

# Advancing Community-Engaged (ACE) Student Scholars Grant Request for Proposals (RFP)

DU Grand Challenges Initiative

Center for Community Engagement to advance Scholarship & Learning

Office for Public Good Strategy & Research

AY 2023-2024 & Summer 2024

[Click here to access the online application.](#)

## Background

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DU Grand Challenges (DUGC) brings together students, faculty, staff, and community members to tackle the world's most complex problems through community-engaged learning, scholarship, and creative work.

DU students are invited to submit proposals for community-engaged research or creative work that is designed to:

1. Improve daily living in our communities. This includes, but is not limited to, meeting basic needs and tackling issues like food and housing insecurity, crime and safety, migration, and urban sustainability.
2. Increase economic opportunity in our communities. This includes, but is not limited to, expanding education access, improving transportation options, fulfilling employment rights, advancing entrepreneurship and emerging employee-owned business models, and decreasing poverty.
3. Improving deliberation and action for the public good in our communities. This includes, but is not limited to, inspiring civic engagement, amplifying youth voice, preparing new leaders, and strengthening our connections to one another.

DUGC is an institution-wide initiative powered by the Center for Community Engagement to advance Scholarship and Learning (CCESL).

More on [CCESL](#)

- Vision: A university collaborating with communities to improve lives
- Mission: To activate university and community potential through partnership
- Values: Collaboration for the public good characterized by mutual benefit, fierce optimism, tenacity, rigor, democratic participation, equity, and inclusion

## What is community engagement?

Community engagement is a process of addressing community-defined needs through mutually beneficial and reciprocal partnerships between DU and local or global communities. Reciprocal means the community and DU are equal partners and collaboratively bring their areas of expertise to bear on the identified problem. DUGC defines community broadly—partners could be nonprofits, grassroots organizations, government agencies or entrepreneurs/businesses.

**Community-engaged scholarly work is an approach to academic study that involves working collaboratively with community partner(s).** Scholarly work includes both research and creative work. Research is an investigation or inquiry that seeks to make a scholarly or artistic contribution to knowledge. Creative work is any scholarly endeavor that produces an artistic or creative output through writing, making, composing, designing, recording, performing, or curating. For example, a community-engaged research project might answer a question that is important to the student researcher while also meeting a need that is important to the community. Community-engaged creative work project might demonstrate a student's ability to synthesize, analyze, or generate refined knowledge of a topic while also producing a creative output that meets the need of a community.

**If you have questions regarding project ideas, faculty/staff mentorship, or requirements please email [CCESL@du.edu](mailto:CCESL@du.edu) with Your Last Name/DUGC ACE Question in the subject line.**

## Funding Types & Amounts

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### Academic Year 2023-2024 ACE Student Scholars Grants

- Funds up to **\$3,000 (\$1,000 per quarter – fall, winter, and spring)** for a single student; or up to **\$6,000 (\$2,000 per quarter – fall, winter, and spring)** for two or more students working together can be used for student compensation, project costs and/or project-related travel expenses.
- Additionally, each mentor (e.g., faculty/staff) may be eligible to receive a **\$200** stipend per undergraduate student (or **\$500** for a group of undergraduate students).

### Summer 2024 ACE Student Scholars Grants

- Funds up to **\$3500 per student** for student compensation.
- Funds up to **\$2,000** to support project costs and/or project-related travel expenses.
- Additionally, each mentor (e.g., faculty/staff) may be eligible to receive a **\$2,000** stipend for their mentorship of an undergraduate student.

## Grant Benefits

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In addition to funding, there are several benefits to receiving an ACE Student Scholars Grant. ACE Student Scholars Grant awardees are [DUGC Student Scholars](#) and work with either a [Community-Engaged Fellow](#), CCESL staff member, or faculty mentor on their community-engaged research or creative work project. As a DUGC Student Scholar, awardees will be a part of a collaborative network and may access support and resources such as CCESL's in-person and asynchronous trainings, mentorship, and ePortfolio development support.

