Purpose

The Strategic Priorities Faculty Initiative (SPFI) provides temporary University financial support to academic departments enabling them to hire additional full-time, tenure-track faculty or continuing-track faculty who will enhance the University of Arizona's (U of A's) Purpose, Mission and Values. The SPFI program provides funding to hire faculty who were not recruited through a designated search with accompanying funding. Candidates will be considered whose work will address the following priorities:

1) Fostering new and creative ways of involving our diverse student body in an accessible and engaging educational experience with the goal of producing highly capable graduates who will meet our state's critical workforce needs;
2) Developing new approaches to discoveries and cutting-edge interdisciplinary research, scholarship, or creative work that benefits our diverse communities and addresses complex global problems; and
3) Expanding collaborations with community and business partnerships, including those involving traditionally underserved groups.

Criteria

Departments seeking financial support to recruit faculty must establish that those individuals demonstrate competency in one or more of the provided priority areas identified above. Interdisciplinary hires are strongly preferred. Priorities include those candidates who will help advance U of A's distinctiveness and values. There is particular interest in hires that advance our Value of Inclusion. "At the University of Arizona, our diversity makes us stronger. Inclusion infuses our classrooms, our research labs and our outreach within the community because we believe the most significant learning takes place when we are working with others who are different from ourselves. We also prioritize culturally enriching experiences and student support through our communities and resources."[1]

Given, the University of Arizona's R1 status, land-grant status, and Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) designation, there is a need for faculty who advance our work in these areas. Our R1 status indicates we are at the highest levels of research activity. As such, we highly value innovation, critical thinking, and problem-solving which are greatly enhanced by a diverse and inclusive academic community. Advancing efforts to increase collaborations across traditional disciplinary and ideological divides is essential to research advancement. Our land-grant status indicates that we continue to prioritize the positive public impact of our work that encourages community-engaged research/scholarship, teaching and service that greatly contributes to the state of Arizona. Additionally, we strive to build sustainable relationships with sovereign Native Nations and Indigenous communities through education offerings, partnerships and community service. Our federally designated status as a Hispanic-Serving Institution provides opportunities to expand our capacity to serve not only Latinx students, but to prioritize serving all students.

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[1] The University of Arizona. (2024). *Inclusion |Our Values |The University of Arizona. https://www.arizona.edu/purpose-mission-values/inclusion*

Below are some criteria considerations when submitting SPFI applications:

High-Quality Pedagogy to Effectively Serve ALL Students

- The potential to contribute to our understanding of the conditions that enhance access, full participation and success of a diverse academic community

- Experience with developing innovations in pedagogy and curriculum to engage all students

- Experience with mentoring students from groups that have been underrepresented in higher education and your discipline

Innovations in Research, Scholarship and Creative Achievements that Advance and Promote Inclusion

- Research and scholarship that addresses the needs of our diverse society and will impact Arizona, the region and the world for the better

- Artistic expression and cultural production that reflects diverse communities and voices not well represented in the discipline

- Research that addresses the experiences of groups underrepresented in their disciplines

- Potential for collaborations with U of A's interdisciplinary strengths and programs that serve our diverse students and communities

Partnerships in Outreach and Service that Advance and Nurture Inclusion

- A record of service aimed at expanding the field for underrepresented groups in the discipline

- Expertise with serving the needs of our state and region's economic, social, and cultural needs, as well as our unique populations in the state and region

Submission Requirements

Deans or Department Heads must use the SPFI Application Form in Arizona Cultivate to provide the following information. Materials are reviewed by the SPFI Committee. Please submit one application per candidate in Arizona Cultivate.

1. Submit written statements which:

   a) Describe how the candidate's background, experience and other qualifications will advance the University's Purpose, Mission and Values, and strategic priorities, as outlined in this Initiative and the in the U of A Strategic Plan.

   b) Describe the department/college/unit's plan to support and retain the SPFI candidate. A description of a mentoring plan for the SPFI candidate is required.

   c) Outline the candidate vetting process, including how the candidate will be reviewed by faculty and others prior to extending an offer of hire. Please remember that funds for recruitment are available, but not required for participation in the SPFI program.

d) Outline the Startup Package Plan. This should be comparable to peer faculty to support success.

e) Summarize how the proposed hire builds upon investments that your department or school has made that are synergistic with the SPFI priorities.

f) Outline how the proposed hire will help bring varied perspectives to the teaching, research, and service efforts in your unit. If your discipline faces challenges with respect to diverse representation and inclusion, please note how this hire will help to address them.

2. Include the candidates' curriculum vitae. You may also include student evaluations, publications, or collaborative project information. Such supplementary materials are important when this information is not detailed on candidates' CVs.

3. Submit a budget sheet for salary requirements, which include:

a) Salary, FTE, title, and anticipated start date;

b) Percent of salary and years of support requested (see funding model on page 4); and

c) Department or College commitments to cover startup cost

4. Department Head and Dean letter of support containing:

a) A brief description of long-term plan for continued funding;

b) Proof that salary is comparable to recent hires in their department;

c) Priority order of request in relation to other requests that have been submitted by the school or college; and

d) Signatures from **both the department head and dean** affirming agreement to financial commitments as described in the initiative funding model

e) If there is more than one application from a college, please include a letter from the Dean that indicates the college's priorities in hiring

5. Submit a statement, in which the department should specify the candidate's track record, experience, and commitments to meeting the SPFI Priorities.

Application Deadline and Review
Applications are due the last Friday of the month. Applications are accepted from October 2024

through December 2024. Reviews will occur monthly and conclude with the final decision from the Provost. Decisions will be provided in 2 weeks. Contact Dr. Andrea Romero, Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs, at romeroa@arizona.edu or (520) 626-0202 if you need an expedited decision.

Funding Model

The Initiative is funded and administered by the Executive Office of the President and the Office of the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost. Funding of no more than $100,000 per hire is available for up to three years based on the formula below.

Hire Year	Initiative Contribution	Department Contribution
One	75%	25%
Two	50%	50%
Three	25%	75%
Four	0%	100%

The process described under "Application Review" will be used to determine the funding awarded. Salary funding will include associated ERE rates. The typical funding model employed by the Initiative is included in the above table.

Awarded funds will be transferred to the colleges/units, unless otherwise noted on the approval notification.

Program Review

This program will be reviewed annually to ensure that it is being implemented in a manner that meets the strategic priorities outlined above and findings will be reported to the President and Senior Vice President and Provost.