Request for Proposals: Initiative on Education and Human Development

The Initiative on Education and Human Development (the Initiative) is pleased to offer funding opportunities for interdisciplinary faculty-led project groups (Project Groups) to conduct research on education and on human development in its integral relationship to education. By fostering collaborations across all schools of the University, the Initiative seeks to encourage innovative approaches that transcend the boundaries of traditional disciplines. Successful proposals will focus the talents of interdisciplinary teams on advancing the understanding of the interplay between education and human development, with an emphasis on research with the potential to inform policy or practice.

Because the Initiative’s focus extends beyond schools and schooling to encompass child and family well-being and learning, each of its terms is broadly defined. “Education” includes all aspects of early care and education, K-12 schooling, and post-secondary education, and extends to learning outside the realm of formal education. “Human development” encompasses the full range of domains—mental and physical health; personal, social and familial adjustment; economics; family income and employment; school adjustment and achievement; community factors; and the larger policy context—that influence children’s educational experience and outcomes.

Project Groups are one of four pillars of the Initiative, and are intended to intersect with the remaining three pillars, namely building a data infrastructure, educating the next generation at Duke, and public engagement in practice and policy. Because it is particularly complementary to the Bass Connections’ Education and Human Development theme, faculty members are invited to apply for support from both sources as appropriate to their proposal. We also encourage careful thought to leveraging other institutional and grant support.

Proposals are encouraged that employ any of the methods used to study education and human development, from ethnography to MRI, to secondary data analysis. Of special interest will be proposals that (i) integrate diverse units of analysis and methods in the solution of a specific problem and/or (ii) develop and incorporate innovative ways to collect, interpret and communicate data to inform policy or practice. Thus, the Initiative encourages both theoretical and methodological pluralism and rigor. The Initiative welcomes proposals at any stage. Proposals at earlier stages may be seeded with modest support to facilitate the future creation of a project team. Both new and existing interdisciplinary collaborations are invited to apply.

The specifics of this request are as follows:

Composition of the Project Groups: Teams must include faculty representing two or more fields and will typically consist of several Duke faculty with complementary expertise.

Amount of Support: The Initiative plans to fund each approved Project Group (new or renewal) at a maximum level of $100,000 for one fiscal year. Some funding will be provided for opportunities where a smaller award (on the order of $10,000) would suffice, for example as seed funds or where the support can have a disproportionate impact. All awards are intended to support project development ultimately leading to external funding for the ongoing collaborative work.

Selection Process for New Awards: Proposals will be reviewed by an ad hoc review committee consisting of faculty with a broad range of expertise in fields related to education and human development. The review committee will consider the following:

- The significance and potential impact of a proposed project on the understanding of education and human development and how it is studied.
- The breadth and depth of interdisciplinary engagement and the feasibility of a proposed project.
- The likelihood of attracting external funding that might sustain the project after an initial award.
The review committee is not asked to provide extensive written feedback on the applications and the Initiative will not be able to provide the detailed responses from individual reviewers that are customary in NSF or NIH evaluations. However an informal summary of committee deliberations can be provided on request.

**Selection Process for Future Renewal Awards:** Awards may be renewed for up to a maximum of three years providing there is significant progress on the aims of the proposal and a clearly articulated plan for the upcoming year of funding that builds on this progress. Continued funding depends on progress made on the overall goals of the project, the merits of the research plan, the specific goals for the next period of support, and the likelihood that the project is advancing toward external support as well as sustained funding for the Initiative. Advances that could not have been achieved with purely individual efforts must be clearly articulated, and the effective functioning of the working group must be made clear. Renewal applications will be reviewed competitively against new as well as other continuation applications. Support for the third year is contingent on evidence that these funds will serve as a bridge to external support, and a plan for continuance of the project beyond year three.

**Awards Process:** The number of new and renewal awards is not guaranteed. If the proposals lack sufficient quality and merit, the Initiative reserves the right to withhold awards. Notification of awards will be announced on or before **July 1, 2013**.

**Application Instructions – New Proposals:** The deadline for submitting a full proposal is **June 1, 2013**. The full proposal should contain the following:

1. **Face Page**
2. **Abstract Page:** Comprising a lay abstract and a project summary, each no more than 250 words.
3. **Project Group Justification:** Describe the proposed project’s potential to inform policy or practice.
4. **Research Proposal:** Comprising (1) Specific Aims; (2) Background and Significance; (3) Preliminary Studies (Optional); and (4) Proposed Research Program. This section is limited to 5 pages including figures and legends. Use 11 point Arial or larger and ½ inch margins.
5. **References:** References are not included in the above page limit.
6. **Biographical Sketches:** Provide a sketch for all faculty collaborators and for any Research Associates / Postdoctoral Associates if salary is requested.
7. **Appendices:** Not allowed.
8. **Budget:** Funds may not be used for faculty salary support, but may be used for staff, postdoc, and graduate student support (for other than teaching).

We look forward to your application.

Please direct questions to Carol Ripple (carol.ripple@duke.edu).