COMMUNITY ENGAGED LEARNING

THE INSTITUTE FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

Request for Proposals: Community Engaged Learning Mini-Grants Spring 2026

Note - the CEL Mini-Grant Program is continually revised based on previous iterations and feedback. This is the Spring 2026 application.

About CEL Mini-Grants

The Community Engaged Learning program in The Institute for Learning and Teaching (TILT) is pleased to announce the availability of Community Engaged Learning (CEL) **Mini-Grant Funding.** These grants, typically ranging from $500 to $1,000, are available to fund the development of new CEL courses or curricula, or the improvement of existing ones.

Proposal Due Date **Completed proposals will be accepted through December 1st 2025.**

Before submitting your application, you will be asked to confirm that you have shared a copy of this grant proposal with your department chair/head and they are aware of and supportive of the application.

Additional Information:

Virtual Information Session

November 18th 12-12:45pm | MS Teams | Register on Bridge

An overview of the Community Engaged Learning Mini-Grant program including new updates, support for proposals, frequently asked questions, examples of proposals, and previous projects. Includes time for questions and discussion.

- FAQs and examples of funded proposals
- View the CEL website under the heading for **Community Engaged Learning / Service Learning Mini-Grant Funding**
- CSU's Continuum of Engaged Scholarship - it can be helpful to reference continuum categories when describing the kind of engagement strategies or activities you are developing or the kind of collaboration you have with community partners.

About Community Engaged Learning: Key Components

See About Community Engaged Learning for TILTs description of CEL programs. Key CEL program components include:

- Rigorous scholarship and academic content linked to impact-focused community engagement.

- Engagement components meet community-identified priorities (needs or goals identified by or with community partners). Community partners have power to shape or inform projects and processes.
- Students and faculty participate in regular & supported critical reflection on engagement experiences that help guide learning in a few areas:
    - Self awareness – understanding oneself in relation to one's environment, to others, and to broad socio-cultural and political systems.
    - Civic learning – ideas of the public good, democracy, and public and collective dialogue and decision making.
    - Academic content and course learning objectives.
- Learning happens through engagement with texts, peers, and community partners.

Funding Criteria

This Mini-Grant program is designed to support and help develop Community Engaged Learning courses and opportunities for CSU students and to support CSU instructors who are developing CEL curricula. Co-curricular (not for credit) programs may also be funded if the program has, or is applying to develop, a curriculum.

To be eligible, your project must:

1. Be tied to a curriculum: either credit-bearing courses or co-curricular programs with defined learning objectives
2. Provide learning opportunities for a group of CSU students
3. Involve an identified community partner who has agreed to collaborate with you

For the purposes of this application a curriculum includes (at a minimum) these elements:

- learning objectives
- methods of instruction & reflection designed to meet the learning objectives
- at least one form of evaluation or assessment

You do not have to have a fully developed curriculum in place in order to receive a CEL Mini-Grant. If you have a project in mind but it does not have all of the bulleted points above, consider submitting an Mini-Grant proposal to help develop one of those bulleted items.

Community Engaged Learning Mini-Grants will be awarded to support the following:

1. Creation of a new CEL course
2. Improvement or further development of a CEL course or project
3. Improvement or further development of a Community Partnership Agreement or similar resource
4. The development or addition of a new course component or assignment. Examples include: developing new assignments, integrating a new methodology or approach (e.g. Photo Voice, Do-It-Yourself Glossary) adding additional pre-service preparation (e.g. community partner guest lectures, history tours, tours of a key area or topic provided by local experts), developing a Community Partnership Agreement developing open data-sharing measures and delivering results of student work to community partners, co-teaching with community partners, hiring student assistants to support project

logistics or provide peer mentorship, educational trips or travel to community partner sites)

5. Professional development or training for students in a CEL program or who support a CEL program
6. Evaluation of a CEL/SL course or project (projects focusing on one component of an evaluation process are welcome: development of an assessment tool, data collection, or data analysis etc.)

Available Funds, Size of Awards, and Important Dates

Individual awards are expected to range between $500.00 and $1,000.00 Larger allocations may be granted on a case-by-case basis.

