Milestones and Pathways

Guidelines for Funding Proposals

Milestones and Pathways is a Faculty of Arts & Science initiative supported by the School of Graduate Studies Innovation Fund. The initiative aims to support graduate students as they progress through their studies and prepare for their careers.

- **Milestones** activities help students reach key benchmarks in their graduate training, including passing departmental examinations and writing dissertations.
- **Pathways** activities provide students with the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in careers within and outside the academy. These events may include alumni networking opportunities and professional development workshops.

The following are general guidelines for proposing activities under the Milestones & Pathways Program. Units in the Faculty of Arts & Science may request funding support between min. $1,000 and max. $5,000 for each proposed activity. Proposals may be developed and submitted by faculty members, staff, or graduate students (with a faculty or staff sponsor). Proposals must be submitted through a primary academic department or unit, and must be approved by the graduate Chair or equivalent, but it is also possible to propose activities across cognate units or departments. Proposals approved for funding may be funded in full or in part. If your unit is proposing an activity outside of those laid out below, please contact us if you require more information. We encourage applications for initiatives that take up issues of mental health and wellness; please contact us to discuss if your proposal includes such elements.

We accept proposals on a rolling basis. Proposals are reviewed monthly. There is no deadline for funding, but please allow five weeks from the time of submission for the committee to review and reach a decision about the funding request.

**General Principles**

1. Consideration will be given to the number of proposals funded for each department in an academic year. Departments are encouraged to prioritize their proposals.
2. Approved budgets will take into consideration the number of student participants and the size of the proposing unit.

**Guidelines**

**Proposing On-Campus Writing Groups:**

*Recommended Duration:* 4 to 12 sessions over several weeks or months (depending on the goal and scope of the group)

*Recommended Facilitators:* Weekly meetings may be peer-facilitated by graduate students, but we recommend that faculty members or experts be invited to run writing workshop sessions.

*Recommended Participants:* Graduate students at any stage in their program, in groups of 6 to 15. Departments may opt to target a specific group of graduate students (e.g. students preparing conference submissions or PhD candidates writing their dissertations).

*Suggested Locations:* Department Lounge or Classroom Space

**Proposing Off-Campus Writing Retreats:**
**Recommended Duration:** 1 to 3 Days  
**Recommended Facilitators:** At least one writing instructor or faculty member who will lead group discussions, run writing workshops, and provide one-on-one consultation during the retreat (as needed). If there is no facilitator, proposals should include a detailed agenda/outcomes for the retreat.  
**Recommended Participants:** Graduate students at any stage in their program, in groups of 6 to 15. Departments may opt to target a specific group of graduate students (e.g. students preparing conference submissions or PhD candidates writing their dissertations).

**Proposing Professional Skills Workshops:**  
**Recommended Duration:** 2 to 3 hours  
**Recommended Facilitators:** 1 to 2 university faculty and/or staff members, possibly with support from senior graduate students. If no university faculty or staff members are available or able to facilitate the needs of the workshop, we may support external facilitators.  
**Recommended Participants:** Graduate students at any stage in their program. Departments may opt to target a specific group of graduate students (e.g. PhD candidates considering alt-ac careers).

**Notes**

1. **Paying honoraria:** Funding may be requested to pay honoraria for external speakers, with the exception of University of Toronto faculty and staff.

2. **Paying faculty member costs:** While we encourage faculty members to actively participate in M&P funded activities, we cannot provide funding to cover their costs (i.e. accommodation, travel, honoraria, etc.)

3. **Teaching-related training:** TA training at the University of Toronto is governed by collective agreements with CUPE 3902. Therefore, we do not fund training directly related to teaching, and encourage graduate students to connect with the Teaching Assistants’ Training Program ([http://tatp.utoronto.ca](http://tatp.utoronto.ca)) for more information and resources on developing these skills.

4. **Conferences and workshops:** To receive M&P funding, conferences and workshops must include a professional skill development component. Disciplinary conferences and workshops without such content will not be funded. Funding requests for conferences and workshops that combine disciplinary and professional skill development may be funded in full or in part.

5. **Reoccurring funding requests:** Although funding may be requested for the same initiative in subsequent years, we may advise that departments take over funding for ongoing and well-established programs.

6. **Level of funding:** Approved proposals can be funded up to $5000; however, proposals that involve a large number of students are more likely to receive higher levels of funding.

7. **Catering costs:** Care should be taken that catering costs are reasonable. Generally, we advise that catering costs be no more than the below (per person):  
   - **Coffee and snacks:** $4-5  
   - **Lunch:** $10-13  
   - **Dinner:** $15-20

If you have any questions about the Milestones and Pathways program or developing an activity within your unit, please contact Erin Macnab, Assistant Director, Teaching & Learning Initiatives (erin.macnab@utoronto.ca).