SEF Application

Thank you for your interest in the Student Engagement Fund (SEF) program!

Before beginning this application, please note that if you log out of the application, you must log back in on the same computer to pick up where you left off. Additionally, you will be required to upload the following documents at the end of the application. Please prepare these materials in advance so you can submit them with your application:

- Budget: [SEF Budget Template](#)
- Project Timeline
- Student-Faculty Contract: [SEF Student-Faculty Contract](#)
- Transcripts (students only)
- Reference Form (students only)

**Students, please have your faculty or staff reference complete the [SEF Reference Form](#) for your application to be considered complete. Letters of recommendation must be submitted by the application deadline.**

Please submit all materials as PDFs.

If you have any questions, please contact the Student Engagement Fund Team at ugresearch@niu.edu.

Have you ever applied for the Student Engagement Fund before?

- [ ] Yes (Please include the semester and year you applied below)

- [ ] No

Are you a student or a faculty member?

- [ ] Student
- [ ] Faculty

Are you applying for Travel (to a conference, competition, class field trip/activity, etc), a Research, Artistry, or Community Based Research Project, or a Field School?

*Travel to conferences or competitions, group travel for class activity:* Funding can cover travel expenses incurred by the students. Projects may be mentored by faculty or staff, as appropriate. *Limited funding is available for non-CLAS applicants.*
Research, Artistry, or Community Based Research Project: Funding for undergraduate projects initiated by students or faculty to cover a student’s compensation (hourly paid assistantship position) and project related expenses for equipment, software, travel, etc.

Field Schools: Funding can cover expenses for students participating in field schools.

- Travel to Conferences or Competitions
- Research, Artistry, or Community Based Research Project
- Field School

Contact Information - Faculty Application

- First Name ________________________________________________
- Last Name ________________________________________________
- NIU ID ________________________________________________
- Email Address ________________________________________________
- Department ________________________________________________
- Department Chair Name ________________________________________________
- Department Chair Email ________________________________________________
Student Information - If you have selected the student(s) that you will be working with next semester, please list their contact information below. If not, please skip this question.

- Student First Name ____________________________________________
- Student Last Name ____________________________________________
- Student Z-ID ________________________________________________
- Major ________________________________________________________
- Student First Name ____________________________________________
- Student Last Name ____________________________________________
- Student Z-ID ________________________________________________
- Major ________________________________________________________

Contact Information - Student Application

- First Name ___________________________________________________
- Last Name ___________________________________________________
- ZID _________________________________________________________
- NIU Email ___________________________________________________
- Major _______________________________________________________
- Additional Email _____________________________________________
- Faculty Mentor Name __________________________________________
- Faculty Mentor Email _________________________________________
- Faculty Mentor Department/Office ______________________________
When is your graduation month/year?

*Please note that students cannot graduate before completion of the semester they are applying for.*

________________________________________________________________

What is your current NIU GPA?

________________________________________________________________

Demographic Information

The following information will be used to help us better analyze our data and better serve NIU's diverse populations of students.

In which college do you study?

- Business
- Education
- Engineering and Engineering Technology
- Health and Human Sciences
- Liberal Arts and Sciences
- Visual and Performing Arts

What is your year in school?

- Freshmen
- Sophomore
- Junior
- Senior
- Other
Did you begin your time at NIU as a freshman or as a transfer student?

- Freshman
- Transfer

What is your cumulative GPA?

- 0.00-0.49
- 0.50-0.99
- 1.00-1.49
- 1.50-1.99
- 2.00-2.49
- 2.50-2.99
- 3.00-3.49
- 3.50-4.00

Are you in the CHANCE program?

- Yes
- No

Are you in the Honors program?

- Yes
- No
Are you a student athlete?

- Yes
- No

Demographic Information, cont.

The following information will be used to help us better analyze our data and better serve NIU’s diverse populations of students.
What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Non-binary / third gender
- Prefer to self-describe ________________________________
- Prefer not to answer

What is your ethnicity?

- African American
- American Indian / Native Alaskan
- Asian
- Hispanic
- Pacific Islander
- White
- Multiple Ethnicities
- Other
- Prefer not to answer

Are you a first generation college student?

- Yes
- No
Are you an international student?

