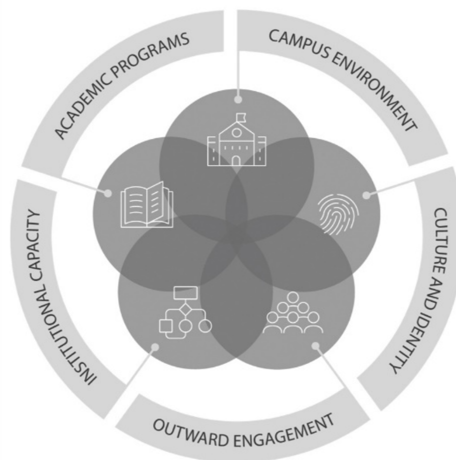
CLARK UNIVERSITY

Steps for Proposing, Evaluating, and Implementing Significant New Initiatives



This document outlines a process for evaluating significant new initiatives or projects at Clark — how ideas will progress visions to realities. These initiatives might involve program innovation, large-scale projects, collaboration with other institutions or organizations, or affiliation with or acquisition of other entities, and could involve either a single Clark program or more than one program. Those initiatives that involve more than one program should be discussed by the Senior Leadership. Relatively small initiatives with limited impact on the institution need not be evaluated through this process.

This process is meant to be flexible. Not all steps or questions will apply to all initiatives, and the sequence of steps may change based on the characteristics of the initiative. The process is not meant to stifle new and creative ideas, but to serve as a reminder of the importance of communication and discussion with the appropriate parties during the consideration of and planning for new initiatives, and to increase efficiency by highlighting the issues that may need to be considered before committing to an initiative.

STEP 1

Members of the Clark community are invited to submit ideas for potential new programs, investments, or partnerships that advance one or multiple of Clark's five strategic areas of focus: academic programs; campus environment; culture and identity; outward engagement; and institutional capacity. New ideas may be submitted using an online form, which asks for the following pieces of information:

- A short narrative description of the idea
- The scale of the idea (institution-wide, multiple offices or department, single office or department)
- If available, estimates for anticipated costs and revenue that the idea would generate
- A brief statement regarding why this is a particularly good fit or opportunity for Clark

Ideas will be forwarded to the Steering Committee for consideration and a member of the committee will follow up with you regarding any questions and next steps.

STEP 2

The Strategic Framework Steering Committee will review and evaluate the idea. As part of the Committee's initial review, some ideas may be immediately referred to other responsible parties for consideration or implementation, merged with ideas that have been submitted previously, or considered to be too far afield of the work of the committee to be evaluated further.

Depending on how fully-developed a particular idea may be the committee may recommend further development and broader community engagement. A toolkit has been developed to help sponsors through this developmental process.

Ideas that are not duplicative and fall within the scope of the committee for review and evaluation will be assessed according to a standardized rubric developed by the committee to help categorize and prioritize future initiatives.

STEP 3

The Strategic Framework Steering Committee will shepherd ideas through the process, including relevant and timely engagement with appropriate faculty governance committees and process, consulting with the Staff Assembly Steering Committee, student government, and seeking the input of specific relevant experts and stakeholders in the Clark community and beyond.

STEP 4

Depending on the scale of an initiative, the committee may recommend that the President appoint an executive sponsor from the University's leadership team, who may also be the initiative's original sponsor. Others may be led by a faculty or staff sponsor with sufficient responsibility in the relevant area. Additional individuals may be identified to serve as part of a team. The Vice President for Planning and Strategic Initiatives is available to advise the team during its investigation, especially on matters that involve more than one Clark program and cut across academic and administrative lines.

STEP 5

The sponsor or team produces a brief summary document (a “white paper”) that describes the vision for the initiative or project, and provides an overview of the perceived demand, viability, competitive advantage, and any relevant national or international trends. In addition to a vision, the white paper should identify questions still to be answered about the initiative, and consider whether or how the initiative might impact or delay the completion of existing projects or work, and how any such impacts could be mitigated. This document is submitted to the Strategic Framework Steering Committee to begin an iterative process of developing the proposal and determining how it might fit into the Strategic Framework.

STEP 6

Faculty governance will consider proposals requiring faculty approval. Relevant faculty committees will review plans as needed and consult with senior leadership to inform their decision-making. In parallel, the Strategic Framework Steering Committee will consider whether and how the initiative might fit into Clark’s strategic framework, and make a recommendation to the President and other relevant members of senior leadership regarding how to prioritize this initiative in the context of others.

STEP 7

The President, Provost, and relevant members of senior leadership discuss the proposal and decide whether additional evaluation or consultation is needed.

STEP 8

The President, Provost, senior leadership, and any other relevant group (e.g., Board of Trustees) decide whether to commit to the initiative and will establish the priority of the initiative. Some initiatives requiring significant financial investment may be endorsed pending successful fundraising (gifts or external grant commitments) and/or further development of a sustainable financial model.

STEP 9

For significant initiatives that involve external parties, a memorandum of understanding (MOU) or letter of intent (LOI) is drawn up, and a formal due diligence process is initiated.

STEP 10

Implementation

Once the strategic decision has been made to commit to the initiative and MOUs/LOIs are signed (if necessary), the appropriate member of the leadership team will charge an implementation team and initiate the implementation process. To aid in implementation, an implementation checklist will be developed to help the implementation team consider relevant stakeholders that may need to be engaged in planning.