

## **The EHIPs WCU Forward Program: Call for Proposals**

### **Overview**

EHIPs is one of two WCU Forward programs that were funded by the Provost's Office for three years. Upon funding, we formed a committee of faculty and staff from across campus to manage the program and encourage more engaged learning on campus. This call is for funding activities in Spring 2027.

**Due Date for Applications, Fall 2026:** Monday, November 23<sup>rd</sup>. Send to [dkinner@wcu.edu](mailto:dkinner@wcu.edu) with subject line: EHIPs application

**Drop-In Q&A sessions (ST 338):** November 3<sup>rd</sup> (2-3 PM); Nov 11<sup>th</sup> (4-5 PM) both in Stillwell 338 (Eller Conference Room)

### **Program goals**

The goal of the EHIPs (Expanding High Impact Practices) program is to increase the number of high impact practices (HIPs) on campus over a three-year period and to improve the design and implementation of HIPs. Program improvement will be through designing experiences by considering the HIP definition, and funding decisions are based on a rubric with the HIP criteria (see below). While not all experiences will include every HIP criterion, we do expect that funded experiences will meet most of the HIP criteria (in the left-hand most column).

Historically, academic experiences like undergraduate research, freshmen seminars, and common intellectual experiences were the only ones considered HIPs. The definition of HIPs has been extended to other co-curricular and campus activities that meet the HIP criteria. This program will fund HIPs related to courses but also recognizes that other campus experiences are valuable and can meet the HIP definition. We encourage faculty and staff from all over campus to apply to this program!

### **You may want to check out these resources:**

<https://www.aacu.org/trending-topics/high-impact>

<https://teaching.resources.osu.edu/teaching-topics/high-impact-practices-enhancing>

### **Funding**

This call for proposals is for activities during Spring Semester 2027. A second call in the spring will provide funding for Summer 2027 and Fall 2027 activities. The EHIPs budget will be divided into two calls for proposals, assuring that there will be funding during the spring

application window. Applicants are encouraged to include the total estimated cost of their activities in case full funding is available. We may impose a budgetary limit of \$5,000 per proposal, if we receive many competitive proposals.

Allowable expenses include (but may not be limited to) the following:

- |                                       |                                                |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| (1) Travel                            | (6) Faculty/staff support for                  |
| (2) Supplies and materials            | developing the HIP (limit of 3 K) <sup>1</sup> |
| (3) Student stipends/salary/support   |                                                |
| (4) Conference presentations          |                                                |
| (5) Training/professional development |                                                |

Other expenses may be fundable. Contact D. Kinner with questions ([dkinner@wcu.edu](mailto:dkinner@wcu.edu)).

### **Funding Criteria**

The funding criteria are based on the definition of a HIP from Kuh and O'Donnell (2013)<sup>2</sup>, which have been summarized and simplified in the rubric below. The criteria are noted in the leftmost column. Example project elements provided below are some ideas about parts of the proposed experience that would satisfy the HIP criteria. These are examples and applicants can argue for other ways that their projects will meet the criteria. A project would meet the criterion with just one piece of example elements.

The rubric criteria will be weighed equally during evaluation, except the access and scale criteria, which are weighed higher. The ability of students to participate in the HIP is of key importance, and projects that consider scale allow more student participation. While it is possible that we would provide funding for a single experience (e.g. a thesis), providing funding for groups of students (even small groups) is in line with the mission of EHIPs. The committee will score proposals, but ultimate funding decisions will be made to assure that the program is inclusive and meets needs throughout the University.

### **Assessment**

To show proof of concept, there will be assessment of HIPs experience. Each applicant will be asked two goals they have for students participating in the HIP and how they will be

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<sup>1</sup> Verify that you are able to get extra compensation with your supervisor before putting it in the proposal.

<sup>2</sup> Kuh, G. D., & O'Donnell, K. (2013). Ensuring quality and taking high-impact

practices to scale. Peer Review, 15(2), 32-33.

assessed. These data will be collected by the program at the end of HIPs experience. Students participating in the HIP will be tagged by the committee to see if in the long term, HIP participants have higher GPAs, retention and graduation rates. Additionally, the EHIPS committee may develop other assessments to be implemented in funded HIPs and may work with the applicants to apply them in a class.

| <b>Criteria from Kuh and O'Donnell (2013)</b>                                                                              | <b>Example Project Element</b>                                                                                                                                              |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Investment of time and effort                                                                                              | Experience has several days to weeks of concentrated time (trip; and/or)                                                                                                    |
|                                                                                                                            | Experience includes work that involves multiple steps (and/or)                                                                                                              |
|                                                                                                                            | Experience lasts for a significant part of the semester (1/3 of semester) and is weighted heavily in student performance evaluation.                                        |
| Interactions with mentors and peers about substantive matters                                                              | Experience includes multiple opportunities for students to get oral or written feedback from a mentor or peers (and/or)                                                     |
|                                                                                                                            | Experience has significant opportunities for discussion among mentors and peers. (and/or)                                                                                   |
|                                                                                                                            | Experience requires students to work in groups to complete a substantive project. Students have accountability to each other. Group function is described and/or evaluated. |
| Novel experiences                                                                                                          | Experience requires students to encounter new things: e.g. ideas, people, cultures, and/or places (and/or)                                                                  |
|                                                                                                                            | Experience would involve new skills or new applications of learned skills given the student prior experience                                                                |
| Frequent, timely and constructive feedback and periodic, structured opportunities to integrate learning                    | Experience has multiple opportunities for students to get feedback including formative feedback (and/or)                                                                    |
|                                                                                                                            | Experience gives the students the opportunity to improve work based on feedback.                                                                                            |
|                                                                                                                            | Experience requires students reflect on their learning either orally or in writing.                                                                                         |
| Discover relevance through real-world applications                                                                         | In the experience, students solve a real-world problem, preferably one that is relevant. Projects are open-ended with no existing answer. (and/or)                          |
|                                                                                                                            | Experience involves external partners or addresses an important issue. (and/or)                                                                                             |
|                                                                                                                            | The project involves creation of knowledge.                                                                                                                                 |
|                                                                                                                            | Students develop skills in a real-world or professional setting                                                                                                             |
| Public demonstration of competence                                                                                         | The experience allows students give talks, poster presentations, or share their work in public spaces.                                                                      |
| Scale                                                                                                                      | The experience impacts a number of students (experience is built for groups and not individuals).                                                                           |
| Access                                                                                                                     | The experience is created in a way where students participate as part of their time at WCU, for example a degree requirement. (and/or)                                      |
|                                                                                                                            | There are not financial or other barriers that inhibit student participation (and/or)                                                                                       |
|                                                                                                                            | The experience is nested in campus employment. (and/or)                                                                                                                     |
| HIPs: High impact practices that are curricular, co-curricular, work, or athletics where a mentor guides student learning. |                                                                                                                                                                             |

Mentor: Faculty, staff, or volunteers on a college campus who are guiding learning. Kuh and O'Donnell's criteria were developed for faculty, but HIPs have been expanded to include other experiences, so mentor is a faculty or staff member.