The DUGC Student Scholars program is a [4D signature experience](#) that enables students to deepen and apply their thinking, reflect on their interests and goals, and gain new perspectives on education and life. Through this community-engaged experience, students will grow across the four dimensions, supporting their intellectual growth, character exploration, well-being, and sense of purpose.

## Eligibility

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- All undergraduate students currently in good standing are eligible to apply. We accept proposals from graduate students as funds are available. Graduate students are encouraged to contact CCESL to see if funds are available before applying.
- Student applicants must have a mentor (e.g., faculty/staff) who is familiar with their project focus area. The mentor must agree that, if the proposal is funded, 1) the award will be transferred to

their department/center, and 2) they will assist the student in accessing funds according to department/center policy.

- Student applicants are strongly encouraged to collaborate with other students, especially those from other majors.
- Students cannot have funding from more than one DU Grand Challenges ACE Student Scholars Grant at the same time.

## Use of Funds

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Most expenses for research and creative activity are eligible.

### Examples of Fundable Expenses

Student Compensation: Students may request compensation for research/creative work that is completed as part of the project. Students should indicate the total number of hours they intend to work and the total amount of their project budget that should go towards student compensation. Please note that:

- Based on the Student Employee Pay Rate Scale for the 2022-23 academic year, CCESL suggests an hourly rate of \$18/hour for undergraduates and \$18.50/hours for graduate students plus fringe (1.7%). For more information please visit: <https://career.du.edu/resources/pay-rates-position-classification/>
- If you are currently being compensated to work on a CCESL Special Project (as a Community-Engaged Fellow or CCESL-Mentored Student Scholar) you are not eligible for additional project-related compensation.
- Compensation is considered taxable income.
- The student(s) will be hired by the University, through the department of their mentor, as a non-benefited or student employee, meaning that they must complete a background check, I9 form, and W4 form.

Project costs: For example, honoraria or gift cards for community partners, materials, specialized equipment, software, interview transcription, and data coding needed to carry out the research or creative work. Explanation is required for how materials and/or equipment will be used after research activities have been completed.

Project-related travel expenses: For example, transportation, hotel, and meals that can be justified as necessary for research and creative activity and carried out in compliance with COVID protocols.

### Non-Fundable Expenses

- Expenses that have already been incurred.
- Computers and/or tablets.
- Student tuition.
- “Backpay” covering student compensation or project costs accrued before the date the grant is awarded.
- Compensation of students for work being done for class-credit. Compensation is allowed for projects related to a class that go beyond the work required to receive class-credit.
- Grant funds **cannot be used** to relieve the operating budgets of university departments or community partners.

### Funding Timeline & Extension Requests

Once an ACE Student Scholars Grant has been awarded, it takes approximately 1-2 weeks for funds to be transferred to the mentor’s department and become available for use. For planning purposes, a start date 4-6 weeks after a full proposal (including letters) is submitted is recommended.

Funds must ordinarily be spent within 1 month of the proposed project end date. If additional time is needed beyond the proposed end date, a request for extension must be submitted in writing. A written request must be submitted to [ccesl@du.edu](mailto:ccesl@du.edu) that includes the dollar amount remaining, the reason for the extension, and a revised timeline.

## Funding & Institutional Policies

Any use of DU Grand Challenges ACE Student Scholars Grant funding must be in accordance with institutional policies as detailed at <https://www.du.edu/policy/find-policy>. For example (but not limited to): research involving human or animal subjects must be reviewed by the DU Institutional Review Board; international travel must be registered with the university in advance; driving using institutional funds must comply with university driving procedures; following the Technology Acquisition policy for purchase of software and hardware.

## Selection Criteria & Expectations

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The ACE Student Scholars Grant Review Committee bases its selection on the quality of the proposal, including the budget request and narrative. The committee looks for proposals that fit the definition of community-engaged research or creative work, are developed in close consultation with faculty and a community partner and present a coherent set of goals and outcomes.

