



## LEEP Projects and LEEP Fellows Program Information for Project Sponsors

### Quick Guide to Sponsoring a LEEP Project

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#### Know what a project entails:

- LEEP Projects offer students real-world applications of course material, allowing students to have authentic problem-solving experiences all while engaging with others outside of Clark. This means that projects should have:
  - A well-defined deliverable, or tangible end-product toward which the student can work.
  - A clear set of expectations of, as well as benefits for, the student.
  - A project supervisor, who will serve as the primary point-of-contact and manage the student and their project.
  - An external component, broadly defined, that allows the student to engage with others outside of Clark.
  - A project sponsor and a faculty mentor.

#### Why should I sponsor a LEEP Project?

- When you sponsor a LEEP Project, you contribute in two important ways:
  1. You provide an opportunity for a Clarkie to engage in an active, hands-on learning opportunity. Let's face it – real opportunities for students to deeply engage in the world are both scarce and highly competitive. Further, many of such opportunities are unpaid, making them out of reach for most students in this current economic climate. When you sponsor a LEEP Project, you're investing in one Clarkie's future.
  2. You become connected to Clark's bold effort to transform higher education. Make no mistake, Clark is on the cutting edge of higher education as we rethink how learning takes place – and we recognize that valuable learning often takes place outside of the classroom when students have the opportunity to apply what they learn in class to evolving, unscripted situations, as well as the ability to reflect on that learning.
- Let's not forget that you also get a student of your choosing to work on a project you design for the entire summer – it doesn't get better than that!

#### Sounds great! What else should I know?

- LEEP Projects are intended to be capstone, or culminating experiences, so you ought to consider designing your project with rising seniors (juniors at the time of application) in mind.
- LEEP Projects take place during the summer. You may, in conjunction with your student, begin your project in the spring or continue it into the fall, but the funding period extends to the summer only.
- Students may be eligible to receive a stipend of up to \$2500 to work on your project.
- The faculty mentor for your project will also receive a stipend of \$750 (or \$1000 if they are mentoring two or more students).
- We do not, at this time, provide any funding for the project itself or the project supervisors.
- Students who complete LEEP Projects are referred to as LEEP Fellows.
- Associated programming and professional development opportunities are referred to as the LEEP Fellows Program.

## **I want to sponsor a LEEP Project! What are the next steps?**

**Step 1: Create a project description.** We'll need a project description, which will be posted for potential applicants in the Clark Recruiter. We will work with you to develop your idea into a detailed and compelling project description that will appeal to our students. You may submit your project description to us at any time, but we suggest you do so **no later than January 5, 2015** in order to be competitive.

**Step 2: Recruit applicants.** Yes, that's right: students will need to apply to your project. We will market LEEP Projects to a broad range of students, but you should feel free to market it too.

**Step 3: Interview and select your student** – how you do so is up to you. You may set a deadline by which all applications must be submitted, or you may interview on a rolling basis. You can interview in person, by phone, or over Skype, whatever works best for you.

**Step 4: Help your student prepare their LEEP Fellows application.** The student you select will have to apply for funding, so we ask that you provide them with assistance in preparing their application. The student you select will be given funding preference, but they still need to take the application process seriously. Incomplete or ill-prepared student applications will not be funded.

- There are two application deadlines: Friday, February 27 and Friday, April 17

**Step 5: Submit a short letter of recommendation** (if you're also serving as the faculty mentor). This letter should briefly state that 1) you agree to serve as the student's faculty mentor; 2) you have read the student's proposal and you think the project is worthwhile; and 3) you believe the student is capable of completing the project in the timeframe outlined in the proposal.

**Step 6: Wait for a decision.** All applications for funding will be reviewed by a committee comprised of faculty and staff. Decisions will be sent out within 2-3 weeks of the application deadline.

## **Questions about the LEEP Project Process**

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### **I know whom I want to hire. Why do I have to post the position?**

All positions must be posted in accordance with Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) guidelines. How you conduct the selection process is up to you, but we do encourage you to consider all applications that are submitted.

### **Can I hire any student?**

- You should hire the best student for the position, with the following exceptions:
  - Rising sophomores (first-year students at the time of application) are not eligible
  - We can only fund current, continuing undergraduates in lieu of seniors who will be graduating in spring 2015 since LEEP Projects programming continues into the fall 2015 semester
  - Students who have already completed a LEEP Project are not eligible to complete another

### **How many students may I hire? How many projects can I sponsor?**

You may propose one project. A staff person will work with you to determine the appropriate number of students for your project.

### **Am I guaranteed a student to work on my project?**

You may hire whomever you want to work on your project. Any student who applies for funding for your project will receive funding preference, but *funding will not be guaranteed*. The student you select must apply for funding through a separate process.

### **Why do students have to apply for funding separately?**

- To make sure the student is committed to the project.
- To make sure the student is ready to complete the project.
- To make sure the student understands what they'll be doing for the project.
- To make sure that the two of you – both sponsor and protégé – have a sense of how you might work together.
- The application allows us to have a foundation upon which we can work with the students on their professional development.

### **What if my student's application for funding is rejected?**

- You have several options:
  - If your student submitted for the first funding cycle, they may resubmit their application for consideration in the second cycle. If you elect to do this, we strongly suggest that the student seek advice from LEEP Center staff as well as work closely with you on the resubmission.
  - You can suggest that your student apply for another source of funding (the LEEP Center maintains a list of funding sources).
  - You may ask the student to continue to work on the project as a volunteer.
  - You may elect to pay the student through another funding source.
- Please note that your student can still be considered a LEEP Fellow even if they do not qualify for funding if 1) they work on your project; and 2) they participate fully in the LEEP Fellows program.

### **What if my student has funding from another source?**

- Students who secure additional funding are only eligible to receive LEEP funding if their total compensation is less than \$2500; receipt of outside funds may lessen or negate Clark funding.
- No student will receive more than \$2500 in funding from the University; no double-dipping is allowed.

## **Questions about LEEP Projects/LEEP Fellows**

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### **What are students expected to do as a LEEP Fellow?**

- Students selected to be LEEP Fellows are generally expected to:
  - Complete a project for you, involving a minimum of 140 hours of work.
  - Participate in pre-project advising, pre-application and pre-project preparation, and post-project reflection, report, and presentation.
  - Connect their project experience to their academic coursework and link it to other experiences.
  - Present their project to the Clark community.
- For details on the student experience, please [click here](#).

### **Who else is involved?**

- A project supervisor, who ensures that students are staying on task and meeting benchmarks towards project completion. The project sponsor can also be the project supervisor.
  - What are the expectations for project supervisors?
    - Be available to the student for the duration of the project.
    - Provide the student with a clear set of project objectives and benchmarks.
    - Be available to troubleshoot and provide project assistance for the duration of the project.
    - Provide clear, critical, and helpful feedback for the duration of the project.
    - Contact the LEEP Center with any issues.
    - Participate in surveys as appropriate.
    - Submit evaluations of the student upon request.

- A faculty mentor, who can provide subject matter expertise, project management support, and general advice and guidance.
  - Do I choose the faculty mentor, or does the student?
    - Either, whichever works best for your project. If you do, however, have a preference for a faculty mentor, be sure to inform the student you select for the position so that they do not approach another faculty mentor.
  - What are the expectations for faculty mentors?
    - The faculty mentor generally provides the following type of support:
    - Provide guidance and coaching for the student in support of the goals of the project
    - Assist, as appropriate, in the resolution of issues and/or challenges encountered by the student
    - Provide feedback to the student and the University regarding the LEEP Project/LEEP Fellows experience
    - For details on the faculty mentor role, [click here](#).