolled \_\_\_\_\_

Course # \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_ # of Students Enrolled \_\_\_\_\_

**VI. Semester/Year the Project Will Be Offered for First Time:** \_\_\_\_\_

**VII. Plan for Continuous Project Offering:** \_\_\_\_\_

**VIII. Application to other University/College Funded Summer Grant Program(s):** Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

**Application to External Grant Program** Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If Yes, please explain the nature of the grant funding: \_\_\_\_\_

**IX. I acknowledge that**, by accepting the VITAL Minigrant, I agree to forego any other summer funding to support full engagement.

Signature(s): \_\_\_\_\_

**X. Signatures of Faculty Applicant(s), Department Chair, and/or Academic Program Director:**

Faculty Member(s) Submitting Proposal

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Department Chair and/or Academic Program Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**BUDGET REQUEST**  
**2026-2027 MINIGRANT PROPOSAL**  
**Villanova Institute for Teaching and Learning (VITAL)**



Please list all budget items under the appropriate category; provide the estimated cost **and rationale** for all budget items. Requested budget items need to be **essential** and **relative** to the scope of the project. If rationale for funding is not provided, the requested budget item may not be funded. Maximum amount for project-related funding: \$2,000

Refer to "Proposal Guidelines," page 5, item #3 for budget details.

<b><u>Budget Categories and Rationale</u></b>	<b><u>\$ Funding Requested</u></b>
Summer Stipend – 9-month faculty <i>State approximate <b>total number of weeks and number of hours/week</b> spent on project</i> Rationale:	WEEKS A
Honoraria – 12-month faculty <i>State approximate <b>total number of weeks and number of hours/week</b> spent on project</i> Rationale:	
Project-Related Travel of Applicant(s) <i>Except meals and accommodations – indicate <b>relevance</b> of travel to project (2026-2027 AY)</i> Rationale:	
Participation in Conference and/or Professional Instructional Development Program (e.g., workshop/webinar) – <i>indicate <b>relevance</b> of event to project (2026-2027 AY)</i> Rationale:	
Consultant Fee (non-Villanova affiliated) – <i>Except meals and accommodations</i> Rationale:	
Honorarium for Guest Presenter (non-Villanova affiliated) - <i>Except meals and accommodations</i> Rationale:	
Student Labor - undergraduate and/or graduate student stipend (per department rate) Rationale:	
Supplies/Materials (not available at University) Rationale:	
Equipment/Software (not available at University) Rationale:	
Other - <i>Please explain</i>	
<b>TOTAL \$ FUNDING REQUESTED:</b>	