

CALL FOR RESEARCH CLUSTER APPLICATIONS

The Dedman College Interdisciplinary Institute (DCII) is pleased to announce a call for applications for research clusters for academic year 2025–26.

The purpose of this program is to provide a home for informal, collaborative groups of scholars who wish to meet together to discuss and advance shared interdisciplinary interests. Clusters should have a clearly defined impact on participants' research or teaching activities, and should convene at least twice per semester for substantive meetings or events (planning meetings among the conveners do not count toward this requirement). Clusters should actively seek the participation of the SMU community and must be open to faculty and graduate students from across campus, though they may also welcome participants from other universities and the broader DFW community.

The DCII provides the space for meetings in Ford Hall, staff assistance to organize cluster meetings and events, and up to \$4,000 in funding to support cluster activities. Because clusters offer a unique opportunity for interdisciplinary study beyond the parameters of individual departments, we encourage conveners to consider new ways to collaborate and make use of these funds. In the past, clusters have sponsored reading groups, brought in speakers, organized workshops, provided meeting refreshments, and covered research expenses, among other uses. Cluster funds must be used for reasonable expenses that directly support the work of the cluster and cannot be used simply to compensate cluster participants for meeting attendance, but use of funds is otherwise largely unrestricted. Renewing clusters may also propose a budget exceeding \$4,000—evaluation of such proposals will be based on the cluster's record of prior accomplishments and on the ambition of its upcoming plans.

For examples of previous and current research clusters sponsored by the DCII, visit <https://www.smu.edu/dedman/research/institutes-and-centers/dcii/research/research-cluster>.

Clusters should have at least two SMU faculty (tenure-track or NTT), staff, and/or graduate student conveners who are responsible for the cluster's activities, though they may have additional conveners from other parts of SMU or other institutions. Conveners will ideally come from different academic disciplines, but proposed clusters whose conveners are from the same discipline will be considered so long as there are clear plans to recruit participants from other fields. Conveners must also submit an end-of-year report about the cluster's activities.

The deadline for applications is **Friday, May 16**. Applications should be submitted via the following link: <https://www.smu.edu/Dedman/Research/Institutes-and-Centers/DCII/Programs/ResearchCluster/Proposal>

Applications for New Clusters:

The application should include a completed online application form and a proposal describing the purpose of and plans for the cluster.

Proposals (maximum length two pages), should:

1. Explain the significance of the collaboration for research and/or teaching
2. Describe the specific activities the cluster plans to undertake in the coming year and the concrete outcomes these activities are expected to produce
3. Describe plans for at least two substantive meetings per semester that are open to faculty and graduate students from across campus (and additional constituencies as appropriate)
4. List the names and department affiliations of potential faculty and/or graduate student participants
5. Provide an itemized budget

Applications to Renew Existing Clusters:

The application should include a completed online application form and a proposal describing upcoming plans for the cluster.

Proposals (maximum length one page), should:

1. Describe the specific activities the cluster plans to undertake in the coming year and the concrete outcomes these activities are expected to produce
2. Describe plans for at least two substantive meetings per semester that are open to faculty and graduate students from across campus (and additional constituencies as appropriate)
3. Provide an itemized budget. Unused funds from AY 2024–25 will not automatically roll over to AY 2025–26, and any rollover request must be accompanied by a clear justification for the extension.

Note that renewal requests will not be considered in the absence of a completed end-of-year report for 2024-25.

Questions about the program or application process should be addressed to Dr. Karisa Cloward, Ruth Collins Altshuler Director of the Dedman College Interdisciplinary Institute, at kcloward@smu.edu.