

Big Ideas

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CAL POLY

Cal Poly Vision

Cal Poly will be the nation's premier comprehensive polytechnic university, an innovative institution that develops and inspires whole-system thinkers to **serve California and to help solve global challenges.**

Mission and Values

Cal Poly fosters teaching, scholarship and service in a Learn by Doing environment where **students and faculty are partners in discovery**. As a polytechnic university, Cal Poly promotes the **application of theory to practice**. As a comprehensive institution, Cal Poly provides a balanced education in the arts, sciences and technology while **encouraging cross-disciplinary** and co-curricular experiences. As an academic community, Cal Poly values free inquiry, cultural and intellectual diversity, mutual respect, civic engagement, and social and environmental responsibility.

Strategic Priority 1: Enhance the Success of All Cal Poly Students

1E: Provide an **additional high-impact experience** for every undergraduate student.

Strategic Priority 4: Strengthen Our Portfolio of Academic Programs

4D: **Address real-world problems**, such as environmental sustainability, through **interdisciplinary** and international experiences as well as community and industrial partnerships.



What is a Big Idea?

Generating Big Ideas is a euphemism for the process of catalyzing institutional growth, change, collaboration, or leadership focus

Big Ideas transform an institution's:

- Culture, by breaking down silos and unifying vision
- Reputation, brand, and awareness
- Funding, in its ability to increase and sustain funding

Why Big Ideas?

Generating Big Ideas is a euphemism for the process of catalyzing institutional growth, change, collaboration, or leadership focus

Additionally, the process used to generate Big Ideas can:

- Bring greater alignment between advancement and academic priorities
- Explore and define leadership vision
- Create a more compelling case for support
- Excite and engage faculty, students, staff, donors, and community members

Emerging Challenges Impeding Progress

Three Main Pain Points Keep Us from Realizing Transformational Gift Success

STRATEGIC PLAN INADEQUATE

- Institutional uniqueness lost in favor of broad thematic areas
- Many priorities merit internal funding
- Statement of priorities too broad for advancement

LACK OF IDEAS ON A GRAND SCALE

- Immediate needs prioritized over long-term vision
- Research in silos, yet global problems cross disciplines
- Emphasis on scholarly publications over universal impact

A NEW BREED OF DONOR

- Donor investors seek long-term sustainable impact
- Innovative, large scale solutions to local, national, and global challenges
- Invest in people who can link big ideas to impact

Create Evaluative Criteria for Your Institution







Ensuring Success By Clarifying What is Expected

A Big Idea Should:

-  Transform the University and the world
-  Make the University unique in the marketplace
-  Focus on where the University is good but could become better
-  Include areas where the University is emerging as a leader

A Big Idea Should Not:

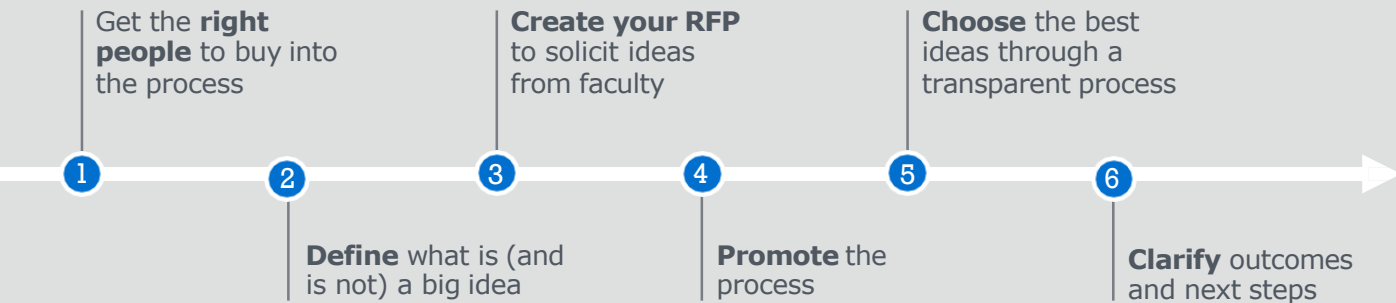
-  Be defined *solely* by a capital project
-  Bundle together smaller ideas
-  Solely feature a naming opportunity
-  Lead to slow, incremental improvement



