



Productivity and Innovation Fund Proposal Form

PART 1 – PROJECT OVERVIEW

Productivity and Innovation Fund Proposal Type

Institutional	Multi-institutional
Priority Area of Focus: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1. Program Prioritization <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Course(s)/Program Redesign: <input type="checkbox"/> Foundational or Introductory Course(s) or Program(s) <input type="checkbox"/> Experiential Learning <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching Quality	Priority Area of Focus: <input type="checkbox"/> 1. Program Prioritization <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Course(s)/Program Redesign: <input type="checkbox"/> Foundational or Introductory Course(s) or Program(s) <input type="checkbox"/> Experiential Learning <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching Quality <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Administrative Services Delivery Transformation <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching Evaluation (System wide proposal only)

Project Name

Development and Implementation of a Formal Program Prioritization and Strategic Enrolment Plan

Lead Organization & Contact Information

Organization: Nipissing University

Contact Name: Dr. Harley d'Entremont

Title: Vice President, Academic and Research

Telephone: 705-474-3450 ext 4254

Email: harleyd@nipissingu.ca

Partner Institutions – *If the proposal is multi-institutional, list all partner institutions, including contact information, participating in this proposal. Proposals must include a letter of support from each partner.*

n/a

Executive Summary – *provide a brief overview of the proposed project, the project goals and the expected outcomes. This section should also include the proposal's alignment to the Fund's overall goals and objectives. (Maximum 500 words)*

Nipissing University has recently undertaken an initiative to prepare a new Strategic Plan, a process intended to revitalize its programming and improving learning outcomes for students choosing to study in northern Ontario and who wish to experience studying in a high quality, smaller, more personal university setting.

Nipissing University has introduced innovative programming in the 20 years it has existed as a

separate degree granting institution. In addition to providing quality traditional undergraduate education in Arts and Science and Education, strategic partnerships have been developed with Community Colleges and with health care facilities. Examples have been Collaborative Nursing Program in partnership with Canadore College, Degree completion opportunities under the College partnership program with a number of Ontario Community Colleges and opportunities to bridge from various diploma RPN programs to a BScN degree.

The University's planning efforts to date focused on expansion of existing programs and introduction of new programs. Nipissing's programs undergo regular quality reviews to ensure its programs are meeting or exceeding provincial standards. However, Nipissing University has no formal methodology for the prioritization of its programs in the context of its strategic plans or Strategic Mandate Agreement and how each program contributes to overall strategic enrolment planning.

Nipissing is facing an unprecedented reduction in provincial grant funding as the province mandates the movement to a two year Bachelor of Education program. Enrolment growth has slowed and with the demographics declining in its traditional catchment areas, Nipissing University will be challenged to maintain stable revenues for the next five years. As an institution, Nipissing has no long term, formal Strategic Enrolment Plan in place as this activity has only been done on an informal basis.

Addressing the need to formalize a program priority methodology and link the prioritization to a strategic Enrolment Plan, Nipissing University proposes to undertake a process to draft a tailored program prioritization methodology based on proven methodology. To this end, Nipissing proposes the modification and implementation of a methodology developed by Dickeson (2010) that examines a number of different dimensions when evaluating the contribution of a particular program makes to the institution. Examples of these dimensions are: Program Relevance, Program Demand, Capacity to Deliver, Financial Impact, Learning and Research Outcomes, Wider benefits and Future Opportunities. Much of the data collected for the review process will also inform the formalized strategic enrolment plan and under this proposal Nipissing wishes to link these two activities.

Given timeframes for the Productivity and Innovation Fund, we are proposing to limit the prioritization exercise to a pilot assessment of 8 academic units. The units selected for review will represent approximately one third of academic units. The second component, the forward looking Strategic Enrolment Planning, will enable the University to identify new viable areas for program development, consistent with our mission and strengths as well as reflecting community needs. This component of the project will not be limited to a few areas but will encompass the whole University.

Funding Request

Total Productivity and Innovation Fund Request Amount

\$ 350,000

PART 2 – PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS (Maximum 6 pages)

1. **Proposal Summary** - Provide a detailed description of the undertaking, the scope and purpose of the project, including the specific activities that will be undertaken. Provide a work plan with a schedule of key activities and target dates for completion. Activities should be completed by March 31, 2014 to be eligible for funding.

A project of this nature will involve the contribution of a wide variety of personnel from within the university and from the public outside the institution. There will be a steering committee created to establish the terms of reference for the project. The committee will consist of senior University management, faculty members and students. This ambitious project will require the engagement of at least one but more likely two groups consultants. The first group will require expertise in performing program prioritization at small institutions. The second group of consultants to be engaged will require expertise in the development of a strategic enrolment plans.

The Communications office will be engaged to outline to the institution the need and purpose of such a review. They will provide regular updates as to the progress of the project.

There will be a significant quantity of data to be gathered. Some of this data will exist in the data systems of the University. Other data will need to be collected in the form of surveys and focus group discussions. The gathered information will be analysed and initial findings shared with the units selected for review.

Once the program prioritization methodology has been accepted, it will be applied to other units within the University. The data collected as part of the program prioritization process will also be used to inform the strategic enrolment planning exercise and again one of the outcomes for this project will be a draft framework for an enrolment plan.

