



UNIVERSITY OF
TORONTO

Access Strategy &
Partnerships Office

2025 Application Guide & Proposal Template Form



Access Programs University Fund (APUF)



Please use this form to prepare your proposal.

This document is meant as a reference as you develop your proposal and complete the application form. All required information must be submitted via the **online application form** on the Access Strategy & Partnership Office's (ASPO) [APUF website](#).

Questions should be directed to ASPO at access@utoronto.ca.

Before you Begin:

- The Access Programs University Fund (APUF) seeks to support divisional and university access goals, which are defined differently in different areas. Reflect on whether your initiative responds to goals related to *access to postsecondary education* in the short (0 – 2 years), medium (2-4 years) or long-term (5 years or more).
- If this is your first time applying for APUF, we encourage you to reach out to previously funded APUF grantees where possible. You can find a list here: [APUF Funded Initiatives](#).

The Access Programs University Fund (APUF) operates through a two-step application process:

1. Consultation with the Access Strategy & Partnerships Office (ASPO) to discuss your proposal.
2. Submission of a full application package.

To arrange a proposal consultation meeting with ASPO, please use the [APUF Consultation – 2025 link](#). Please include the emails of colleagues who plan to attend.

On the following pages is a step-by-step review of the APUF application form. We have included questions and prompts for you to consider as you develop your responses.

Initiative Overview

1. **Initiative Title**

2. **Executive Summary**

Provide an executive summary of the initiative. (350 words)

3. **Academic Program Level**

- Undergraduate
 - First entry (e.g. Bachelor of Science degree)
 - Second entry professional programs (e.g. MD, JD)
- Graduate studies
 - Professional Masters
 - Research Masters
 - Doctoral programs

4. **Program Focus**

Note: Post-secondary pathways include undergraduate, graduate and professional studies.

- **Outreach & Engagement:** increase awareness and understanding of post-secondary pathways
- **Access & Transition:** promote successful academic and social transitions to post-secondary
- **Retention & Persistence:** help participants complete and graduate from postsecondary programs

Initiative Lead(s)

To list multiple leads, please use a semicolon between names/titles/emails for entries #4 - #6.

5. **Name**

6. **Title/Position**

7. **Email address**

8. **Academic Unit**

Check list provided in form.

9. **College, Department, Centre, Institute or Other**, if applicable

10. **Division(s) participating in the proposed initiative.**

Please list all collaborating departments and divisions, as well as any student groups and external partners who are involved in this initiative.

If you have partnership agreements in place with any of your partners, please identify and kindly share them with us at access@utoronto.ca.

11. **Biographies of Leads and Primary Collaborators**

Provide one paragraph for each of the leads and primary collaborators in the proposed project that states their position (academic or non-academic) and includes an overview of their relevant expertise in relation to the proposed initiative.

Detailed Description

The APUF grant is intended to provide opportunities for creating outreach opportunities and pathways to post-secondary education for underrepresented groups by either developing a new initiative or scaling existing programs. Initiatives should connect to at least two of the [three Presidential Priorities \(Appendix B\)](#). Grants are provided for a maximum of 2 years.

APUF Initiative Goals:

- Expanding, replicating, adapting or scaling an existing program, including partnering with other U of T access programs (expanding community/school partners; increasing number of participants, etc.);
- Developing a new initiative/program that focuses on creating intentional pathways to post-secondary education;
- Identifying new approaches and opportunities to learn;
- Improving overall impact of a current program;
- Supporting relationship development across the university, including involvement of student groups;
- Encouraging community partnerships, e.g., agencies, school boards, etc.;
- Fostering collaboration with divisional access and outreach offices and across the University to ensure strategic alignment with collective access goals.
- Providing experiential learning for University of Toronto students through greater interaction with potential students through involvement with a wide range of diverse communities where underrepresented students come from.

12. **Rationale:**

- a. Describe the reasons for undertaking this initiative and the goals you hope to achieve.
- b. Please identify any structural barriers that may be impeding educational access that will be addressed by your initiative. How do these intersect with unit, divisional, and/or institutional access program goals?
- c. Consider including research to support your claims. Use of a critical equity lens and a theoretical framework for access is recommended. (1000 words)

As you complete the rationale for your initiative, please consider the following:

- What specific gaps in **access to postsecondary** are you addressing? How do you know this is a barrier or gap?
- Address how this program will tangibly fill this gap?
- What research supports the vision, goals, activities and/or design of your program? Have you referenced research by U of T faculty? If so, please reference.
- How does your initiative address your divisional access goals? How does it address Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) goals?

The [Resource Library](#) on ASPO's website has a searchable library of U of T and external resources relevant to access programs. The library contains links to reports, publications, toolkits, guides, data and statistics, primarily in a Canadian context.

13. **Deliverables:**

Provide a brief description of the expected outputs of the initiative. (250 words)

- After activities are complete, what do you anticipate will be the result of your initiative?

