



# Request for Proposals to Form New UCEA Program Center

UCEA is pleased to announce a Request for Proposals (RFP) to establish new Program Centers organized around a variety of educational leadership issues. Suggestions for Program Centers targeted interest areas are sought from UCEA member universities, the Executive Committee, the Executive Director, Plenary Session Representatives, directors of existing program centers, and the general UCEA membership.

The primary purpose of a UCEA Program Center is to conduct research and identify targeted areas of collaborative work over 3 years. The Program Center promotes research and project development through the leadership of faculty colleagues at UCEA member institutions, nonmember institutions, school districts, and governmental agencies. Program Center efforts serve UCEA's mission by involving UCEA member faculty in significant work in focused inquiry areas of contemporary importance and interest, by creating multi-institutional interest networks, and by giving broad recognition to the efforts of UCEA institutions and their faculties.

Program centers advance UCEA's mission of improving preK-12 educational leadership, policy, and organizations, including conducting and disseminating research that benefits schools, communities, and society. Further, centers address UCEA's strategic priorities:

- promoting, sponsoring, and disseminating research on essential problems of practice;
- improving the preparation and professional development of school leaders and professors; and
- influencing policy and practice through establishing and fostering collaborative relationships.

UCEA Program Centers advance knowledge through inquiry in the targeted area of interest. Program Center directors are strongly encouraged to engage in high-quality research, seek external funding to support such research, and form research groups to exchange ideas relating to lines of inquiry that promise to provide significant insights for preparation and practice.

Major activities of a UCEA Program Center include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Developing a sustained research agenda to deepen the fields understanding, provide implications for leadership preparation, and support educational leaders and school communities.
2. Identifying a network of individuals interested in participating in the center's research foci. Whenever possible, faculty from multiple universities, practicing school administrators, and state education agency leaders should be involved to promote effective liaisons with other organizations and individuals who share the center's interests and goals.
3. Creating work groups to develop curriculum and other materials useful in improving the preparation of educational leaders, advancing educational administration and leadership practice, and improving educational policymaking.
4. Organizing seminars, workshops, conferences, and other outreach activities to share new understandings, practices, and materials with others who share UCEA goals for advancing the field of educational administration and leadership.
5. Sharing center interests, action plans, accomplishments, and products through special network meetings at the annual UCEA Convention; meeting periodically with the executive director and members of the Executive Committee; and participating at conferences of other professional associations dedicated to improving administrator preparation and practice.
6. Establishing an advisory board to guide the work of the Program Center.

## Proposal Information Requirements

While a response to the RFP need not be a lengthy document (typically 6–9 pages, plus supporting letters), each institution applying to host a UCEA Program Center must provide information related to the following areas:

1. Purposes and work plans relating to the proposed center that include information as to (a) what the primary focus will be and what the center will do, (b) when the center will implement its plans over the

initial 3-year hosting arrangement, (c) how the center will accomplish its stated purposes, and (d) how the center will address the UCEA's strategic goals.

2. University, academic division, and department (or school district/agency) commitments, including provisions for staff and resource support (e.g., release time for professional and staff personnel, graduate assistants, monetary support, facilities, and equipment).
3. Operational procedures related to such matters as the composition and role of the center's advisory board, relationships with other universities, partnerships with school districts, and/or education agencies/professional associations. All UCEA Program Centers must have a representative advisory committee, with the size of that board set by the Program Center director(s) in consultation with the UCEA Associate Director of Program Centers. It is expected that most of the advisory board will be from UCEA member universities. Advisory board membership is subject to approval by the UCEA Executive Committee.
4. Qualifications and time commitment availability of the individual(s) who will have primary responsibilities for directing the center's activities.
5. Statements of institutional commitment regarding UCEA expectations for program centers relative to (a) the 3-year summative report for the center, (b) wide dissemination of center reports and products, for example, at the annual UCEA Convention and UCEA website, as well as (c) appropriate inclusion of UCEA in any external funding proposals related to program center operations, as negotiated by the Program Center Director and the UCEA Executive Director.
6. Support letters from appropriate institutional officials. In the case of universities, letters from the department chair and dean are appropriate. Partnership districts might have the school superintendent and/or board president write such letters. Proposals involving state education agencies might include support letters from the chief executive officer of the state education agency or the state board of education president.

