

BTtoP Call for Proposals: Grants for Multi-Institutional Innovation Projects

Proposal deadline: Monday, February 4, 2019, 5:00 PM (EST)
Grant awards announced by March 15, 2019

For further information or questions, please contact BTtoP's Project Associate, Mercedes Yanora, at yanora@bttop.org

OVERVIEW

Bringing Theory to Practice (BTtoP) is pleased to announce a new funding opportunity for colleges, universities, and other higher education organizations. Grant awards **of up to \$7,000** will support multi-institutional collaborations that advance—through innovative practices, programs, policies, or research—the core educational purposes to which BTtoP is committed. These grants are relatively modest, but their aim is ambitious: to catalyze innovation projects that bring institutions together in sustained collaboration.

The mission of BTtoP weaves together three commitments. We believe that undergraduate education should be holistic and transformative, nurturing active and integrative learning, personal well-being, preparation for meaningful work, and democratic citizenship. We believe that “educating the whole student” must include *all* students, no matter their background, interests, or educational setting. And we believe that the first two commitments require the reshaping of higher education. BTtoP works to advance these ideals through innovative practice, research, advocacy, and institutional change.

We invite grant proposals grounded in these basic commitments: to the education of the whole student, to equity and inclusion, and to the imperative for creative innovation. And we invite proposals that advance these commitments through multi-institutional partnerships.

BTtoP is placing [a growing emphasis](#) on the role of inter-institutional and inter-sectoral collaboration in fostering creative innovation and systemic change in higher education. We have long supported campus projects as seedbeds of change; we continue to encourage them. But this call focuses on multi-institutional partnerships through which innovative practices, programs, policies, or research can be collectively developed, implemented, and disseminated.

POTENTIAL THEMES AND ACTIVITIES OF GRANT PROJECTS

Within this general mandate, we invite proposals with a wide range of potential themes, activities, and modes of institutional partnership. Successful projects may focus on any of the four intertwined core purposes to which BTtoP is committed:

1. Active and integrative learning
2. Student well-being
3. Civic engagement
4. Preparation for meaningful work

We especially welcome proposals that model the interdependence among these goals. Proposals may focus on the collaborative development of innovative practices among partnering campuses, on the co-creation of curricula and/or co-curricula, on research that tests and demonstrates the value of shared innovations, among other possibilities. Possible proposal initiatives, for instance, might include (but aren't limited to):

- a summer institute for faculty and staff at partnering institutions, which designs programs or courses linking academic inquiry with students' work aspirations
- an examination of and report on best practices for supporting the well-being of underserved students in institutions with diverse missions and student bodies
- the planning of a community education center by colleges and universities from different sectors within the same community
- the development of faculty-to-faculty partnerships that support transfer between two- and four-year institutions
- a training institute that prepares graduate students from research institutions for teaching and mentoring in non-research institutions
- the convening of faculty, staff, and students from diverse sectors to develop a shared, cohort-based student leadership program
- a research project that investigates the barriers to high-impact practices for adult, working students

These are examples, not prescriptions. We welcome and encourage your creative ideas and approaches.

TIME FRAME

Grant proposals are due via electronic submission to info@bttop.org by 5:00 pm (ET) on Monday, February 4, 2019. Awards will be announced by mid-March. Although the timeframe for grant-supported activities and expenditures can be somewhat flexible depending on the project, we expect the work supported by Multi-Institutional Innovation Grants to be pursued and completed **between May, 2019 and September, 2020**.

ELIGIBILITY

Multi-Institutional Innovation Grants are open to non-profit colleges and universities from all academic sectors. Associations and consortia are eligible to apply, but not for the support of their normal, ongoing collaborative activities. Proposed projects must include at least two partnering institutions, but larger partnerships are encouraged. We especially welcome proposals that bring together institutions from different academic sectors or with diverse educational missions.

AWARD CRITERIA

Grants will be selected by a committee of BTtoP staff and network leaders. Criteria for awarding grants will include:

- the proposal's alignment with the mission, purposes, and values of BTtoP
- the potential of the proposal for advancing the institutional priorities of the partners
- the significance and timeliness of the proposal for creative innovation and positive change in higher education
- the feasibility of the proposed work within the time-frame and budget of the project, and the institutional profile and practices of the participants

- the durability of the partners' commitment to each other and the project and their plans to sustain the proposed work beyond the grant itself

As stated, BTtoP will award Multi-Institutional Innovation Grants of up to \$7,000. All grants require a 1:1 matching commitment from the partner institutions. Up to half of the match may come in the form of in-kind resources, but at least half is required to be a financial commitment to the project budget. Because we expect—and hope—that many proposals will involve partners with unequal resources, the matching contributions (both monetary and in-kind) may be shared unequally by the participating institutions or fully borne by one partner. The proposal budget should clearly describe the source of matching contributions.

PROPOSAL FORMAT

Project proposals should be submitted by electronic attachment to info@bttop.org by **5:00 pm (ET)**, on **Monday, February 4, 2019**. Proposals should include:

- an **information sheet** listing all participating institutions or associations and the names and contact information of Principal Investigators (PI) or Co-Principal Investigators from each partner. These will be the primary point of contact for funding decisions, grant management, and other communications
- a **proposal narrative of no more than 5 pages**, laying out the project, its goals, activities, timeline, key participants and stakeholders, hoped-for outcomes or products, and plans for sustaining the collaborative project beyond the limits of the grant
- a **project budget** and budget narrative, including sources of matching contributions and categories of expenditures
- **letters of endorsement** from the President or relevant Chief Academic Officer of all partners, speaking to the partner's commitment to the project and the collaborative relationship
- relevant **biographical or organizational materials** about key participants and stakeholders

GRANT REPORTING

The PI's of Multi-Institutional Innovation Grants will be expected to document their project in three ways:

- a **grant report** to the Bringing Theory to Practice staff (and, depending on the length and timeline of the project, an interim report)
- a formal, final **budget report** (and where relevant an interim budget report) to the Bringing Theory to Practice staff
- **public-facing materials** that accessibly present the project, its outcomes, and its significance for wider consumption. Depending on the nature of the project, these materials might take the form of reports, curricula, research papers, or media and digital resources

Please feel free to contact Mercedes Yanora, Project Associate of Bringing Theory to Practice, at yanora@bttop.org if you have questions or need further information. We are grateful for your interest in this grant opportunity.