- **All funds need to be spent by the end of the fiscal year June 30th 2026.**

  Costs that Can be Funded:

  Examples: Materials; technology needs; transportation to service site; books; supplies; cost for campus coordinator of sites, materials and assessment; pay for work of student assistant(s).

  Costs that Cannot be Funded:

  Examples: Indirect costs; food (unless it's part of the CEL project, ex: Farm to School, Nutrition Education, etc.); payment to participants; supplemental faculty pay; entertainment; clothing; cash incentives or awards.

  Completed proposals will be accepted through December 1st 2025.

Community partnerships

Community partnerships and community partnership agreements need to be in place before funding will be provided (you can also apply for CEL Mini Grant funding to develop a Community Partnership Agreement if you do not have one). Projects that show support for existing community initiatives or those that have been asked for by a community partner will be prioritized. Projects should have a plan for sharing the outcome of their work with community partners (and the broader community where relevant).

For more information about Community Partnership Agreements, including examples or templates, contact danyel.addes@colostate.edu

The application will ask for information about your community partner(s) and for some background on your partnership/type of collaboration. You can see a list of these questions at the end of the RFP.

You will be asked to submit a Collaboration Form signed by your community partner(s). This is to show that the project has been created or discussed with the community partner/s and that they agree with the outlined plan. If you have questions about how to

approach this given the nature of your project, please contact Danyel Addes. For additional information about this portion, see FAQs.

Proposal Contents

Complete this CEL mini grant application form. You can review the list of application questions below.

In the CEL mini grant application form:

1. Complete the application questions
2. Upload an **application document** as a Word Doc or PDF with these components:
    a. **Project Description** (3-page maximum): Your proposal should describe the course or co-curricular program and your proposed project with attention to the CEL key components described above.
    b. **A Line Item Budget** with columns for “items”, “justification/explanation” and "amount"
    c. **A Budget Narrative**: Describe how funds will be spent to support the CEL project goals.
3. Upload a **draft syllabus or other outline of program curriculum** (optional but recommended)
4. Upload a **Collaboration Form** signed by community partner / collaborator(s). You can download a copy of the Collaboration Form In Teams or a copy of the Collaboration Form in Google Docs. Complete the downloaded version, with your community partner signature and upload the signed document in qualtrics. This is to show that the project has been created or discussed with the community partner/s and that they agree with the outlined plan. **Projects will not be reviewed without a completed Collaboration Form or substitute document.** If you have questions about how to approach this given the nature of your project, please contact Danyel Addes. For additional information about this portion, see FAQs.

    We look forward to supporting your innovative ideas!

Contact: Danyel Addes, she/her

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Coordinator of Community Engaged Learning
The Institute for Learning & Teaching (TILT) & The Office for Undergraduate Research and Artistry (OURA)
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List of application questions

- [ ] Project Title
- [ ] Amount Requested
- [ ] Brief Project Description (200 word max)
- [ ] Primary contact, department, college, phone, email, campus address
- [ ] Additional collaborators
- [ ] Course number (credit-bearing programs) or Program title and home department/office (non-credit bearing programs)
- [ ] Number of CSU students expected to be involved
- [ ] Number of other people expected to be involved and impacted.
- [ ] Is it a new project or existing project? How many years has it run?
- [ ] 13 Account number for receipt of funds (optional but suggested for quick processing)
- [ ] Should we copy anyone else (department administrator, financial contact, etc.) on communications about fund transfers? If yes, please provide their name, title, and email address.
- [ ] Who are your community partner(s) for this project? Please list the name(s) of the organization(s) or group(s) you'll be working with. If your partner doesn't have a website or may be difficult to find online, please include a brief description about who they are and what they do.
- [ ] Tell us a little about your community partnership/s. How long have you been working together? What kind of collaboration or partnership do you have? (If it is helpful you can reference categories from CSU's Continuum of Engaged Scholarship) What goals or objectives have you met together? What goals or objectives do you have for the work included in this proposal?
- [ ] Can you confirm that you have shared a copy of this grant proposal with your department chair/head and that they are aware of and supportive of the application?