**CU Denver Research and Creative Work Grand Challenges**

**Identification and Selection Process**

**Context**

In Make Education Work for All, our strategic plan, one of the five goals is to be internationally known for our research and creative work (RCW) impacting five societal grand challenges. This year we are launching activities to start this work. Specifically we launched a campus- and community-wide process to identify challenges we plan to address, taking into account societal need, our strengths, and our expertise.

**The Process**

Our process consists of four phases, that encourage an organic development of research areas.

1. **Symposium 1 | October 29**

This phase brought together CU Denver researchers to conceptualize ideas for grand challenges and the research expertise they could provide to address them. Individuals or small groups presented a three-minute pitch with their initial ideas and attempted to recruit others to contribute to building out their concept.

1. **Symposium 2 | November 19**

Based on feedback from the Oct 29 session, researchers will come together in teams to build out a more detailed presentation. Teams are expected to be interdisciplinary, span multiple schools and colleges, and, commensurate with the expertise needed to address the grand challenge. Similarly, topics around which teams form should be grand challenges suitable for convening researchers across the institution, e.g., eventually a research institute or major research center. **Registration is required by November 12 and there is no limit on the number of teams that can register.**

Session Logistics and Presentation Information

Teams will share their ideas through a 10-minute presentation. Presentations are expected to address:

* Summary of the grand challenge the research the group has agreed to pursue.
* Explanation of why the research focus presents a strategic advantage for CU Denver and why the university should consider investing in it.
* Explanation of the extent of coverage the research area already has through the team members’ work.
* Explanation of any gaps that will need to be covered through additional hiring or through partnership with researchers from peer institutions.
* High-level timeline for moving the project towards tangible outcomes, and the kind of impact we might expect if this grand challenge were taken on.

Following each presentation, audience members will be invited to engage in question and answer for 5-10 minutes. Similar to the first symposium, CU Denver researchers will be given the opportunity to join teams and help continually shape ideas.

1. **Proposal Preparation | March 18**

Coming out of the second symposium, teams will prepare proposals for seed funding and support. Depending on the quality and compelling nature of proposals, we anticipate funding two proposals at about $200K-$300K and perhaps 2-3 others at a lower amount to mature the ideas for next year when this process will be improved and repeated. There is no limit on the number of teams that can submit proposals.

**To help inform the formulation of those proposals, a detailed RFP will be disseminated shortly after the November 19 session. Teams will be required to provide a short Letter of Intent by December 13 so we can provide support for proposal preparation. Support will include management/admin, teambuilding training, and further market analysis of research and creative work support possibilities.**

1. **Team Launch | April 29**

Proposals will be selected for funding through a review process that evaluates both intellectual merit and broad impact of the proposal. Reviewers will include internal and external experts. Selected teams will launch their efforts in May and be expected to actively work through Summer 2022 to build their research program plans.

Seed funding, anticipated activities (program building and research), and expectations will be negotiated. University support will be provided in the form of: project management/admin, proposal management/writing, DEI expertise, and identification of research opportunities and building of connections to relevant program managers in federal agencies, foundations, etc.

Schools and colleges will be asked to integrate the selected research programs into their strategic planning and seek to align new faculty hires with them. They should be able to leverage campus investments through startup funds, etc.