Student Success Quantum Leap Request for Proposals Spring 2017 Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How soon must the project(s) start after the grant monies are awarded?

A: Ideally, projects will start in Fall 2017 and no later than January 2018. Institutions can determine the timeline and the appropriate "start" date once funding is transferred. For some projects, the start date might refer to the commencement of planning, with implementation to follow.

Q: What will the reporting look like?

A: Regular reporting is a requirement, and the specific timeline and obligations are still being determined. Institutions can expect at least semi-annual reporting regarding adherence to project outcomes, milestones, timeline and budget. Reporting requirements will be shared upon announcement of awards.

Q: May outside organizations collaborate on the project?

A: Yes, it is acceptable for outside organization to collaborate, although the project must be managed by a University of Texas institution, with lead roles including the project champion, coming from within the institution.,

Q: Will reviewers be looking for project(s) that involve collaborative partnerships?

A: Collaborative partners may be appropriate and even important for the success of a program, but collaborative partners do not represent a criterion for projects approved for funding through the grant monies. However, the criteria do require all proposals to include an engagement plan describing how institutions will broaden shared responsibility for student success among a critical mass of administrative leadership, faculty staff and students. The engagement plan is one of many criteria by which proposals will be evaluated.

Q: How many projects may a single institution submit for funding?

A: No cap has been placed on the number of project submissions from institutions, and each proposal submitted will be evaluated on its merits.

Q: Is attention to the Keystone Projects required in proposals?

A: No. It is up to the institution to decide whether it wants to submit a request for funding on one of the Keystone Projects, based on student success needs and institutional priorities and goals. The Keystone Projects are meant to be customizable and some institutions may decide that partial alignment with, or integration of Keystone Project features would meet their institutional needs and enhance their proposal.

Q: Do proposals have to adhere strictly to the RFP proposal template?

A: While proposals should adhere as closely as possible to the template, we recognize that some of the projects proposed will not fit neatly into every one of its sections. Institutions are encouraged to consult the rubric as they develop proposals and to provide an explanation for when they are unable to complete a section of the proposal in the ways asked.

Q: May a logic model be used in place of the assessment plan, following the practice of other grant programs?

A: Yes, institutions may submit a logic model in lieu of the Assessment Plan requested in Section 2.2.1 of the proposal template. Examples of logic models can be found in the Glossary.

Q: During the grant-writing process, am I allowed to contact Associate Vice Chancellor Rebecca Karoff, or anyone at Academic Affairs?

A: Yes, Dr. Karoff will be happy to hear from campuses. In addition, specific UT System Administration personnel are available to each UT academic institution in support of the grant-writing process and student success initiatives, in general, as part of the System-Institution Student Success Partnerships:

UT Arlington	Meredith Goode, Director of Academic Policy & Analytics, Office of Academic Affairs Jessica Shedd, Director for Strategic Initiatives, Office of Strategic Initiatives
UT Austin	David Troutman, Associate Vice Chancellor, Office of Strategic Initiatives Elizabeth Mayer, Senior Research & Policy Analyst, Office of Academic Affairs
UT Dallas	Rebecca Karoff, Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Office of Academic Affairs Stephen Harris, Director, Strategic Design & Initiatives, Office of Facilities Planning and Construction
UT El Paso	Rebecca Karoff, Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Office of Academic Affairs Lydia Riley, Research & Policy Analyst, Office of Academic Affairs
UT Permian Basin	David Troutman, Associate Vice Chancellor, Office of Strategic Initiatives Lydia Riley, Research & Policy Analyst, Office of Academic Affairs
UTRGV	Rebecca Karoff, Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Office of Academic Affairs Meredith Goode, Director of Academic Policy & Analytics, Office of Academic Affairs
UT San Antonio	Kevin Lemoine, Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Office of Academic Affairs

	Alan Marks, Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Office of Academic Affairs
UT Tyler	Wanda Mercer, Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, Office of Academic Affairs Nichole Prescott, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Office of Academic Affairs

Q: Who is going to review the proposals?

A: The review process is being finalized. Two levels of review are anticipated: 1) an in-depth evaluation of each proposal by multiple members of the UT System Student Success Delivery Team, who will form the System Review Committee; 2) a summary review of the Review Committee's recommendations by UT System executive leadership.

Q: How will the proposals be reviewed?

A: The UT System Review Committee will evaluate all proposals with the same standards using a rubric. Review Committee members will engage in a calibration session using the rubric prior to proposal evaluation. The rubric is being sent to institutional leadership and is available online at www.utsystem.edu/student-success-rfp.

Q: Are letters of support accepted?

