University Teaching & Learning Research Funds

Competitive Grant Category

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1. Background

The Teaching and Learning Office (UTLO) was established in 2008 with the specific aim of advancing the University's vision, mission and strategic plan with regard to teaching and learning. The UTLO is lead by the DVC (Teaching and Learning) as a cross cutting portfolio within the executive management of the university, parallel to the DVC (Research) portfolio, requiring working closely with the Colleges and Schools and support structures variously involved with teaching and learning.

UKZN's STRATEGIC GOAL FOUR - EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING AND LEARNING - commits the university to promoting excellence in teaching and learning through creative and innovative curriculum design and development, pedagogical strategies, and assessment practices in accordance with the highest quality management principles**.** In furthering this goal, the university has also committed itself to promoting **research-led teaching and learning** approaches to developing policies and practices. To advance research in teaching and learning, it is necessary to set up a fund to support researchers wishing to undertake such research

The university teaching and learning research fund falls within the framework of the Competitive Grant category of University Research Funding and complements allocations to staff members based on Research Productivity Awards (for journal articles, chapters in books, patents, etc). It is a new dedicated fund jointly set up and supported by the Research Office and UTLO for researching teaching and learning within the university. This category of funding will apply to staff who have already established a research profile but are novice in areas such as Higher Education, Institutional and Curriculum Research, to new staff seeking to build scholarship in university teaching and learning, and to staff who undertake institutional level research within the university. As a Competitive Grant category it remains a developmental programme, aimed at researchers just beginning their research careers and those who are in need of funds to establish themselves in research but specifically within higher education research.

2. Eligibility

Competitive Teaching and Learning Research Grants are available to university staff as follows:

2.1 Staff undertaking any higher education research for the first time.

2.2 Staff undertaking higher education institutional research at college and university level.

2.3 Staff who have recently completed their doctoral degree and are engaged in higher education research but have not as yet established a research profile that will allow them to access sufficient funds through the Productivity Award category. Staff members who have received funding from the Competitive Grant Budget towards their doctoral degree will not be eligible.

2.4 Staff members who are registered for their doctoral degree in the broad area of higher education research. This support will only be given towards the research project for the degree registered.

2.5 Contract staff members are eligible for funding provided that they are on a continuous two year (or longer) contract with the University.

2.6 Both academic and support staff are eligible to apply

2.7 Staff studying towards a Masters qualification do not qualify for funding.

3. Conditions/Requirements

Grant recipients are required to submit annual progress reports signed by the Head of School and Dean together with a financial statement indicating the amounts utilized

4. Period of Funding

Applications only need to be submitted once and grants will be made available for a period of up to three years. However funding after the first year will be made available subject to the submission of an acceptable progress and financial report. The format of the report is available on the university Research Office and the Teaching and Learning Office websites

5. Budget

Support may be requested for:

5.1 Personnel:	Research Assistants
	(detailed costing should be provided according to University rates)
	Other (Specialist services, translators, transcriptions, etc
5.2 Running Expenses:	Travel
	Accommodation and subsistence
	Field Work Costs
	Operating Costs
	Editing Costs (R4000 max – towards PhD studies)
	Local Conference Attendance (R7 000 max)
	Conference Attendance Abroad (R30 000 max) (must have a doctoral degree to be eligible)

5.3 Equipment (not exceeding R50 000)

5.4 Books (Specialist Books, requests to be motivated – max R5 000)

6. Submission Procedure

A call for submission of applications will be made three times a year. Closing dates will be posted on the University Teaching and Learning Office and the Research Office websites.

Application forms for a Competitive Teaching and Learning Grant can be downloaded from the University Teaching and Learning Office and the Research Office websites.

Completed forms, signed by the Head of School and Dean, should be submitted to the University Teaching and Learning Office, Howard College Campus.

5. Evaluation

Each application will be forwarded to at least two independent reviewers for an evaluation of the research proposal in terms of novelty of the research idea, academic merits, feasibility, and budgetary requests.

In addition each research proposal will be evaluated in terms of its relevance and potential for contributing to knowledge about teaching and learning in higher education, in general, and to the university in particular, including:

- curriculum transformation
- access to higher education
- improving retention and graduation rates
- promoting quality of throughput
- higher education policy and practice
- research supervision
- teaching and learning in under- and post-graduate sectors

Research proposals that reflect engagement with the university's teaching and learning vision and mission; that advance African Scholarship; have innovative research designs; and that are multidisciplinary and collaborative are especially encouraged.

The reviewers' reports will serve before the University Teaching and Learning Competitive Grant Committee, which will make the final decision on funding.

The evaluation and processing of applications for the University Teaching and Learning Competitive Grant will broadly follow according to those of the Competitive Research Grant of the University Research Office

6. Ethical Approval

Studies involving animals or human subjects must receive ethical approval. Funding will only be released once the University Teaching and Learning Office are provided with proof of ethical clearance.