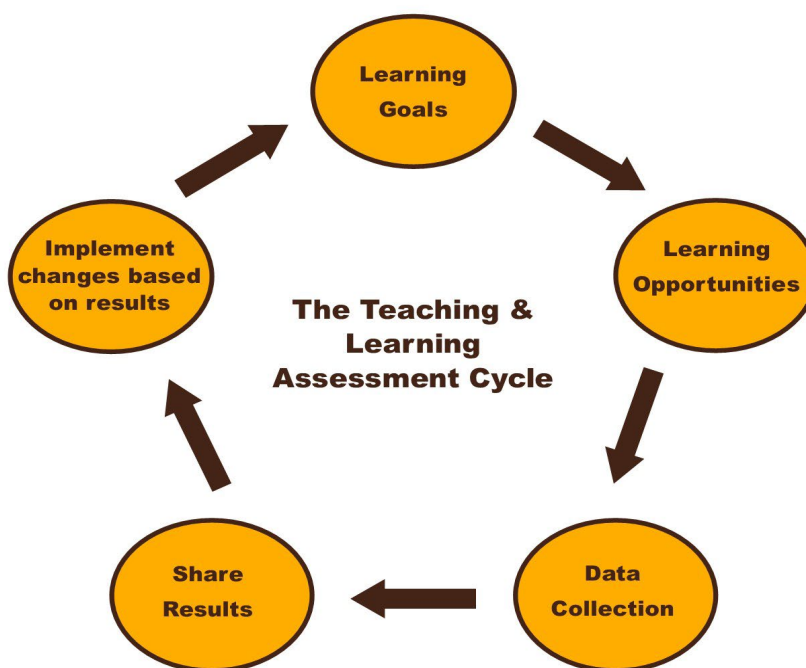


2023 Assessment Mini Grant Program (second round)

UNIVERSITY ASSESSMENT STEERING COMMITTEE (UASC) REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Purpose of Program: To award funding for the purpose of supporting assessment-related projects to improve student learning outcomes in both academic and co-curricular areas.



Full and part-time faculty, staff, and graduate students in academic departments, learner support units, student affairs and interdisciplinary units are eligible to apply.

NOTE: All applicants must be able to support project funds through a university department at the outset. The grant will reimburse the department for funds up to the \$1,500 maximum, but initial funding will come from the department or unit of the principal investigator (PI) or Co-PI. **Graduate students must have a co-investigator to be eligible to apply.** Please refer to the Career and Student Employment Services website for current student employment information including hourly rates and work hour policies: <https://wmich.edu/career/campus>

The focus of the grants is to provide a means to help departments and programs move forward in the assessment cycle (as seen above) from starting a learning assessment project through completion or the continuous improvement of a learning assessment project already in progress. Project funding can also be used to learn about assessment best practices or develop new or continued expertise on assessment-related topics. Some examples of how the project funding may be utilized are:

- Developing new or rewriting existing student learning (or operational) outcomes and/or measures collaboratively with stakeholders and/or colleagues.
- Creating and applying a rubric for use in evaluating an assignment or activity to measure outcome achievement.
- Creating a curriculum map for a program.
- Creating a new assessment plan or revamping a current plan for assessment activities in a department or program.
- Hosting a workshop on a learning outcomes assessment topic facilitated by an expert in this field. (For example, using the funds to pay for the honorarium for a guest speaker or facilitator from outside the institution).
- Paying for registration to attend or present at a learning outcomes assessment-related conference (excludes travel expenses). Learn more about the University's travel policy here: <https://wmich.edu/travel>

Applications will only be accepted for projects that focus on student learning or operational outcomes assessment.

Funding Preference: Funding preference will be given for projects involving departments and/or programs that have not been previously funded by the Assessment Fellows Grant program or the Assessment Mini Grant program.

Priority will also be given to applications that demonstrate the greatest need for assessment support in their areas. For the purposes of this grant program, need can be defined by the maturity level of the assessment processes within a department or program. Those who are just starting to formally assess outcomes are considered as less mature with their assessment process and therefore will be given priority for funding.

We will also give priority to projects that:

- Can help revitalize assessment efforts that have stalled or need revision;
- Have the potential to impact the University's strategic planning [key priority areas](#);
- Will have potential impact on an upcoming accreditation reaffirmation.

Application Process: Individuals must complete the application available on the Assessment website: <https://wmich.edu/assessment/application>. Applications for this second round are due no later than **Monday, January 30, 2023**, by 8 p.m. Eastern. No more than one proposal per program will be reviewed for possible funding each fiscal year. Each application must be completed in full to be considered by the review committee.

1) Proposal Objectives: Purpose and objectives for the project are key elements and should be clearly stated. Objectives flow from purpose and are the specific aims of the project. What is the purpose of the project; what do you intend to do; why is the project important? Be as specific as possible. This section should also include information about proposed workshop content, workshop date(s), name of intended facilitator(s), and virtual conference date(s), if applicable.