- Yes
- No

Research, Artistry, or Community Based Research Project Information

You will now be directed to the application questions regarding research, artistry, and community based research projects. These projects cover the following:

- Mentored student research projects: Funding for undergraduate research projects initiated by students or faculty to cover a student’s compensation (paid assistantship position) and research related expenses for equipment, software, travel, etc.
- Mentored community-based research projects: Funding for undergraduate community-based research projects initiated by students or faculty to cover a student’s compensation (paid assistantship position) and research related expenses for equipment, software, travel, etc.

Please read through the following information to determine which category your project falls under. Applicants that are able to clearly articulate their project type are more likely to receive funding.

**Research/Artistry Projects**

- Main purpose is to contribute to the body of knowledge on a specific topic
- Intends to serve the academic community
- Pursues the "truth" and "objectivity"
- Controlled by the researcher/artist

**Community Based Research**

- Main purpose is to provide the community with tools and information to enact change
- Intends to serve the local and academic communities
- Pursues community empowerment and mutual learning
- Controlled by community members and researcher/artist

For more information on how to determine the type of your project, please view the following PDF: [Types of Research](#).

- Research/Artistry Project
- Community Based Research Project
Project Title:

Background
Explain the present state of knowledge and understanding of the community you will be working with or in your field of study, using proper citations when necessary. Provide the background of the topic in an engaging manner (e.g., relate topic to reader, raise interesting questions, note topics importance in field, etc.). Include descriptions of any partnering organizations. Make it clear why you want to do this project and why it needs to be undertaken to fill a gap in knowledge.

________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________

If you are working with a nonprofit community or agency, please include their information below. Examples of these types of organizations include community based nonprofits, FermiLab, Argonne National Laboratory, or other similar organizations.

☐ Name of Agency ____________________________________________

☐ Agency Website ____________________________________________

Impact
Explain the significance of your project as it contributes to the advancement of learning in your field (i.e. the big picture)

________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________

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**Project Objectives**
Clearly and concisely state the problem/question(s) or creative concept(s) that will be addressed during the period of the proposed project.

________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________

**Methodology: Action Steps/Process**
Describe in clear and understandable terms your general plan of work in order to fulfill your stated objectives.

________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________

**Methodology: Expected Results**
What are your expected results or the expected range of results for your proposed project?

________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________
Final Product
How do you plan for your project to be disseminated? Examples include poster, report, a publishable article or chapter, a performance, a policy recommendation, or other. Be as specific as possible.

________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________

Student Academic Experience
Indicate how the proposed experience is expected to enhance your or your student’s academic experience and future career.

________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________

Does this project tie into a specific course?

☐ Yes (List course below) _________________________________

☐ No

Are you applying for compensation, reimbursement, or both?

☐ Compensation

☐ Reimbursement
Additional Documents

Download and submit the budget template, available here: SEF Budget Template.
All applicants are required to submit an itemized budget when completing the SEF application whether you are applying for funds related to project supplies, student compensation, funding for travel, or a combination of the three. Each category requires a separate budget. Any budget submission that is not completed using the provided template will not be considered. It is important that applicants are as specific as possible when submitting their budget, including the following information:

- Description of item (including the cost and quantity)
- Justification of why the item is essential for the project’s success
- Student Compensation applicants- describe the amount of hours you plan for the student to work on the project per week and the tasks the student will be working on
- Distinguish if the purchase will be made by the student or the Department

*Items purchased by the student directly- examples include: travel, hotel, poster printing, registration for a conference, training cost, travel-related per diem etc.*
*Items purchased by the department (these will require NIU property tag with a few exceptions) - examples include: group travel, software, hardware, other equipment, books, lab safety gear, and data storage.*

Eligible expenses include (but are not limited to):
- Project supplies (including printing costs)
- Travel related to research or project
- Conference travel for undergraduate students (must be presenting outcomes from this project)
  Compensation for undergraduates

**NOTE:** For Travel applications, the budget **MUST** include: mileage, airfare, hotel/lodging, registration fees, per diem costs, and any miscellaneous expenses.

Upload a detailed timeline of your proposed project.

Download and submit the Student Faculty Contract, available here: Student Faculty Contract
Faculty, if you have a student selected for your project, please submit this as well.

**STUDENTS ONLY:** Upload your unofficial transcripts.
**STUDENTS ONLY:** Please provide the email address for your letter of recommendation.
Recommenders will receive an email stating that you requested a letter from them for the SEF grant.