A proposal cannot be reviewed until all components, including online application form, community partner letter, and mentor letter, have been submitted. Once all three items have been submitted, please allow two weeks for the selection process.

### Expectations if Funded

In addition to carrying out the proposed project, awardees are expected to complete tasks in each of the following three categories:

- **Communication:**
  - Submit any requests to adjust your project (i.e., budget, timeline, project scope, etc.) to [CCESL@du.edu](mailto:CCESL@du.edu). Requests must be vetted and approved before any changes may be implemented. Violating this process may result in the immediate revocation of your funding.
  - Work with CCESL to communicate information about your DU Grand Challenges research or creative work through outlets such as CCESL's Public Good Impact newsletter, blog posts, social media, etc.
  - Include recognition in all communications about this project (e.g., posters, talks, social media, etc.) that the work is funded by DUGC and CCESL. If your project is funded, you will be provided with the DUGC and CCESL logos to use in your materials.
- **Scholarship:**
  - Undergraduate Awardees: present your project at the [DU Undergraduate Showcase](#) (May 2024 for Academic Year projects, May 2025 for Summer projects)
  - Graduate Student Awardees: submit a short (300-500 words) article on the project for publication in our Public Good Impact Newsletter. This article is due within 30 days of the project's end date, as indicated on your application. You may invite your community collaborators and/or students to work with you on this article. Please email your article to [ccesl@du.edu](mailto:ccesl@du.edu) along with any relevant photos, collateral, or other products you'd like to share. If you need an extension, please submit your request via email with a brief explanation to [ccesl@du.edu](mailto:ccesl@du.edu).

- Reporting:
  - Upon completion of the project, awardees will be required to submit an ePortfolio (personal website) that documents their learning and project outcomes. The ePortfolio must include at minimum:
    - Names of student researchers, faculty mentor(s), and community partner(s)
    - Any artifacts created during your project
    - A description of 1) what you did; 2) the results of your project; 3) how the work contributed to your development as a scholar; and 4) how you will apply what you learned in this experience going forward
    - A brief description of how your work was communicated to your community partner and/or the larger community
    - Explicit recognition that the project was funded by DU Grand Challenges and the Center for Community Engagement to advance Scholarship and Learning

Final ePortfolios are due **within 30 days** of the project's completion or by **June 1, 2024** (for AY projects) or **August 31, 2024** (for summer projects) whichever is sooner. Students may determine their own timeline for their project within this timeframe.

Please note that some ACE Student Scholars Grants are donor-funded, and as such some details of your project may be shared with the donor. CCESL may also ask for your permission to feature excerpts from your ePortfolio in the [Public Good Impact blog](#).

## Submission Deadline

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Grant proposals are accepted on a rolling basis. Proposals will be accepted until all funds have been awarded or the following deadlines, whichever comes first:

- **Academic Year 2023-2024 projects: April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024**
- **Summer 2024 projects: May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024.**

Funding decisions are usually made within two weeks of receiving a complete proposal (online application form and all required letters). **We recommend a project start date 4-6 weeks after a complete proposal is submitted and require a start date that is at least two weeks after a complete proposal has been submitted.** For example, if a complete proposal was submitted on January 1<sup>st</sup>, the project state date must be no earlier than January 15<sup>th</sup>. For further details on what a complete proposal entails, see Submission Requirements below.

After submitting the online application form, an automated confirmation email including a copy of your application will be sent to you. Once we receive your related letters, CCESL will promptly send an email to confirm the successful submission of your complete proposal. In case you do not receive a confirmation email within 48 hours, kindly reach out to [CCESL@du.edu](mailto:CCESL@du.edu).