The University Assessment Steering Committee can provide guidance and support for projects as requested. Please describe any requested support or guidance within this section of the online application.

NOTE: Applicants are responsible for making all arrangements with an outside facilitator or speaker as well as completing all appropriate paperwork for bringing in an independent contractor, following all University policies and procedures. Prior approval needs to be obtained before inviting someone to campus by initiating the appropriate paperwork via Michele Cole in Business Services. For more information, visit: <https://wmich.edu/business-services/>

2) Methodology: Applicants should describe a project plan and timeline and define the approach that will be taken to work toward the intended objectives. Include the sampling design, data collection and analysis methods (if applicable), and describe whether the research will continue after the June 15, 2023, spending deadline. (For more information about the funding deadline, see the Grant timetable section below.)

3) Sharing of Project Output/Results: It is expected that at the end of the project, the final outcomes and/or results of the research project will be disseminated to others in the department, program, unit and/or institution for the benefit of all.

Plan for dissemination: Project proposals will describe a plan for dissemination of information and development of a final assessment product or system that will become part of an ongoing or future assessment plan. Dissemination of project results/products should include short-term, medium and long-term goals. For guidance in best practices on dissemination of research results, visit: [Guidelines for the Dissemination of Research Findings](#) (University of Canberra).

Project Reports: At the conclusion of the project, the project leader will submit the output/results of the project to the University Assessment Steering Committee. It is expected that tangible output/results will be available to share at the conclusion of the project to ensure funding is used for the intended purpose. Depending on the project objectives, this could look very different. For example, one could share a list of learning outcomes; a curriculum map; a learning outcomes assessment plan; proof of attending a conference **and** the intended takeaways or how attending a conference meets the project objectives in a practical way; etc.

Project reports are expected to be submitted to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE) electronically by **Monday, October 2, 2023**. Reports will describe the progress toward intended outcomes if the project is still ongoing through the end of the fall semester. **OR**, if the project has been completed, the report will describe final outcomes and any tangible products should be provided at that time as well. If the project research will continue through the end of the fall semester, a final report and any tangibles products will be due to OIE on or before **January 29, 2024**.

NOTE: If the project involves attending a conference or workshop, please address how this meets the intended objectives in this section of the application. Project output/results should describe the following: What was the workshop topic? What was liked most/least? What were the key takeaways? How does the conference or workshop meet your project objectives?

Annual conference participation: All grant recipients will be asked to attend the Assessment in Action Conference in April 2024 and participate in a panel discussion. Recipients will be asked to provide an overview of their project; include a description of project objectives; share the results; etc. More information about the conference date and expectations for the panel discussion will be shared as it is available from the University Assessment Steering Committee and the Office of Institutional Effectiveness.

4) Proposal Budget (maximum award of \$1,500): Funding will be awarded up to \$1,500 per project. Consider the following: What materials need to be purchased? What student assistance is needed? What analytical assistance is required? What payment is required to attend or present at a conference or workshop? In this section, please provide specific rationale and/or justification for all proposed purchases describing how the budget items align with and help you achieve your proposal objectives.

All requests for reimbursement must be documented and received by Cathe Murphy at cathe.murphy@wmich.edu by June 15, 2023, so they can be paid from the 2022-23 fiscal year budget.

What is supported: Please note that UASC Assessment Mini Grants can be used to support student assistants, faculty research time, materials, software support, and conference registrations or workshop attendance. Funding can also be used to host a student learning outcomes-related workshop facilitated by an off-campus expert and to pay for materials and/or an honorarium for the facilitator/speaker. After the completion of a workshop or attendance at a conference, some sort of tangible product should be produced and shared with the UASC such as an assessment plan, learning outcomes, an outcomes measurement tool, etc.

NOTE: Faculty compensation **must include fringe benefits** and total amount cannot exceed the \$1,500 maximum award. Please consult with the budget administrator for your program/unit to determine fringe percentages and more information about current policies. Prior approval following all university policies must be obtained before hiring any new employees (including students). Since Assessment Mini Grant funding is internal to WMU, policies around compensation and employment apply for all funding that would be used to support faculty work time.

Graduate students must follow the WMU Student Employee Work Hour Policy and cannot exceed the work hours stipulated in the policy. For more information:

<https://wmich.edu/career/campus>

What is not supported: Funding cannot be used to support release time from assigned teaching or administrative responsibilities; to support costs of academic credit; direct compensation for staff who have assessment-related work as a part of their normal duties; computer or other technical equipment; or conference travel. Additionally, all proposals will be reviewed to determine the suitability of budgeted items in terms of stated departmental assessment planning activities and fidelity with University policies and regulations.

