Los Angeles Valley College

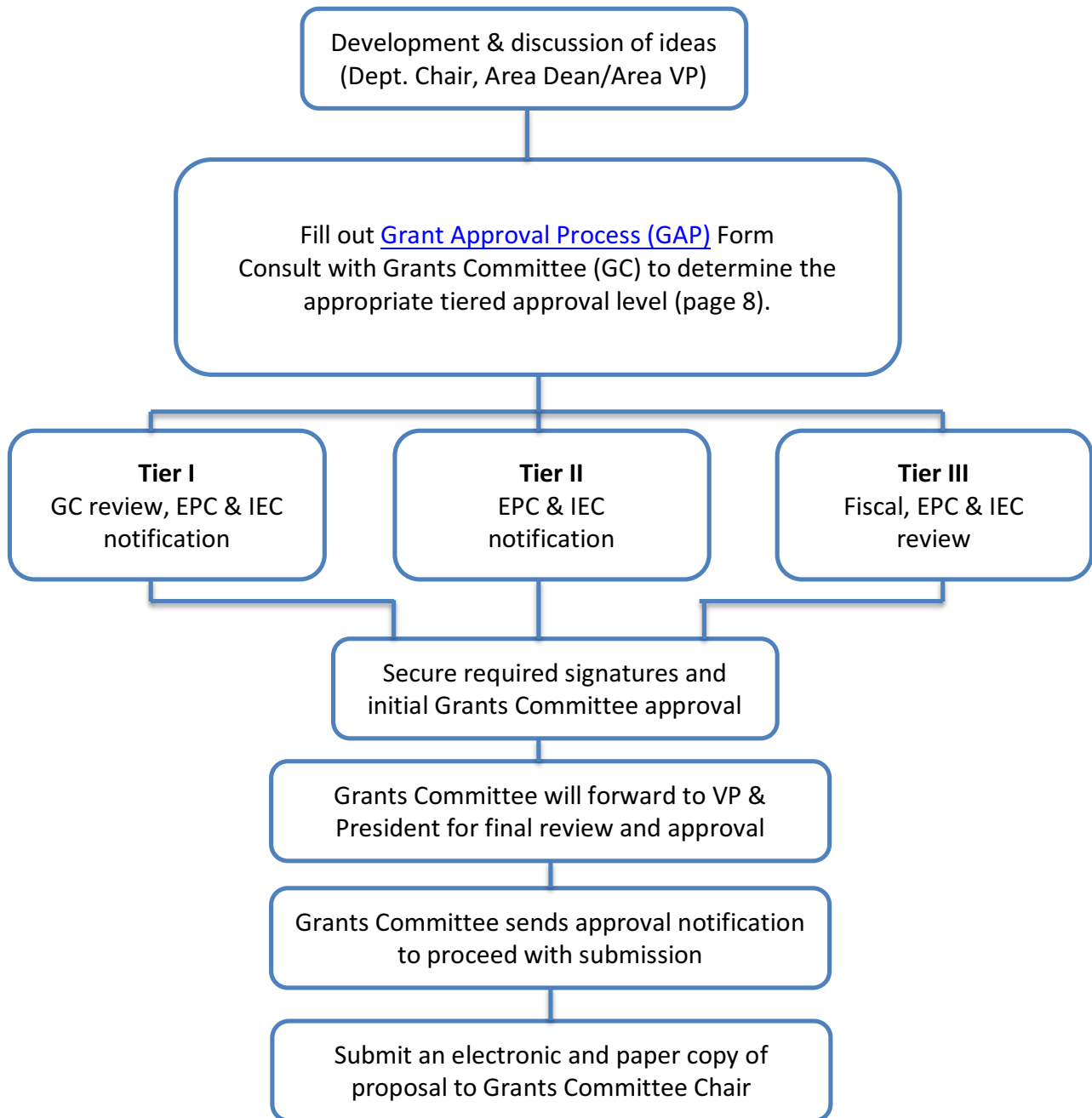# Grant Approval Process Handbook

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this handbook is to outline the internal college processes and procedures for all grant submissions for competitive grant applications on behalf of Los Angeles Valley College (LAVC).

