



Productivity and Innovation Fund Proposal Form

PART 1 – PROJECT OVERVIEW

Productivity and Innovation Fund Proposal Type

Institutional	Multi-institutional
Priority Area of Focus: <input type="checkbox"/> 1. Program Prioritization <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2. Course(s)/Program Redesign: <input type="checkbox"/> Foundational or Introductory Course(s) or Program(s) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Experiential Learning <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching Quality	Priority Area of Focus: <input type="checkbox"/> 1. Program Prioritization <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Course(s)/Program Redesign: <input type="checkbox"/> Foundational or Introductory Course(s) or Program(s) <input type="checkbox"/> Experiential Learning <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching Quality <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Administrative Services Delivery Transformation <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching Evaluation (System wide proposal only)

Project Name

Evaluation and Enhancement of Experiential Learning Opportunities in Business Programs at Nipissing University

Lead Organization & Contact Information

Organization: Nipissing University
 Contact Name: Dr. Harley d'Entremont
 Title: Vice President, Academic and Research
 Telephone: 705-474-3450 ext 4254
 Email: harleyd@nipissingu.ca

Partner Institutions – If the proposal is multi-institutional, list all partner institutions, including contact information, participating in this proposal. Proposals must include a letter of support from each partner.

Executive Summary – provide a brief overview of the proposed project, the project goals and the expected outcomes. This section should also include the proposal's alignment to the Fund's overall goals and objectives. (Maximum 500 words)

The proposed project consists of two key components. The first component would be to conduct a review of the experiential learning opportunities currently offered to Nipissing business students. The second component would be to determine the feasibility of developing a more formalized co-op program.

Nipissing University currently offers students experiential learning opportunities through its iLEAD program. This program is made up of a series of elective courses including field placements, internships and directed studies courses that

enable students to Learn through Experience, Action & Discovery (iLEAD). The iLead initiative has been in place for three years. There have been a number of student cohorts who have participated in this initiative. The evaluation and review of the outcomes and experiences these students have received can be used to inform future modifications to the program and perhaps extend to program into a more formalized co-op program.

The review would assess the effectiveness of the existing iLEAD program as well as the satisfaction levels of students and organizations involved in the program. The study would gauge the demand for a co-op program and identify the resources necessary for its successful implementation. The review would also include the recommendation of a proposed structure for a co-op program. Additionally, the use of iPads and other technologies to facilitate student placements outside of the North Bay area would be studied.

Funding Request

PART 2 – PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS (Maximum 6 pages)

Total Productivity and Innovation Fund Request Amount

\$ 75,000

- 1. Proposal Summary** - Provide a detailed description of the undertaking, the scope and purpose of the project, including the specific activities that will be undertaken. Provide a work plan with a schedule of key activities and target dates for completion. Activities should be completed by March 31, 2014 to be eligible for funding.

A project leader will be engaged to gather and catalogue information of the existing experiential learning opportunities under the iLEAD initiative. On-line survey documents will be prepared for current students, graduates and current and potential placement organizations. The surveys will be administered over November and December. Initial results from the surveys will be used to prepare questions for focus groups for current students, graduates and current and potential placement organizations. The focus groups will take place in January. The results from the survey's and focus groups will be summarized and from this summary a number of recommendations made as to possible future experiential learning opportunities. Where possible costing for the recommendations will be estimated. The project lead will share the findings with audiences internal and external to the University.

Work Plan

Activity	Timeline
Hire a consultant or allocate existing staff	Upon receipt of funding

as project lead	
Develop survey tool to administer to students and placement organizations	October/November 2013
Administer survey to students and placement organizations (current and potential)	November/December 2013
Conduct interviews and focus groups with students and placement organizations	January 2014
Analyze findings and make final recommendations	January 2014
Share key findings with participants and broader education sector	February 2014

2. **Innovation & Productivity** - *Identify the innovative aspects (ideas, systems, processes) of the proposed project. Describe how the approach improves productivity in areas that are central to the institution's mandate and mission to enable financial sustainability over the long term.*

Exploring the use of technology to facilitate placements and other experiential learning opportunities for students from a distance is an innovative initiative. It is also one that would help make Nipissing more attractive to students from other markets as it would enable them to gain experience at organizations located virtually anywhere. By improving the student experience through enhanced experiential learning opportunities, Nipissing would be better positioned to compete in the competitive business school arena.

