

**Council on Postsecondary Education  
September 16, 2007**

**Northern Kentucky University  
Regional Stewardship Grant Proposal**

*Northern Kentucky University is seeking Council approval of its regional grant proposal. With that approval, NKU will qualify to receive \$300,000 in 2007-08 regional grant funds to support efforts to build intellectual capacity in stewardship priority areas.*

**ACTION:** The staff recommends that the Council approve Northern Kentucky University's regional grant proposal.

According to Council guidelines, regional grant funds are to be used to recruit and retain full-time faculty or professional staff in areas of strategic benefit to the area of geographic responsibility or the state, as identified in an institution's strategic plan for regional stewardship and its regional grant proposal, and as endorsed by a region's stewardship advisory committee. Appropriate uses for these funds include start-up costs, salaries, benefits, travel, and other professional expenses as permitted by university policy for new faculty or professional staff positions in targeted priority areas. It is anticipated that the addition of newly hired faculty or staff within a given Council approved priority area will result in reduced departmental teaching loads and increased release time, so that participating faculty will have more time to engage in regional stewardship activities.

At the September 17, 2006, meeting, the Council approved NKU's proposal to use its 2006-07 infrastructure pool allocation to build intellectual capacity in three priority areas—early childhood development, informatics, and public health and health education. This was allowable under program guidelines since NKU had demonstrated that sufficient levels of personnel and resources were already committed to supporting core stewardship functions. With this regional grant proposal, NKU is requesting money to further expand intellectual capacity to address the identified needs and priorities of the region.

As required by Council guidelines, NKU has submitted two documents: (1) a strategic plan (Attachment A), produced in collaboration with, and approved by, an institution's advisory committee, which identifies regional needs, opportunities, and stewardship priorities; and (2) a proposal that identifies targeted areas of impact at the university and contains a proposed budget for faculty and staff salaries and operating expenses in those areas (Attachment B). The Council approved Vision 2015, NKU's regional stewardship strategic plan, at its September 17, 2006, meeting.

NKU's work is guided by the work of the region's Vision 2015 effort. The executive committee of the Regional Stewardship Council, which is part of the region's Vision 2015

effort and serves as NKU's regional stewardship advisory committee, has endorsed NKU's regional grant proposal (Attachment C).

NKU proposes that regional grant funds be used to support the following four initiatives that are tied to the goals of Vision 2015. The initiatives focus on early childhood development and literacy, mathematics education, mental health, and technology assistance.

**1. Early Childhood and Literacy: One of the goals of the Vision 2015 plan is to "exceed national education performance standards at every level."** With regional grant funds, NKU will focus on early childhood development and literacy in its work with STRIVE, a regional education effort.

NKU proposes to employ one full-time faculty member, one half-time faculty member, a full-time administrative assistant, and one graduate assistant. The funding from the regional grant fund (\$90,000) will cover about half of the costs of salaries and benefits, and the balance of the funding will be covered from existing university funds.

Some of the projects these new faculty and staff will implement include:

- Development of a school readiness assessment measure.
- Technical assistance workshops for directors of early childhood centers.
- Expansion of success by six teams to every county in NKU's area of geographic responsibility.
- Creation of a regional plan to provide a caring adult in the life of each child in the region.
- Creation of a database to document the early childhood experiences of children and connect to their performance in kindergarten.

**2. Mathematics Education: This second initiative also relates to education excellence, specifically to the Vision 2015 goal to "challenge students with a rigorous curriculum necessary for furthering their education and career goals and for strengthening our region's workforce."** NKU will focus on mathematics education because of the importance of STEM-related disciplines to economic development and to expand upon the university's work as the home of the Kentucky Center for Mathematics.

These funds (\$57,618) will be used to support 50 percent of the salary and benefits of a mathematics educator. One-half of this person's time will be used in researching mathematics education and attracting grant money that will support mathematics education in the region. The balance of this person's time, supported by university funds, will be spent in the university classroom preparing mathematics teachers. The university will do a national search to fill this position for the 2008 fall semester. For the 2007-08 academic year, two current mathematics faculty will each contribute 25 percent of their time to advance the proposed work.