• All grants should identify and provide specific benefits to the college, which are in alignment with the mission statement and Educational Master Plan.

• All grant submissions must follow the campus-approved process to address the effect on college resources. Fiscal impact to any unrestricted funds or a significant operational impact to the college requires fiscal review as well as approval by the Educational Planning Committee and the Institutional Effectiveness Council.

• All grants should ensure collaboration in coordinating activities throughout implementation.

GRANT APPROVAL PROCESS OVERVIEW

The graphic on the following page depicts the internal grant approval process at LAVC. Before any grant proposal may be submitted to a potential funder, this process and all required approvals must be completed by the deadlines indicated. The graphic is followed by a detailed, narrative explanation of each component of the approval process. Applicants are encouraged to contact the Grants Committee, through the Grants Committee Chair, with any process-related questions.

Development & discussion of ideas
(Dept. Chair, Area Dean/Area VP)

Fill out Grant Approval Process (GAP) Form
Consult with Grants Committee (GC) to determine the
appropriate tiered approval level (page 8).

Tier I
GC review, EPC & IEC
notification

Tier II
EPC & IEC
notification

Tier III
Fiscal, EPC & IEC
review

Secure required signatures and
initial Grants Committee approval

Grants Committee will forward to VP &
President for final review and approval

Grants Committee sends approval notification
to proceed with submission

Submit an electronic and paper copy of
proposal to Grants Committee Chair

DEVELOPMENT & DISCUSSION OF IDEAS

Schedule a meeting with your Department Chair

You should discuss your proposal ideas with the appropriate Program Director, Department Chair, Area Dean, and/or Area Vice President. They can help you evaluate and clarify your project idea, making sure it is of interest and benefit to LAVC. They can also help you to identify programs or areas that may be impacted by your project and who else will need to be involved in the initial conceptualization and planning. In addition, they can work with you to identify potential collaborators for your project. Other faculty and staff may have the expertise you need in areas such as evaluation, technology, and curriculum development. Communication is the key to successful projects!

Planning questions to consider

The purpose of these guiding questions is to prepare you for the internal submission process and to determine how your idea matches with the college's mission statement, Educational Master Plan (EMP), priorities, initiatives, and any other projects currently on campus.

1. Grant Description and Priorities:

- What is the project's connection to the college's mission statement and Educational Master Plan?

- What is the benefit to Los Angeles Valley College and its students?

- Will the grant start a new program? If so, is it a program that is in demand in the San Fernando Valley area?

- Who are your partners? What responsibilities will they have in the grant?

2. Personnel:

- Will there be a need for part-time faculty or staff to carry out the grant?

- Who will be the lead person (usually called the Project Director) of the grant if it is funded?

- Will the Project Director be a current college employee or will we need to hire a new position?

- If the Project Director is a current employee, does that person have the required skills and is she or he interested in taking on this role?

- If we will need to hire a new position, will we be required to keep that employee after the grant period is over?

- Will release time be requested for any of the project team members?

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3. Budget:

- What is the allowable amount for the grant budget? Total? Per Year?

- Does the grant require a funding match by the college? If so, how will we meet that requirement?

- What is the allowed indirect cost rate?

4. Facilities, Equipment, & Services:

- What are the office space requirements for the grant staff?

- Will you be purchasing new equipment? New software? What about post grant license renewal? Equipment maintenance?

- Will you be the grant writer? If not you, who will it be? Are you hiring a grant consultant? If so, what are all the costs? Who is paying for it?

5. Evaluation

- What are the reporting and evaluation requirements of the grant?

- Will there be an internal or external evaluation?

- Do we need to keep track of goals and objectives? If so, who will be responsible for doing this and how will it be done?

- What resources will be necessary to accomplish this reporting?

- What research or demographic information do we need for the grant application or proposal?

6. Institutionalization/Sustainability

- What are the long-term obligations required by the grant? Personnel? Space? Equipment? Licensing renewals?

- Do we have to commit to doing certain things, such as keeping a program in place or employees?

- If the grant requires a commitment beyond the period of the grant, is the college willing to make that commitment?