Bringing Order to Chaos

Developing a Process to Capture Big Ideas

Six Steps to Sustainably Source Big Ideas



Case Exemplars



Background

Cal Poly resides in a uniquely beautiful environment and as a comprehensive university provides education in the arts, sciences, and technology under the umbrella of *Learn by Doing*. A strong foundation has been built to provide outstanding education through the teacher-scholar model, to create new knowledge that helps us to see the world in new ways, and enables us to address fundamental problems and opportunities that may face the Central Coast of California and beyond. We seek innovative proposals that reflect your best and biggest ideas that promise to transform Cal Poly and the surrounding community in California.

Underlying Goals

- Enhance academic and student success
- Provide positive economic and social impacts
- Enrich personal well-being of faculty, students, staff and/or members of the Central Coast community
- Ensure financial success and sustainability

Examples

Montana State University:



Goal – Expand research to \$200M expenditures annually and increase well-being of Montanans

Big ideas – Mental health, Center for Western Lands and Peoples; Applied Research Laboratory; Precision Agriculture

Stanford University:



Goal – Renew public commitment/image; advance freedom of thought/enlightenment

Big ideas – Precision medicine, climate change and sustainability, strengthen humanities and arts in a technological world

University of California at Davis:



Goal – Provide context for their capital campaign (To Go Boldly)

Big ideas – Healthy brain aging initiative, building the entrepreneurial mindset, sustainable campus, global education for all, sustainable cities



Details on Request for Proposal

Eligibility and Funding Level

All faculty are eligible and encouraged to apply. Funding level for each proposal is \$50,000 to \$500,000 for one year, with subsequent funding negotiable pending progress as assessed by an annual progress report. The number of projects funded will be determined following proposal review and depending on the funding level for each proposal.

Proposal Format

- Cover page indicating project title, principal investigator(s), department, center, institute affiliations
- Biographical sketch and/or CV of principal investigator(s)
- A three-page proposal (12 pt font and 1-inch margins) should include:
- Scope/background of proposed research, scholarship and creative activity (up to one half page)
- Specific aims/objectives/goals (up to one half page)
- Methods/approach (up to one half page)
- Proposed budget and general budget outline (personnel, supplies, equipment, travel) for the first year and up to two additional years
- Potential for building a faculty cluster or for consideration of faculty cluster hiring
- Expected outcomes (up to one half page)
- Anticipated contribution to growth and impact of research, scholarship and creative activity at Cal Poly (up to one half page)
- Matching funds, if available, and source, or existing funds (grants, donors, etc.)
- One page, or less, of references cited or addendum materials/figures



Proposal Evaluation Criteria

- Innovation
- Interdisciplinarity
- Feasibility
- Academic merit
- Expected outcomes
- Ability to generate funding from federal, state, philanthropy and/or private sources
- Anticipated contribution to Cal Poly undergraduate and graduate students
- Anticipated impact on the Central Coast and California

Proposed Review Committee

Co-Chairs

Pedersen, Ewing and Reijo Pera

Members

Representative from each of the six colleges

Academic senate representative

Two undergraduate students

Representative from a center or institute

Dean of Graduate Studies

Government affairs

Two community members



Anticipated Timeline

September/October	Draft RFP and receive input from faculty, department chairs and deans on
Late October	Finalization of RFP with President's Cabinet
Early Mid November	Launch meetings across campus
November/December	Ongoing communications
November/December	Presentations at college leadership meetings
December 15 January 5	Winter break
January 28	Proposal due
February 1 15	Staff review, assembly and distribution
February 16 28	Committee review – first round
March 1 7	Proposal teams are notified of outcomes
March 8 15	Finalists make presentations
March 15 31	Present recommendations for President's cabinet consideration
April	Symposia on big ideas
April May on	Team will develop resourcing plan (outward press, funding, student support, future funding strategies, potential for faculty recruitment and other as merited)



Looking Back and Moving Forward

“You look at where you're going and where you are and it never makes much sense, but then you look back at where you've been and a pattern seems to emerge. And if you project forward from that pattern, then sometimes you can come up with something.”

— Robert M. Pirsig, *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance: An Inquiry Into Values*