Major Activity	Timeline
Assemble a Program Prioritization/Strategic Enrolment Review team. Should include senior academic administrators (VPAR, Associate VPAR, Deans as well as representative faculty members and Students.) Supporting roles to be provided by Dir of Finance, Registrar, and Institutional Planning office	October 2012
Establish terms of reference for project and role for consultants	October 2012
Select and engage consultant for Program Prioritization	October/November 2012
Select and engage consultant for Strategic Enrolment Planning	October/November 2012
Engage communications Office	October 2012 through March 2013
Collection of existing data	November/December 2012

Administer surveys to gather further information	November/December 2012
Prepare analysis of information covering the selected program dimensions	January 2013
Draft initial findings and observations for comment by units reviewed	February 2013
Draft Formal Program Prioritization Process and begin plans to expand its application to other units	March 2013
Draft recommendations to inform the Strategic Enrolment Plan	March 2013
Evaluation by Senior Management Team, Board of Governors and Senate.	March 2013

2. **Innovation & Productivity** - *Identify the innovative aspects (ideas, systems, processes) of the proposed project. Describe how the approach improves productivity in areas that are central to the institution's mandate and mission to enable financial sustainability over the long term.*

Methodologies for the prioritization of university programs have existed for a number of years. Nipissing intends to implement a modified version of the existing methodology as proposed by Dickeson to take into account the activities of a small undergraduate university. As a small institution, it is a difficult balancing act to provide a wide range programs and elective courses and yet pay attention to the financial impact that implementation of various programs incur. In addition, Nipissing needs to develop a strategic enrolment plan that reflects the strategic plan for the organization that will ensure the financial sustainability of Nipissing in the long term. There is a significant overlap of the information requirements that is required to inform either process. The innovation Nipissing wishes to explore is the combination of these efforts.

3. **Project Outcomes** - *Link the program goals with expected outcomes to be achieved, including any metrics for measuring improvements to the student experience. Identify a process for evaluating the effectiveness of the project, including any KPIs, institution-specific surveys, cost-savings and/or cost avoidance etc. Identify targets for measurable outcomes and a process for reporting on them, and any risk mitigation strategies for project completion and achieving outcomes.*

At the conclusion of this process, Nipissing will have a framework of a formalized program prioritization process that can be agreed to by all stakeholders. The second outcome from this project will be a framework for the preparation of a formalized enrolment plan for the University.

4. **Partnerships & Knowledge Sharing** - *Describe the nature and importance of each partner institutions' contribution to the project. Describe how the project will leverage partnerships to achieve the Fund's goals and enhance collaboration, and the potential for replication. Indicate how results and best practices will be shared with the postsecondary community.*

There will be little opportunity for partnership as this will be a highly individualized process. However, once a process is in place, there will be opportunities to share our results in COU

forums such as OCAV.

5. **Project Cost** – Provide a detailed project budget that itemizes how funding will be allocated. Include activities that may be funded through other means.

Activity	Budget
Engage Consultant – Program Prioritization	\$70,000
Engage Consultant – Strategic Enrolment	\$80,000
Staff Time for President, VP, Academic and Research, AVP Academic, Deans	\$90,000
Release time for Department Chairs	\$48,000
Staff time – Institutional Planning	\$50,000
Staff time – Finance Office	\$25,000
Staff time - Communications	\$50,000
Website construction for communications and survey administration	\$25,000
Facilities costs for office space, computers	\$20,000
UTS Services	\$20,000
Total Project Budget (2013-14)	\$478,000

- Proposed Revenue Source(s)** – Identify any other funding sources and/or in-kind contributions.

Proposed Funding Source(s)	Amount of Funding
MTCU Productivity and Innovation Fund	\$350,000
Internal Resources	\$128,000
Total Project Budget (2013-14)	\$478,000

Describe how activities will be sustained beyond the 2013-14 fiscal year and/or an ongoing basis.

This project will by necessity extend beyond the 2013-14 fiscal year. As noted in the project description with the compressed timeframe for this funding, it will be possible to only perform a review on a limited number of academic units. The methodology will be applied to other units at the University over the next year. The cost will be absorbed within the operating budget of the institution.

6. **Cost-Savings or Cost-Avoidance Strategy** – Describe the cost savings strategy for this project. Identify projected cost-savings, potential for ongoing savings beyond 2013-14, and associated timelines.

Funding under the PIF will allow the University the opportunity to develop a formalized methodology for program prioritization and in turn inform a strategic enrolment plan. Without

this funding it would be very difficult for the institution to find the necessary resources to commence either of these activities. It is anticipated that this activity will rejuvenate activity in all academic units of the institution, increasing enrolments with refreshed programming opportunities.

7. Potential for Scalability (Updated August 2013) – Describe, if any, the potential for this proposal to be funded at a reduced scale. This section must indicate changes to any activities, outcomes, timelines, and funding requested in the scaled down version.

The project is already scaled down to work within the timelines under this project. In its initial format, the goal is to review eight academic units as part of the program prioritization component of the project. It will be difficult to reduce the scope of the strategic enrolment planning component of the project any further and maintain the ability to provide meaningful result at its conclusion.

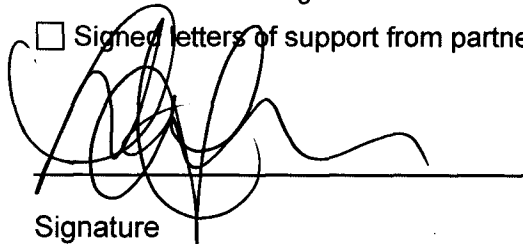
Part 3 – PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Institution and multi-institutional proposals should be submitted electronically on or before **September 30, 2013** through the Secure File Transfer website.

Applicant Signatures

Proposals must be approved by the President/Executive Head or Designate of the lead organization and must include his/her signature.

Signed letters of support from partner organization are attached to this proposal.



Signature

Dr. Michael DeGagné
President, and Vice Chancellor

30/09/2013
Date