

## Before you begin

We are excited that you are applying to the President's Innovation Fund (PAIF)! A few notes before you begin:

- This application is intended as a brief description of your innovation and its impact. You won't be expected to submit a project plan or detailed budget now, but you may be asked to do so if you move to the next judging round.
- There are four different 'types' of innovations the PAIF is designed to fund. In addition, our priority theme for this year will be "Creating Connections and Community". Under this heading, we are especially seeking projects that facilitate cross-school and cross-unit initiatives, that expedite learning across organizational boundaries (both inside and outside of Harvard), and that continue our commitment to diversity, inclusion, and belonging.
  1. **Experiment (Minimum Viable Product, MVP):** A very limited test of an idea that is expected to generate learning; and MVP uses the smallest set of features/activities possible to test a hypothesis.
  2. **Pilot:** You have an idea for an innovation and hope to implement it at a small scale (e.g., in one School/Unit, or a select handful of Schools/Units).
  3. **Collective Action:** You have had some successful experiments and would now like to bring your innovative solutions to a shared administrative challenge to a cross-school or cross-unit group.
  4. **Scale:** You already have a successful local implementation of an innovation and seek to broaden its reach and impact by supporting its application in new settings.
- Most projects can request up to \$15,000 in funding for up to one year. MVP's can receive up to \$5,000 for up to six months. One or two exceptional projects may receive up to \$25,000 in funding for up to one year.
- In this application we're only asking you for an estimate of how much funding you're requesting. Finalists will be asked to develop a more detailed budget. Note funds may be used for non-exempt overtime (as applicable), software/technology, temporary help (staff or students), back-filling for staff working on the project, and other project-related costs. Funds may not be used for payment to staff salaries nor to fund an individual's proprietary product (any products resulting from PAIF funded projects are Harvard University intellectual property).
- Projects will be judged according to the following criteria:
  - The proposal represents an **innovative** approach to an administrative challenge.
  - The proposal is expected to have measurable **impact** once implemented.
  - The proposal highlights a persistent administrative **problem worth solving**.
  - The intended outcome reflects the proposed **type of innovation** (MVP, Pilot, Collective Action, Scale).

- The initial plan outlines **actions** the team can execute within a year (or 6 months for MVPs).
- Ideas with cross-School and cross-functional collaboration will be especially valued.
  - Innovations related to Creating Connections and Community will also be especially valued this year. Under this heading, we are seeking projects that facilitate cross-school and cross-unit initiatives, that expedite learning across organizational boundaries (both inside and outside of Harvard), and that enable us to realize the University's full potential as a diverse and inclusive workplace.
- By submitting your innovation, you are acknowledging a few things:
  1. You and your co-applicants are benefits-eligible Harvard administrative/professional, support or service and trades staff member may apply. Faculty, post-doctoral fellows, temporary employees, students, and co-ops are not eligible.
  2. You have spoken to your manager about this idea and he/she is supportive of you spending time to lead its implementation.
  3. Your idea will be shared among judges and other administrators across the University (and will be attributed to you).

If you have questions, or would like help thinking through your innovation proposal please email us at [administrative\\_innovation@harvard.edu](mailto:administrative_innovation@harvard.edu)

## Questions

1. Give your innovation a name
2. First Name, Last Name, Email, Manager's Name
3. School (drop-down)
4. What is the problem you are trying to solve? Describe your project enough so that others who are unfamiliar with the topic are able to understand. Your problem statement should be concise and include the following:
  - A description of the problem and the metrics used to describe the problem;
  - Where the problem is occurring;
  - The time frame over which the problem has been occurring;
  - The size or magnitude of the problem.
5. Explain your proposed innovation (articulate why this is an innovation, including how it is original or novel). Why do you believe that PAIF is the right vehicle to fund this innovation?
6. Explain your intended impact (consider your impact in terms of an "if, then" statement). Estimate the impact of solving the problem (in hours, dollars, effort, or some other quantifiable results). Who will be impacted and how?
7. At what stage of development is your proposed innovation? *[radio button selection]*
  - **Experiment (Minimum Viable Product, MVP):** We have an idea for a limited-function/limited test of an idea whose primary purpose is to generate learning
  - **Pilot:** We have an idea we want to implement locally
  - **Collective Action:** We have had some successful experiments and would like to bring together a cross-school or cross-unit group for collective action
  - **Scale:** We have a successful solution in place and want to apply it in other University settings
8. How much funding are you requesting, and how will the funds be used?

9. *For pilot and scale projects only:* If your project succeeds, how might you keep it going after the first year without additional PAIF funding? What is your plan for ongoing sustainability?
10. Co-applicants (Name, School)
11. Which of the areas listed below does your project primarily address? (choose up to three)
- Administration – general
  - Communications
  - Community building
  - Diversity, inclusion and belonging
  - Employee engagement
  - Environmental sustainability
  - Events
  - Facilities
  - HR—systems, analytics & reporting
  - HR—talent, performance, career & professional development
  - Knowledge sharing
  - Sponsored research administration & management
  - Technology—academic
  - Technology—administrative
  - Other