

Weitz Innovation and Excellence Fund Request for Applications (RFA)

Application Deadline:

PIs must submit fully completed applications for calendar year 2025 by September 1, 2024, 5 PM Central Time via the <https://nuramp.nebraska.edu> website.

Program Website and Application Directions:

[Academic Affairs Initiatives](#)
[Fund Announcement](#)

The Purpose: The Weitz Innovation and Excellence Fund seeks to inspire faculty and staff to develop and implement new ideas that will propel the University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO) from good to great. Potential projects are not exclusively for academic endeavors and all projects that enhance the university's strategic priorities are welcome. Partnerships across colleges and/or units are encouraged.

General Eligibility: Faculty and Staff employed by the University of Nebraska at Omaha campus are eligible to submit funding applications as Principal Investigators (PIs). PIs may apply for no more than one grant; there is no limit on their participation as Co-PIs.

Funding levels: Funding will be available at up to \$500,000, \$250,000, and \$100,000 levels. The intent is for funding to support an idea or project that could be spent over a number of years. For example, someone may request \$100,000 to spend \$50,000 of the funds over two years to fulfill the project. All awards are subject to funding availability and determinations of application suitability.

Timeline: A first round of funding will begin as outlined below:

May 1, 2024- NuRamp open for application submissions

September 1, 2024- applications due by 5PM

October 15, 2024- notification of funded applications

January 1, 2025- first round of funded projects begin

The Application: The application (**Project Narrative and Budget Sections below**) must be five-pages maximum (including all references, tables, figures, and Budget Section), in minimum font size of 11-point, and one-inch margins. Headings are encouraged for clarity and legibility. The application must be uploaded as a single PDF document in NuRamp and include the following sections:

Project Narrative Section:

- Project name and funding requested for the project.
- Faculty or staff members who will lead and play significant roles in developing and completing the project.
- Evidence of project alignment with a campus or university priority for at least one of the identified pillars of the UNO Core.
- Potential for the college or campus investment in this priority with a clear articulation on the Return on Investment (ROI) even if the project does not have a direct quantified outcome.
- Description of how this investment will enhance the reputation of the campus, college, and program.
- Timeline for development and implementation of the project.
- Benchmarks for measuring the project's development and success.
- Plans for the anticipated long-term sustainability of the project.
- Any partnerships with the community, state, or other universities. To foster collaboration across campus, any projects with identified partnerships across campus will be given preference.

Budget Section: A [budget template](#) and budget justification must be included in your application and uploaded in NuRamp as a part of the single PDF document. F&A costs are not allowable expenses.

Strategic Funding Priorities for the Calendar Year 2025 call for applications must align with at least one of the three pillars of the UNO Core:

- **Pillar 1 Educating All Learners**
- **Pillar 3 Community Engagement, Development, and Partnerships**
- **Pillar 4 Workforce and Economic Development**

The Process: Applications submitted via NuRamp require the signature of the unit's supervisor. Executive Leadership may submit an application for consideration and in this case, the application will not route for a supervisor signature. SVC He will lead a campus advisory committee to evaluate how well the application addresses the priorities, whether intercampus or interdisciplinary connections strengthen the application, the nature of the needs the application addresses, and the likelihood of success. The Chancellor will review the recommendations with the SVCAA and finalize awards and funding levels.

Advisory Committee:

1. Senior Vice Chancellor Academic Affairs-Committee Chair
2. Faculty member appointed by the Dean of the College of Arts and Science
3. Faculty member appointed by the Dean of the College of Business Administration
4. Faculty member appointed by the Dean of the College of Communication, Fine Arts and Media
5. Faculty member appointed by the Dean of the College of Public Affairs and Community Service
6. Faculty member appointed by the Dean of the College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences
7. Faculty member appointed by the Dean of the College of Information Science & Technology
8. Associate Vice Chancellor for Research and Creative Activity
9. Staff Advisory Council President
10. Student Body President and Regent
11. Vice Chancellor of Institutional Effectiveness and Student Success
12. Associate Vice Chancellor for Innovative and Learning-Centric Initiatives
13. Associate Vice Chancellor Dean of Students

General Criteria for Evaluation: Applications will first be screened to determine if all RFP guidelines have been met, including general eligibility and budget amounts. Reviewers will provide written comments and group applications into four categories (Exemplary: Definitely fund, Very Good: Strongly consider for funding, Needs Improvement: Fund only if resources allow, and Inadequate: Do not fund). Unfunded applications are encouraged to resubmit with revisions for a future funding cycle.

Post Award Management, Obligations, and Reporting Requirements: PIs will be required to submit a brief project initiation report three months after the award start date; while the grant remains active, programmatic progress and detailed financial reports will be due 30 days after each award anniversary. A final report will be due 90 days after the award's termination date. Satisfactory progress and adherence to award conditions will be required for access to current and future award funds from this fund. Reports will be shared with applicable campus offices and the NU Foundation.