## UCEA Commitment of Support to the Program Centers

Per Article 8.4 of the bylaws, UCEA is committed to assisting each approved Program Center in realizing its mission and in maximizing the contribution of each center to improving educational leadership knowledge and practice. UCEA support includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- **Headquarters Support**
  - o Consultative and coordination support provided by the UCEA Associate Director of Program Centers and the Program Center Advisory Board.
  - o Consultative visits to program center sites and active participation in program center conferences by a member of the Program Center Advisory Board and/or the UCEA Associate Director of Program Centers.
  - o The use of the UCEA logo and organizational identification, with the written approval of the UCEA Executive Director, on/in program center letterhead stationery, program advertisements, publications, and external funding grant proposals.
- **Publications**
  - o Program Center events, activities, and lists of publications/products will be promoted in issues of the UCEA Review. In addition, each Program Center will be featured on the UCEA website, and internet users will be able to connect directly with the center's home page.
  - o Assistance to Program Centers in publishing, advertising, and distributing their projects, including possibilities for actual publication by UCEA, will be based on negotiations involving the Program Center Director(s) and the UCEA Executive Director. These negotiations will focus on not only the potential contributions of the proposed publication but also UCEA budget guidelines and UCEA publications policies, as established by the Plenum and the Executive Committee.
- **Annual UCEA Convention**
  - o Program Center Directors are strongly encouraged to submit session proposals annually to the UCEA Convention. This will allow them to present and discuss their respective Program Centers' recent efforts and encourage participation from others. Centers are given one highlighted session and one business meeting at the Convention.
  - o An annual meeting of all Program Center Directors held in conjunction with the UCEA Convention to explore center opportunities, propose changes in UCEA policies and procedures related to the centers, and explore collaborative ventures among centers. This meeting shall be convened and chaired by the UCEA Associate Director of Program Centers.

- o Each Program Center will receive no-cost display spaces, support personnel, and equipment at the annual UCEA Convention to display and disseminate its reports and products.
- **Research Awards**  
 Proposals for competitive research awards of up to \$5,000 each fiscal year will be submitted to the UCEA Associate Director of Program Centers and the Program Center Advisory Board for evaluation and recommendation to the Executive Committee. UCEA will award up to two competitive research awards each fiscal year. The purpose of the grants is to assist established centers in research and facilitate conferences around the program center's focus, activities, and product and research dissemination. Award funds are to be used to cover direct costs associated with center activities.
  - o Competitive research awards proposals are due in the UCEA Associate Director of Program Centers around April 15 of each year. They must include the following: (a) purposes of the grant, (b) specific outcomes projected from the use of grant funds, and (c) a detailed budget. The UCEA Associate Director and members of the Program Center Advisory Board will evaluate the grant proposals and make funding recommendations to the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee will make research award decisions at its summer meeting, and funds will be available for the following fiscal year, beginning July 1. A detailed report on the uses of the funds and the results (reports, meetings, publications) must be submitted to the UCEA Associate Director of Program Centers by April 15 of the following year. Program Center Directors are required to develop an exhibit, session, or paper on the research or event supported by the research grant for the annual UCEA Convention. Any center receiving research awards and not submitting the required report will not be eligible for grant support in subsequent funding cycles until the report is received and officially accepted by the Executive Director and Executive Committee.
  - o UCEA funds may not be used to pay indirect costs. Research award funds may not be used to support conference travel.
  - o UCEA also supports the annual Graduate Student Research Award. These awards are given to doctoral students of UCEA institutions who work directly with a UCEA Program Center that is not associated with their home institution. Students receive a modest stipend for this work. Priority is given to students interested in the professoriate.

## Submission Details

A letter of intent to start a new center is due **May 1**.

The full proposal is due **August 1** of that year. The Associate Director will submit a copy of the Program Center hosting proposal materials to the Program Center Advisory Board for review. At this point, the Associate Director or the Advisory Board may provide feedback. The Advisory Board will then send their review and recommendation to the Executive Director and Executive Committee.

The Executive Director and Executive Committee will review the Program Center application and the Advisory Board recommendation. At this point, the Executive Director and Executive Committee may provide additional feedback before a vote is taken.

The Program Center Advisory Board and the Executive Committee will complete their evaluation of the applications prior to the annual UCEA Convention of that year. If successful, the announcement will be made at the Plenum Session of UCEA.

Submit proposals to Jayson W. Richardson, Associate Director of Program Centers, at [jayson.richardson@wm.edu](mailto:jayson.richardson@wm.edu).