Some of the proposed work in this area includes:

- A literature review of studies related to high school mathematics education that will provide information on effective curricula for grades 9-12, pedagogy, and other mathematics programs; professional development opportunities for high school teachers; and other statewide programs and resources for the support of grades 9-12 mathematics teaching and learning. This information will be posted to the Kentucky Center for Mathematics' Web site.
- A plan for offering mathematics-related professional development for adult educators based on a literature review and needs assessment to identify the professional development needs of adult educators in the region.
- Workshops that emphasize the use of technology in the teaching of mathematics and the applications of mathematics.
- Consultations with the newly formed Northern Kentucky Teaching and Learning Network.
- A report identifying the resources needed to scale-up the Kentucky Center for Mathematics' existing intervention programs and coaching programs to meet both the region's and the state's needs for the services provided by these programs.

**3. Mental Health Clinic: This initiative relates to the Vision 2015 goal of ensuring that northern Kentucky is a livable community by "conduct(ing) ongoing health and social needs assessments and implement a comprehensive regional approach to meet and fund those needs."** To meet the mental health needs of low-income residents, NKU is working closely with two existing community agencies (the *Life Learning Center* and *Community Solutions*) to establish an NKU clinic in the poorest part of Covington. The clinic will provide low- or no-cost treatment for a full spectrum of behavioral and emotional problems. The clinic will also serve as a training center for university students enrolled in counseling and social work programs. The counseling and social work interns working in the clinic will be supervised by their faculty, by the clinic director, and by other licensed professionals working in the building.

The regional grant funding (\$96,359) will support two positions. The first is a faculty member, who is a licensed, doctorally prepared, professional counselor, to serve as the director of the clinic, to teach an internship class in the graduate counseling program, and to serve as director of clinical studies. The second position is for a receptionist/secretary for the NKU clinic. The regional stewardship funds will provide about 80 percent of the salaries and benefits, and NKU will cover the balance.

In addition to providing mental health services, NKU will:

- Administer the *Behavior Symptom Checklist* and the *Beck Depression Inventory* before and after treatment to determine effectiveness of services.
- Assess client satisfaction, using a third party, by using the *Interpersonal Process Recall*, a technique developed at Michigan State University to assess client satisfaction and improve the interns' counseling skills.
- Survey interns and their administrators regarding the quality of the clinic internship and the placement rates of the counselors and social workers prepared in the program.

**4. Technology Assistance: Strengthening the regional economy is a major focus of the Vision 2015 report with its goal “to create 50,000 new jobs in the next decade.”**

The region’s focus is on growing small- and medium-size companies as well as supporting start-ups. Companies of this size often lack in-house technology expertise at the level needed to implement their ideas and grow their businesses. This initiative advances one of the Vision 2015 economic competitiveness strategies, which is to “align our college and university programs and resources to support our overall economic competitiveness.”

The regional stewardship funding (\$56,023) will enable NKU’s Infrastructure Management Institute (IMI) each semester to hire seven or eight interns who will work 20 hours per week. The work of the interns will be overseen by NKU faculty, a few of whom are supported with the first round of regional stewardship money.

The IMI will:

- Work with companies in the region to assess and address their technology needs.
- Complete Web development projects for private companies and nonprofit organizations.
- Develop a database repository for tracking performance metrics for preschool children in the region, which overlaps with NKU’s early childhood/literacy efforts.
- Develop a Web-based application system for promoting volunteer activities within northern Kentucky.

NKU will, as will all comprehensive universities, provide regular reports to the Council on the outcomes of its regional stewardship work, including documentation of completeness of the deliverables outlined in their plan. They also will provide information on the number of clients served, quality assessments, and outcomes of the services provided as outlined in the plan (e.g., number and satisfaction levels of mental health clients served; number of companies served through the IMI initiative, etc.).