For information regarding University guidelines for student employment, see the following: <https://wmich.edu/hr/officemanagement/student-resources>

Timeline for project: In the **Methodology** section of the application, please share any pertinent information including potential dates for proposed workshops; conference dates; intended work time necessary to complete the project; and a clearly defined project timeline with intended dates for project start and completion, when certain project milestones will be completed, etc.

Grant timetable: UASC Assessment Mini Grant second round applications for 2023 are welcome until **Monday, January 30, 2022**, at 8 p.m. Eastern. Funds will be made available for awarded projects beginning **February 24 through June 15, 2023** (pending signature of contract). Funding must be spent during the current fiscal year 2022-23 and CANNOT be

reimbursed after this time, so care must be taken to submit requests for reimbursement within the time frame shared.

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness, in collaboration with the University Assessment Steering Committee, will announce the second round of 2023 Assessment Mini Grant recipients by **Friday, February 24, 2023**. Reconsideration will be given to the timing of applications and due dates in upcoming years.

NOTE: Although funds must be spent prior to the end of fiscal year 2022-23, project work and research may continue through the end of the fall semester 2023. It is still expected that an initial progress report regarding output/results will be prepared and shared with the University Assessment Steering Committee no later than **October 2, 2023**, to assure project money was utilized as intended. If research and project work continue through the fall semester 2023, an additional final report is expected and due no later than **Monday, January 29, 2024**.

Grant Reviewing Criteria: A subcommittee of the UASC will review second round proposals and recommend projects for funding to the UASC at its February 2023 meeting. Applicants will receive reviewer comments in summary form upon request. The subcommittee will use the following criteria to recommend proposals for funding:

- Project demonstrates a **strong need** (as described on page 2 under the section Funding Preference) for the unit, college, or division's development of assessment. (20%)
- Project **aligns** with the unit, college, or division's assessment goals, or **progresses** the unit toward establishing goals. (10%)
- Project has potential to **improve** student learning, program quality, or ongoing departmental program improvement initiatives. (15%)
- Project demonstrates a **focus** on student learning and/or operational outcomes and conceptualizes the **impact** on faculty, students and/or campus community. (25%)
- Project includes a plan for **dissemination** to share what is learned and/or the assessment products and/or systems that will become part of an ongoing or future assessment plan. (15%)
- Project **budget rationale** is clear and supports project goals. (15%)

The rubric used for evaluation is available on the Assessment website: [Assessment Mini Grant Rubric 2023](#)

Responsibilities of awardees:

Sharing Output/Results: UASC Assessment Mini Grant recipients are asked to share output/results of projects with the University Assessment Steering Committee upon completion of the project. (For more information see #3 above). It is also expected that recipients will attend the 2024 Assessment in Action Conference and participate in a panel discussion to share information about their projects. Output and/or results will be used to demonstrate what accomplishments are possible from these grants and will be circulated to the University Assessment Steering Committee and, potentially, academic deans and the provost.

Considerations:

If this work results in a publication or project, please acknowledge that support for the work came from the UASC Assessment Mini Grant Program with the following acknowledgement:

Acknowledgement of support: *"This work was supported by funds from the UASC Assessment Mini Grant Program, Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Western Michigan University."*

COVID-19: The Office of Research and Innovation has created some helpful resources for guidance on research practices. Visit the COVID-19 Questions page for more information (note that some policies pertain specifically to externally funded grants): <https://wmich.edu/research/covid-questions>

Human Subjects Institutional Review Board: Assessment proposals that do not meet the federal definition of research or human subject (45 CFR 46) do not require HSIRB review, approval and oversight; however, in order to publish the results in a professional journal, HSIRB approval should be sought prior to implementation and data collection. Most assessments designed to measure achievement of desired student learning outcomes at the classroom, program, or institutional level do not require HSIRB oversight. For questions, please contact the associate director for research compliance at 387-8293 or via e-mail at research-compliance@wmich.edu.

For information regarding interaction with human subjects during COVID-19: <https://wmich.edu/research/humansubjects-COVID-19>

Condition for Acceptance: Awardees authorize the Office of Institutional Effectiveness to post project output/results/findings on the ScholarWorks Assessment page. https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/assessment_faculty_grant/

Budget Contact Information and Pre-project Meeting: The name, email, and phone number for the budget contact within the department shall be provided by awardees upon signing the grant contract. A brief meeting will be set up for the Office of Institutional Effectiveness staff, PI(s), CoPI(s) and budget administrators to go over details and answer any funding questions prior to the start of the project work.

Application Submission: Applicants must meet all eligibility requirements and complete and submit the online application (including budget template) for the second round due date and time, **January 30, 2023**, 8 p.m. Eastern.

For questions about the mini grant program:

Karen Stokes Chapo, Program Manager Assessment
Phone: 269-387-3867
E-mail: karen.stokeschapo@wmich.edu



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