## Submission Requirements & Process

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There are three components that make up a complete proposal:

1. Letter of support from your **faculty/staff mentor**. (Not required if you are already CCESL Student Scholar or Community-Engaged Fellow)
2. Letter of collaboration from your **community partner**. (Not required for proposals submitted by Community-Engaged Fellows or CCESL-Mentored Student Scholars related to work on a CCESL Special Project)

### 3. Online Application Form

#### Letter of Support from your Faculty/Staff Mentor

This brief letter should indicate your mentor's support for the project and understanding that the award will be transferred to their department, and that they will be responsible for assisting you in accessing funds according to department policy and using funds in accordance with institutional policies as detailed at <https://www.du.edu/policy/find-policy>. We strongly suggest you discuss your project and this letter requirement with your faculty/staff mentor before completing the online application form.

**This letter must be sent directly to [CCESL@du.edu](mailto:CCESL@du.edu) from your mentor with 'Your Last Name-DUGC ACE Letter' in the subject line.**

#### Letter of Collaboration from your Community Partner

This brief letter should describe the community partner's assessment of the collaboration and potential benefits of the project to the community. We strongly suggest you discuss your project and this letter requirement with your community partner before completing the online application form.

**This letter must be sent directly to [CCESL@du.edu](mailto:CCESL@du.edu) from your community partner with 'Your Last Name-DUGC ACE Letter' in the subject line.**

#### Online Application Form

**The main application must be submitted via [this online application](#).** As described in detail below, the main application includes several parts:

- A. Student Applicant Information (*described below*)
- B. Mentor Information (*described below*)
- C. Project Information (*described below*)
- D. Project Narrative (*described below*)
- E. Budget and Budget Justification (*described below, prepare as an attachment*)
- F. Additional Questions

#### PART A: STUDENT APPLICANT INFORMATION

1. Your Name, Year, Major
2. Your 87XXXXXXX Number
3. Your Email Address
4. I am a:
  - a. CCESL Community-Engaged Fellow
  - b. CCESL Student Scholar
  - c. Other Graduate Student
  - d. Other Undergraduate Student
5. **CCESL Community-Engaged Fellows Only:** Are you applying for this ACE Student Scholars Grant to support your Community-Engaged Fellow's project? Yes or No
  - If yes, list the full names of all CCESL Student Scholars involved in this project.
6. Your Team: Are you submitting this proposal with other students? Yes or No.
  - If yes, please list the student's full name, DU ID, Major, Year in School, and email for each additional student.

#### PART B: MENTOR INFORMATION

Please provide the following about your research mentor (e.g., faculty, staff, or Community-Engaged Fellow Mentor) for the proposed project:

1. Mentor Name(s)
2. Mentor's Department/School/Center



3. Mentor's Email

#### PART C: PROJECT INFORMATION

1. Project Title
2. Community Partner(s)
3. Amount Requested (must match the total in your budget, described below)
4. Project Start Date (dd/mm/yyyy, no earlier than two weeks after the complete proposal—this application form and letters—materials have been submitted)
5. Project End Date (dd/mm/yyyy)
6. Issue Area(s): Which DU Grand Challenges Issue Area(s) does your project address? (Select all that apply)
  - a. Improving Daily Living
  - b. Increasing Economic Opportunity
  - c. Advancing Deliberation & Action for the Public Good

#### PART D: PROJECT NARRATIVE

Please respond to each prompt within the character/word limits. Your responses should be specific, clear, concise and accessible to a wide audience. The narrative must provide evidence that this project qualifies as community-engaged scholarship. For example, your responses should demonstrate that the project has a clear research or creative work component and has been co-developed or co-implemented with the community partner(s).

1. **Project Abstract:** Provide a brief summary of the project for a general audience. This abstract will be posted on the DUGC website if your project is funded. Up to 1200 characters (approximately 150 words)
2. **Keywords:** Provide 3 keywords to describe the proposal topic.
3. **Definition of Public Problem:** Define the public problem to be addressed by your project. Your definition should explain both the community and academic importance of the issue. Up to 2200 characters (approximately 300 words).
4. **Community Partnership:** Describe your community partnership(s). Your description should include your history of working with the community partner(s) as well as the role that the partner(s) will play in the proposed project. Up to 2200 characters (approximately 300 words)
5. **Goals and Methods:** Define the specific goals of the project in terms of both research or creative work and community impact. Outline the steps (or methods) you will use to meet the project goals. Up to 2200 characters (approximately 300 words).
6. **Results:** Describe a plan to analyze the results of this project. The plan should include metrics by which you will assess whether the goals of the project were met. Up to 1200 characters (approximately 150 words).
7. **Communication:** Describe how you expect to share project outcomes with your community partners. For example, this might include community presentations, final ePortfolio, blogs, or other public communications. Up to 2200 characters (approximately 300 words).
8. **Student Learning:** Describe how this project will benefit your learning. How will working with a community partner on your project contribute to your academic and personal development? Up to 2200 characters (approximately 300 words).

