Call for Proposals: CVN Experiential Learning Grant FY23

Objective

The Commonwealth Cyber Initiative (CCI) is establishing Virginia as a global center of excellence at the intersection of security, autonomous systems, and data. With a mission of research, innovation, and workforce development, CCI serves as a catalyst for the Commonwealth's long-term leadership in this sector through the leadership of a central hub and four regional nodes. The Central Virginia Node (CVN) is led by Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU).

CVN seeks to support programs of experiential learning that build on the expertise of the higher education institutions that are members of the CVN network and extend experiential learning opportunities aligned with CCI to students across the Commonwealth. The objective is to enhance students' essential skills to enter the cybersecurity workforce once they finish their current studies; we are particularly interested in projects that expose students to experiences in industry. With this grant, CVN will support programs that are aligned with CCI's overall mission and CVN's focus areas.

Eligibility

Researchers and faculty members at institutions of higher education in CVN who are deemed eligible by their home institution to serve as a Principal Investigator (PI) on an external grant are eligible to apply. Each faculty member may submit up to two proposals (one as a PI and one as a co-PI). Their home institution must be a member of the CVN network. Each proposal must include a co-PI from another institution within CVN[1]. Budgets must be approved in accordance with the home institutions policies for external grants. Women, underrepresented minorities, and persons with disabilities are strongly encouraged to apply.[2] PIs or co-PIs who are currently funded through CCI or CVN on three or more projects are not eligible to apply.

---

[1] CVN institutions include John Tyler Community College, Longwood University, Piedmont VA Community College, Reynolds Community College, University of Virginia, Virginia Commonwealth University, Virginia State University, and Virginia Union University.

[2] National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics. 2021. Women, Minorities, and Persons with Disabilities in Science and Engineering: 2021. Special Report NSF 21-321. Alexandria, VA: National Science Foundation. Available at https://ncses.nsf.gov/wmpd.

Awards

Anticipated funding amount: $ 150,000

Award Amount: $ 50,000

Identified Commitment/Match: No identified commitment or match is required for this funding.

Award Details: Awardees will receive $50,000 that can be used to support experiential learning programs. Awardees will also be required to submit periodic reporting. PIs and co-PIs are expected to participate in CVN meetings and respond to data collection requests by CCI. Any publications that result from this project must include the following statement (contract numbers will be assigned during the award process):

> *This work was supported [in part] by the Commonwealth Cyber Initiative, an investment in the advancement of cyber R&D, innovation, and workforce development, under the contract number xcxxx. For more information about CCI, visit www.cyberinitiative.org.*

According to the terms under which CCI is funded, the following costs are **not** allowable:

- Costs of developing and delivering undergraduate capstone programs, except as part of the larger effort to align cyber and cyber-physical systems security-focused undergraduate program content with industry needs.
- Portion of salaries and benefits of faculty for time spent teaching undergraduates, including teaching cyber-related courses.
- Scholarships for costs of attendance at institutions of higher education.
- Indirect costs (IDC)

Schedule

Request for Proposals Released	May 2, 2022
Last Day for Q&A	May 15, 2022
Proposals Due	June 1, 2022
Award Notification	July 1, 2022
Project Dates	July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023

Proposal Format

Proposals must use 1-inch margins, 11 point (Calibri or arial) font, and single line spacing. The following outline should be followed:

1. Title Page (1 page)
   - Title of proposed project, contact information for Principal Investigator (PI) and co-Principal Investigators (co-PIs).
2. Proposed Program (up to 3 pages)
   - Description of the project: objectives, methodology, milestones, and timeline.
   - Past performance (if applicable): description of methodology, scale, success, and lessons-learned from prior iterations of project
   - Discussion of the alignment of the project with CCI objectives and CVN focus areas.
   - Measures of success: key performance indicators, how success will be measured and tracked.
3. Target student population and pre-requisites for student participation. (up to 2 pages) • Methods to recruit and ensure successful participation of students throughout CVN.
   - Any measures taken to improve participation by under-represented groups (women and under-represented minorities).
   - Note: For the purposes of this program, "student" means individuals enrolled at institutions of higher education in the CVN network.
4. Budget (1 page)
   - Budget items and justification
   - Budget must include requested amount
   - Budget must be approved by OSP, or other office as determined by institutions' internal policies
5. Biographies
   - Up to two pages per PI/co-PI

Proposal Submission

Proposals must be submitted to ccicvn@vcu.edu by the project PI no later than the close of the business day (5:00pm) on Wednesday, June 1, 2022. All proposals must be submitted as a single PDF document. Proposals received after the deadline will not be considered.

Evaluation Criteria

The applications received in response to this RFP will be evaluated by a panel of reviewers and scored according to the following criteria:

Intellectual merit

- Alignment with CCI mission and CVN focus areas, including preparing students to enter the cyber workforce, and to help Virginia retain that workforce.
- Added value to Commonwealth students.
- Clear performance and evaluation metrics proposed for the project.
- Track record of the team involved and likelihood of achieving the stated goals.

Impact

- Impact to the competitiveness of the Commonwealth in workforce development at the intersection of cybersecurity, autonomy, and data.
- Long-term scalability of the program.
- Cost per student involved in the training.
- Improvements in diverse and inclusive representation.
- Quality of the experiential learning component of proposal.