3. **Project Outcomes** - *Link the program goals with expected outcomes to be achieved, including any metrics for measuring improvements to the student experience. Identify a process for evaluating the effectiveness of the project, including any KPIs, institution-specific surveys, cost-savings and/or cost avoidance etc. Identify targets for measurable outcomes and a process for reporting on them, and any risk mitigation strategies for project completion and achieving outcomes.*

This project would result in one key deliverable: a set of recommendations regarding the best approach for the School of Business to take in terms of its experiential learning offerings

The success of the project would be evaluated in a number of ways including satisfaction rates among participating students, and through the amount of cost-

savings that would result from using technology more heavily for course delivery. Additionally, retention rates and employment rates of students post-graduation would be another benchmark that could be used to measure the success of the project. However, this type of information would require a much longer timeline than would be available under the timelines under this program.

Potential obstacles in undertaking this project could include the short timeline in which to conduct the reviews and make recommendations; however this risk can be mitigated by having the consultant develop and adhere to a strict project management timeline.

4. **Partnerships & Knowledge Sharing** - Describe the nature and importance of each partner institutions' contribution to the project. Describe how the project will leverage partnerships to achieve the Fund's goals and enhance collaboration, and the potential for replication. Indicate how results and best practices will be shared with the postsecondary community.

Key findings would also be shared with the broader higher education sector at conferences as appropriate.

5. **Project Cost** – Provide a detailed project budget that itemizes how funding will be allocated. Include activities that may be funded through other means.

Activity	Budget
Engage consultant	\$40,000
Staff time for VP Academic and Research, AVP Academic, Dean and Director	\$80,000
Faculty release time	\$12,000
Staff time – Institutional Planning	\$10,000
Staff time – Finance Office	\$10,000
Staff time – Communications	\$10,000
UTS resources for on-line survey	\$10,000
Misc	\$ 5,000
Total Project Budget (2013-14)	\$177,000

Proposed Revenue Source(s) – Identify any other funding sources and/or in-kind contributions.

Proposed Funding Source(s)	Amount of Funding
MTCU Productivity and Innovation Fund	\$75,000
Institutional Funds	\$102,000
Total Project Budget (2013-14)	\$177,000

Describe how activities will be sustained beyond the 2013-14 fiscal year and/or an ongoing basis.

The recommendations from this review will be used to plan future course and program offerings which will be resourced from departmental funds.

6. **Cost-Savings or Cost-Avoidance Strategy** – *Describe the cost savings strategy for this project. Identify projected cost-savings, potential for ongoing savings beyond 2013-14, and associated timelines.*

With the engagement of dedicated resources to prepare recommendations for future experiential learning opportunities and exploring the feasibility of these opportunities, Nipissing will be in a better position to get a head start on these initiatives avoiding costly mistakes.

7. **Potential for Scalability (Updated August 2013)** – *Describe, if any, the potential for this proposal to be funded at a reduced scale. This section must indicate changes to any activities, outcomes, timelines, and funding requested in the scaled down version.*

Although there will be flexibility in the scope of the surveys and focus group engagement, with the timelines for the PIF, it would be challenging to prepare meaningful recommendations if the scope for information gathering is significantly reduced.

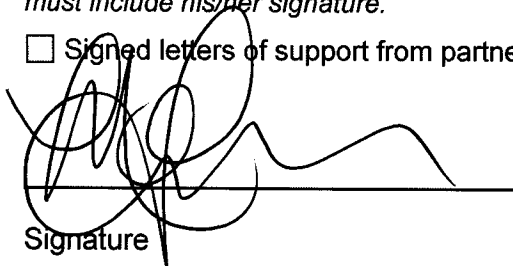
Part 3 – PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Institution and multi-institutional proposals should be submitted electronically on or before **September 30, 2013** through the Secure File Transfer website.

Applicant Signatures

Proposals must be approved by the President/Executive Head or Designate of the lead organization and must include his/her signature.

Signed letters of support from partner organization are attached to this proposal.



Signature

Dr. Michael DeGagné
President, and Vice Chancellor

30/09/2013
Date