#### PART E: BUDGET & BUDGET JUSTIFICATION

**Budget:** You must use one the following templates to create your budget. Download and save the template with "LastName\_ACE Budget" as the file name. **Do not edit the template directly.**

- **Academic Year 2023-2024 projects:** [AY2023-2024 ACE Budget Template view only.xlsx](#)
- **Summer 2024 projects:** [Summer 2024 ACE Budget Template view only.xlsx](#)

**Student Compensation Calculator:** If you will be using funds for student compensation, please use the 'Student Compensation Calculator' sheet in the budget template to indicate the number of hours you/your

team members expect to work over the length of your project and the hourly wage. When setting your hourly wage, please adhere to the guidelines associated with the [Student Employee Pay Rate Scale](#).

**Budget Justification:** Detail a justification for each budget item requested in the “Justification” column of the budget template. *If the justification for an item is not specific the item will be deducted from the budget.* If students are being paid to assist with the project, please describe the expected outcomes of their work. Be sure to fully justify stipends and travel expenses. Travel in excess 20% of the total project budget must be justified in budget justification.

Once you’ve finished, upload the Excel document into the online application. Review the section on “Use of Funds” above for examples of fundable and non-fundable expenses.

#### PART F: ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

1. Have you previously received a DU Grand Challenges ACE Student Scholars Grant? If YES, the Project Narrative should address how this proposal differs from previously funded projects.
2. Have you applied for or received any funds from other sources to support your project?
3. If you answered yes, have funds been approved?
4. Please provide details about any funds you’ve received or requested including the source(s) and dollar amount.
5. Please select each of the following to acknowledge your understanding.
  - I will submit a letter from a faculty/staff mentor. My application will not be reviewed until this letter is submitted. (Not required if you are already CCESL Student Scholar or Community Engaged Fellow)
  - I will submit a letter from a community partner. My proposal will not be reviewed until this letter is submitted. (Not required for proposals submitted by Community-Engaged Fellows or CCESL-Mentored Student Scholars related to work on a CCESL Special Project)
  - I will spend or return all funds by June 1st, 2024 (for AY grants) or by August 31, 2024 (for summer grants).
  - If any large budget adjustments need to occur, I will submit a memo to [ccesl@du.edu](mailto:ccesl@du.edu) with the justification for the change.
  - I will spend all funds in accordance with institutional policies.
  - As an ACE Student Scholars Grant recipient, I will become a DUGC Student Scholar.
  - I will be required to submit an ePortfolio within 30 days of the project’s completion or by June 1, 2024 (for AY projects) or August 31, 2024 (for summer projects) whichever is sooner.
  - If I am an undergraduate awardee, I will present my project at the DU Undergraduate Showcase (May 2024 for Academic Year projects, May 2025 for Summer projects). If I am a graduate student awardee, I will submit a short (300-500 words) article on the project for publication in CCESL’s Public Good Impact Newsletter.
  - I will recognize the Center for Community Engagement to advance Scholarship and Learning and DU Grand Challenges in any public communications.
  - Some ACE Student Scholars Grants are donor-funded, and as such details of my project may be shared with the donor.
6. If funded, do you allow CCESL to feature your project on social media and other communication channels (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, CCESL website, Public Good Impact Newsletter, etc.)? Yes or No.
7. How did you hear about the ACE Student Scholars Grant?