

CSU GUIDE Program

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) Part II

Funding Distribution & Administration

How will funds be distributed?

Funds will be issued as an Inter-Agency Grant Award (IFT) through each campus's Sponsored Programs Office. Each participating campus receives its portion directly—funds are not routed through the lead campus.

Will the lead campus distribute funds to collaborators?

No. Each campus receives its allocated budget directly.

How should budgets be structured for multi-campus proposals?

The lead PI submits a single combined budget that includes all participating campuses. If awarded, funds are distributed to each campus according to that proposed budget.

How are funds administered post-award?

Funds are managed through each campus's Sponsored Programs Office, consistent with Inter-Agency Grant Award processes.

Do proposals need to be routed internally at all campuses?

Routing requirements are determined by each campus's research/sponsored programs office. Campuses should follow their standard processes (similar to subawards).

Institutional Limits & Submissions

How many proposals can each campus submit?

Each campus may submit up to three total proposals, with no more than two per track.

Do non-lead collaborations count toward the campus limit?

No. Only proposals where your campus is the lead PI institution count toward the limit.

Are all CSU campuses considered separate entities?

Yes. Each of the 22 CSU campuses is treated as a separate institution (except integrated campuses like Cal Poly SLO and Cal Poly Maritime, which count as one).

How are campus submissions selected?

This is determined by each campus. Internal competitions or review processes may be used.

Tracks, Eligibility & Participation

Who is eligible to apply?

- CSU faculty (tenured, tenure-track, or temporary)
- PI must be a tenured or tenure-track faculty member

Can Track 2 or 3 include multiple faculty?

Yes, faculty from the same campus may collaborate.

Can faculty submit multiple proposals?

A faculty member may serve as PI on only one proposal. They may serve as co-PI/collaborator on additional proposals, depending on track rules.

Faculty Participation (Track 1 Focus)

What is a “campus collaborator”?

A campus collaborator is considered a co-PI.

How many Track 1 proposals can a faculty member join?

- May be PI on one Track 1 proposal.
- May be co-PI/collaborator on one Track 1 proposal.

Can a faculty member be PI on one Track 1 and co-PI on another?

Yes.

Can faculty participate across tracks?

Yes. Faculty may be PI on one proposal and co-PI on others in different tracks.

Collaboration Requirements

Are collaborations required?

- Track 1: Requires at least two CSU campuses.
- Tracks 2 & 3: Collaboration optional (same campus allowed).

Are interdisciplinary collaborations encouraged?

Yes, especially for Track 1 to promote campus synergies.

Are external or international partners allowed?

Yes, but CSU faculty must lead the proposal.

Budget & Allowable Costs

Does the budget need to be split evenly across campuses?

No. Budgets should reflect the actual work and needs of each campus.

How should faculty effort be budgeted?

- Use WTUs (Weighted Teaching Units) and campus replacement/backfill rates.
- Do not use base salary as in traditional grants.

What are the limits on faculty release time?

- Typically, 3–6 WTUs per academic year.
- Up to 6 WTUs total when multiple faculty collaborate.

Is summer salary required?

No. Optional, up to \$5,000.

Are fringe benefits allowed?

Determined by each campus.

Are student costs allowable?

Yes. Student support and inter-campus travel are allowed.

How is indirect cost (IDC) handled?

- Up to 10% IDC (MTDC).
- Budgeting should be coordinated with campus research offices.

Is there a required budget template?

Use the template provided in the RFP.

Proposal Scope & Competitiveness

What is the primary goal of the program?

To support projects that lead to submission-ready external grant proposals within 12 months.

Are all disciplines eligible?

Yes.

What makes a strong proposal?

Refer to the evaluation criteria in the RFP (Section VI). Strong proposals emphasize:

- Student impact
- Mentorship
- Clear path to external funding

Are single-PI proposals less competitive than collaborative ones?

Not necessarily. Competitiveness depends on proposal quality, not track.

Program Positioning & Policies

Does CSU GUIDE affect other funding (e.g., CSU-SPaRA)?

No. It is independent.

Who owns intellectual property?

Faculty retain IP and downstream funding rights.

Are there minimum requirements for external funding proposals?

No. Determined by campuses.