



To: Women Faculty of Virginia Tech
From: AdvanceVT and the Office of the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs
Subject: Mutual Mentoring Grant
Date: November 29, 2023

The Office of the Vice President and Provost, in collaboration with AdvanceVT, is delighted to introduce the Mutual Mentoring Grants program. This initiative is designed to empower women faculty at Virginia Tech by fostering collaborative networks that facilitate the exchange of knowledge and experiences within specific areas such as research, teaching, tenure, work-life issues, cultural matters, identity groups, and more. A key objective is to encourage women faculty to develop professional and social networks within our academic community.

The concept of Mutual Mentoring was initially crafted by several women faculty at Virginia Tech in the 1980s and has since gained recognition at universities nationwide, including the University of Michigan, UMass-Amherst, and Brown University.

AdvanceVT, established in 2003 with support from the National Science Foundation (NSF), aimed to promote women's careers in academic science and engineering through institutional transformation. While the NSF grant funding concluded in August 2010, the mission of AdvanceVT remains steadfast: to assist Virginia Tech in preparing, recruiting, and retaining high-quality and diverse faculty.

Though high-impact initiatives in support of faculty in all disciplines continue through the work of the Faculty Affairs team in the Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost and InclusiveVT, women faculty continue to encounter challenges stemming from biases and caregiving responsibilities, among other factors.

We cordially invite women faculty to form groups and submit proposals for semester- or academic year-long programs tailored to our shared goals. Each group should appoint a convener, a faculty member, to be the primary contact and facilitate the group's collective work and funds. Group members may be invited to participate in workshops or evaluation activities to enhance the program.

To be considered for this grant, proposals should be submitted electronically to Leslie Stevens (leslie@vt.edu) on or before May 15, 2024, for evaluation. Successful submissions will receive funding in July or August 2024. The maximum amount granted will be \$1,000 and limited to 10 per academic year.

Proposals will be considered based on the following criteria:

- Clear articulation of goals.
- Purposeful engagement of women faculty, especially women faculty of color¹, in building supportive communities at Virginia Tech.
- Provision of opportunities for women faculty with shared experiences to engage in activities that address their professional development, work-life integration, and professional climate needs.
- Creative approaches to addressing the needs of faculty women in non-traditional ways that support them both as women and as faculty members.
- Promotion of leadership skills and increased visibility within the university.
- Potential for positive impact on individuals, groups, and the broader university community.

Upon approval, funds will be allocated to the group facilitator's department after consultation with the convener. Please note that funds cannot be used for salaries, hardware, software, equipment, alcohol, or capital improvements. All expenditures must adhere to Virginia Tech's policies and procedures. Please familiarize yourself with the rules concerning state funds.

Questions?

Contact Leslie Stevens at leslie@vt.edu and Madeline Schreiber at mschreib@vt.edu.

¹ A fundamental principle of Virginia Tech's ADVANCE program is that every activity must be infused with an awareness of and commitment to increasing participation of women of color.