A: Each proposal is allowed to submit three additional documents. If you would like to include a letter of support as one of the three, that's fine. We encourage institutions to consider carefully what supplemental materials will be most beneficial and relevant to strengthening their proposals, as well as most meaningful to the review committee in their evaluation.

Q: If my institution's project is not funded, may we ask why?

A: Yes, feedback will be prepared and disseminated, adhering to the proposal evaluation rubric.

Q: What kind of support will my institution receive during the grant / project years?

A: UT System Administration staff are working closely with student success leaders, faculty and staff at each academic institution to implement the Chancellor's Quantum Leap on Student Success and support will come from multiple fronts.

- Each institution has been assigned System Student Success Partners (shown in the table above). The partners are available to each UT academic institution to provide guidance on proposal development, on implementation of funded proposals along with other institutional student success initiatives, and to facilitate collaborative problem-solving and opportunity-building help meet the

Chancellor's challenge that we do things differently to arrive at different student success outcomes.

- Affinity groups focused on the three Quantum Leap pillars of Finances, Advising and Belonging are working to identity and promote best practices and metrics.
- UT System is sponsoring professional development for many constituent groups, focused on advancing key aspects of student success.

If particular support from the UT System Administration is required for the success of the project, that should be articulated in the proposal.

Q: Are food expenses allowed?

A: Yes.

Q: Can we use grant monies to pay for mileage for people other than staff (e.g., consultants, presenters, members of advisory groups, etc.)? If so, what is the mileage rate?

A: Yes, if said expenses are aligned with the proposal outcomes and milestones, and will help produce needed outcomes.

Q: Can airline tickets and rental cars be covered with these grant monies?

A: Yes, if said expenses are aligned with the proposal outcomes and milestones, and will help produce needed outcomes.

Q: What happens if we don't expend all grant monies as planned?

A: Institutions are expected to expend all requested funds towards the implementation of their funded projects. However, we recognize that sometimes the project and budgetary requirements change and money is left unspent. Discussions regarding unspent grant monies will take place on a case-by-case basis between UT System Administration and institutional leadership.

Q: How many proposals will be funded?

A: That will be determined by how many Quantum Leap worthy proposals are received. If the funding for proposals that meet the approval criteria outlined in the rubric exceeds the available funds, a weighting process will determine the number of proposals funded and the percentage of requested funds to be granted.

Q: What is the maximum amount funded?

A: The Board of Regents has allocated a total of $10 million to fund successful projects. That includes funding for each academic university to mount (or sustain in the case of Austin) Graduation Help Desks. It is expected that the Graduation Help Desks will

require approximately $1.5 million and that amount will be subtracted from the total allocation of $10 million, leaving roughly $8.5 million available for these RFP projects.

While earlier communications had named a cap of $3M per proposal, UT System leadership later decided that there would be no cap on the amount of funding that institutions could request. Of greater importance is that the budget is reasonable and feasible in terms of institutional capacity and aspirations.

Q: Do we have a better chance of receiving support if our request is for a smaller amount?

A: The amount of funding requested is not a criterion for acceptance, and there is no correlation between a smaller budget request and the chances of a proposal receiving support.

Budgets should be carefully developed to make a compelling case to the review committee for why the funding request is necessary, how it is *Quantum Leap-worthy*, and how each budget item proposed will contribute to the institution successfully meeting its project goals.

Q: Can we apply for a grant that will fund a portion of an existing project?

A: Yes, if the expansion of an existing project is *Quantum Leap-worthy and addresses the other criteria* as defined in the RFP guidelines and proposal template.

Q: Can new personnel be hired for this project?

A: Yes. The funding for the Student Success Quantum Leap is not subject to the State's hiring freeze.

Q: Can my institution use the grant monies to pay for an expansion of existing staff hours?

A: Yes.

Q: Is there a list of what can be considered in-kind match? If not, can you provide examples?

A: In-kind match is typically in the form of the value of personnel, equipment, technology including hardware and software, goods, and services, including direct and indirect costs.

Q: Is there a model to address the sustainability of success?

A: There is no particular model. Institutions should think about how the project will be institutionalized beyond the funding period, mindful of budget and staffing requirements,

and the cultural and other challenges and contingencies associated with new initiatives and projects. The sustainability section might be aligned with the assessment plan, which may contain helpful forecasting through data collection and anticipated returns on investment.

Q: How is infrastructure defined by UT System?

A: Infrastructure is defined as the underlying foundation needed to make the proposed project successful. These foundational resources could include software, equipment, supplies, personnel or capital improvements. If capital improvements are included in the proposed budget they must directly align with the assessment plan and proposed student outcomes.