INTERNAL PROPOSAL APPROVAL

Step 1 – Complete the Grant Approval Process (GAP) or Grant Partnership form **and meet with required personnel to obtain approval signatures.**

Grant Approval Process (GAP) Form

Before you can submit your proposal to the funding agency, you will need to complete the college's established internal approval process. The Grant Approval Process (GAP) form is used for all funded proposals.

The purpose of this form is to seek formal approval prior to submission. This stage will require you to schedule meetings with and get signatures from various departments on campus. Be sure to fill in all of the requested fields on the GAP form prior to meeting with the approvers listed below. Each meeting will help you to further clarify your ideas and to ensure that the proposal is aligned with the mission, values, goals and priorities of the college.

- Associate Vice President of Administrative Services – reviews and approves budget, indirect cost, and matching requirements. If the LAVC Foundation will be the fiscal agent, you will meet with the Foundation Director instead.

- Area Vice President – reviews and approves requests for new space

- Director of College Facilities – reviews and approves requests for renovation or construction of existing space

- IT Manager – review and approves the purchase of new equipment and/or software

- Department Representatives (various) – reviews and approves your proposals connection or impact on any departments or campus services under their auspices

- Dean, Office of Institutional Effectiveness – reviews and approves your evaluation plans, as well as data needs prior, during, and post project

- Grants Committee Chair – with the grants committee, reviews and approves any requests for contracted services paid for by college unrestricted funds (i.e. external grant writer)

Grant Partnership Form
The Grant Partnership (GP) Form is used when no funding is involved.

It is important that the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, as well the campus community, is aware of projects or studies involving our campus and our students. This ensures a holistic approach to advancing the goals and priorities of the college and enables us to gather more data. In addition, projects that involve students need input and approval from the Institutional Review Board of the college to ensure appropriate research protocols are followed.

Step 2 - Using the information below, consult with the Grants Committee to determine the appropriate Tiered Approval Level for your proposal.

Grant proposals are reviewed by the Grants Committee and then are categorized into a Tiered Approval Level. The Tiered Approval Level designates which committees will review and/or be notified as part of the grant approval process.

- Tier I – Grants Committee reviews and approves; Educational Planning Committee (EPC) notification

- Tier II – Grants Committee reviews and approves; requires review and approval by the EPC and then Institutional Effectiveness Council (IEC) notification

- Tier III – Grants Committee reviews; if the Tier II proposal has a fiscal impact to any **Unrestricted Funds or a significant operational impact** to the college, requires fiscal review and review and approval by both EPC and IEC

Definition: *Minimal impact* is defined as work or task related items that fall within the scope of a department or an individual's required daily routine, routine maintenance and operations, and must not exceed the capacity of a department's typical workload.

Tier I MUST meet ALL of the following criteria:

1. **Personnel** - Grant does not require new personnel support to operate the grant (new hiring, reclassification of current employees). No Unrestricted Funds will be used.

2. **Fiscal**
   - No Unrestricted Funds used for contracted services or outside consultants (grant writing, evaluation, etc.).
   - All costs for tutoring, student support, etc. are absorbed by the grant.

3. **Space** - Space needs can be met with existing space and modifications, if any, are paid by grant.

4. **Technology, Equipment, Software** - Minimal impact to IT. Minimal technology needs and labor funded by grant.

5. **Research and Evaluation** - Minimal impact to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness.

6. **Institutionalization** – Not required by grant. No fiscal impact to the college regarding continued operation, maintenance, or process.

7. **Educational Master Plan** – Connects to EMP goals and college initiatives.

Tier II & III if ANY of the following criteria apply:

1. **Personnel** - Staffing needs require hiring, reassignment, or reclassification of existing faculty/staff.

2. **Fiscal (triggers Tier III)**
   o Applicant plans to use a contracted grant writer or other consultants with fees charged to the grant/college.
   o Implementation requires use of tutoring, student support, etc. without grant compensation.

3. **Space** - New space needed including construction, any facilities upgrades.

4. **Technology, Equipment, Software**
   o Creates more than a minimal impact to IT.
   o Requires purchase of multiple computers, software or licenses or major purchases over $5,000.

5. **Research and Evaluation** - Impacts Office of Institutional Effectiveness workload, requires additional resources, etc.

6. **Institutionalization**
   o Institutionalization is required by the grant.
   o Fiscal impact occurs with continued operation, maintenance, or process (triggers Tier III).
   o Sustainability includes increased FTEF scheduling allocation.
   o Implementation factors; personnel, software licenses renewals, maintenance and operation.
   o Requires curriculum review, development, modification, etc.

7. **Educational Master Plan** – Reaches beyond the college vision, mission or EMP goals.

Renewal Process – If the renewal does not cause any new impact to items 1-7 above, it may be classified as Tier 1, unless contract services are required through Unrestricted Funds.

Step 3 - Secure initial approvals from the Grants Committee

Once all required signatures have been obtained, you will need to submit your Grant Partnership (GP) or Grant Approval Process (GAP) form to the Grants Committee for preliminary approval. You do not need to wait for the next committee meeting to do this. Simply, forward your completed form (with signatures) to the Chair of the Grants Committee **no later than 2 weeks** prior to the submission deadline for Tier I proposals and **no later than 3 weeks** prior to the submission deadline for Tier II and III.

- Tier I – Grants Committee reviews and approves; the Education Planning Committee (EPC) will receive a notification

- Tier II – Grants Committee reviews and approves; requires review and approval by the EPC and then Institutional Effectiveness Council (IEC) notification

- Tier III – Grants Committee reviews; if the proposal has a fiscal impact to any Unrestricted Funds or a significant operational impact to the college, requires fiscal review and review and approval by both EPC and IEC

The Grants Committee will then forward your proposal to the Vice President and President for administrative review and will notify you of the result.

Step 4 - Administrative Approval & Submission

If the President or VP of Administrative Services needs to sign any part of your grant, be sure to have a copy of your signed GAP form accompanying the proposal. This is their reminder that your grant is fully approved by all internal parties and is ready for submission.

Once you have received approval from the President and Vice President of Administrative Services, you are ready to submit your proposal. **Submit an electronic and paper copy of your full proposal to the Grants Committee Chair.**

Electronic submissions made through grants.gov require authorized personnel to submit the grant on your behalf. As a best practice, plan a date to submit your grant at least 2 weeks in advance. If needed, the Chair of the Grants Committee will assist in coordinating the electronic submission.

POST-SUBMISSION ACTIVITIES

You're funded! What happens next?

If your proposal is approved for funding, pat yourself on the back, have a celebration, and then get ready to really work! It took a lot of hard work to win that grant, and you'll want to continue to impress the sponsor that you are worthy of their support – for this grant and the next! Congratulations, now the real work begins.

If you are funded:

- Send copy of award letter to your Chair/Director, Chair of the Grants Committee, Area Dean or VP – You may be the only person who receives a copy of the award letter. Make sure the appropriate people know about your award (tell the President, the Public Relations Manger!) We want to brag about your achievement!
- You must coordinate the preparation of an agenda item and submit your contract for approval
- Meet with your Area Dean to review the budget, reporting requirements, and clarify any other key grant information
- Manage and monitor all reporting as required by the funder

If you were not funded:

- Notify Area Dean and Chair of the Grants Committee. You've probably seen the statistics – average funding rates for most sponsored projects range from 10-30%. Proposals get rejected more often than not. However, you should be aware that funding rates for resubmitted proposals can be significantly higher – even as much as 50%. Consequently, if you have been rejected on your first submission, you'll definitely want to consider resubmitting for the next deadline.
- Request feedback from the funding source. Ask for reviewer scores and comments.
- Forward the feedback to your Area Dean. Meet to review the feedback and discuss potential changes to the proposal for future submissions.
- If you do decide to rewrite and resubmit your proposal, make sure to address all of the reviewers' comments and concerns in the new version.

If you decide that it's not worth the effort to resubmit your original proposal, what do you do now? One alternative, if you are no longer interested, is to turn the proposal over to someone else who may be interested in moving forward with the project. Keep in mind that you've had a valuable learning experience in developing a proposal and are better prepared for next time.