14. **Impact:**

Which group or groups who are currently underrepresented at the University of Toronto will this initiative benefit, and how? (250 words)

As you identify the impact of this initiative and who will benefit from it, please consider the following:

- How will students see your initiative as a benefit to them on their educational trajectory?
- What stage(s) are your participants at with respect to their educational trajectory? What specific supports might they require?
- Who, specifically, will you recruit for your program? How many students/participants? Include U of T students (volunteer/work study) involved in supporting participants and program overall.
- How will you support learners before and after the program is completed?
 - Understand who your participants are, including their unique needs and potential barriers. How will you determine appropriate wrap-around supports/services? (e.g., mentoring, skills development workshops such as writing and math; sessions on navigating the university, admissions, and financial aid processes; TCards; library access; financial supports for TTC, food, books, school supplies)

- Consider parents/guardians and consider engaging them wherever possible.
- What is the plan for sustaining connections with participants after the program?
- What is the end-goal from the participant perspective? How will they practically gain from this experience?
- How will you support/train your mentors and advisors?

15. Which geographic region(s) will be targeted?

As you select your geographic region(s), please consider the following:

- Whether your initiative is needed or welcomed in this/these regions.
- Whether your initiative duplicates or builds upon other similar initiatives.

16. Participant Recruitment and Support:

How will participants from underrepresented communities be recruited? How will these learners be supported during the program? How will these relationships be sustained after the program is completed?

- Which underrepresented groups will be supported as a result of your initiative?

The following resources may assist you in identifying these groups:

- EDI office website resources <https://people.utoronto.ca/inclusion/>
- Student Services <https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/>

- How will you recruit participants? Be specific about the schools, neighbourhoods, communities that will be engaged. Do you have pre-existing relationships or connections, or will these be built from scratch? Who might be a good connector for you at U of T as you seek to establish connections?
- Have you engaged the organizations and/or schools where you anticipate recruiting students? How do you plan to develop mutually beneficial relationships? What is your partnership/engagement approach or strategy?
- Ensure partners (schools; community organizations) are able to provide agreed upon supports.

17. Assessment:

How will you measure the success of this initiative? How will you ensure the assessment is appropriate and that it is rooted in anti-racism and anti-oppression. (250 words)

- How is success being defined?
- Who is leading the assessment?

Evaluation could include insights, learnings, improved community relations, sustainability and feasibility of initiative, impact on scholarly activity, impact on practice, etc.

As you consider how to evaluate your program, please consider the following:

- Whether an evaluator/evaluation will be embedded in your program?

- What kind of evaluation lends itself to your initiative. See *Program Evaluation Manual for Programs related to Access and Retention* published by Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario (HEQCO) as reference: <https://heqco.ca/pub/heqcos-program-evaluation-manual-for-programs-related-to-access-and-retention/>.
- Whether your initiative will require resources for evaluation?
- Will U of T faculty or students be engaged to support evaluation?

18. Initiative timeline:

Provide a clear timeline, including major milestones and progress reports. Upload a PDF version of the timeline in table format in either Excel or Word.

- How will you move from outreach to access? Where possible, frame access as a longitudinal process that is part of broader system change.

19. Sustainability:

What are the plans for sustaining and/or sharing the initiative beyond the APUF funding limits? Be as specific as you can be in your plans to secure sustainable funding. (250 words)

- How is your faculty intending to support the initiative? Do you have the support of your department – dedicated staff – to ensure the work continues?
- Other funding sources or partner collaborations

20. Bibliography:

A short bibliography related to the development of the proposal. (250 words).

Budget

21. Budget Form:

Upload a PDF version of the APUF chart of funds and itemized expenses (APUF 2025-26 Budget Form).

The [APUF 2025-26 Budget Guideline](#) is intended as a reference as you develop your budget and complete the budget form.

The APUF chart of funds and itemized expenses to be filled in the [APUF 2025-26 Budget Form](#) and uploaded as a PDF file in the online application form.

22. Rationale and Justification for requested funds:

Provide a summary of the major rationale and justification for the type, amount and duration of funds requested. Include as much information as possible on the major expenditure milestones (250 words)

As you complete this section, please consider:

- Include evidence of an understanding of the true costs (e.g. time, salaries, stipends, consumables, etc.).
- Include any changes you expect to see from year 1 to year 2.

23. Existing Resources:

Provide a brief description of existing university resources/in-kind support leveraged in support of the initiative. This can include staffing, personnel, equipment, and internal or external funding currently secured for this initiative. (250 words)

- Include how you might leverage connections between access programs.
- Include any partnerships or collaborations including supports from other programs at U of T and the community.

24. APUF funds requested:

Year 1: \$

Year 2: \$

Enter the amount(s), up to \$100,000 per year, rounded to the nearest dollar.

Divisional Support

- A letter of support from the sponsoring division's leadership (e.g., Dean, Principal, Director, Chair) is required.

We request that you inform and discuss your proposed initiative with divisional leadership and relevant access outreach and/or programming office(s) to ensure that they are aware of your plans to submit an application.

Please consider how your proposed initiative aligns with other access programs and/or activities within your division to ensure alignment with strategic and operational access goals in advance of scheduling a meeting.

Applicants from multi-departmental faculties should check with their Dean's office before applying as some may require Decanal approval before submission.

Sponsoring academic division/unit head(s)

Minimum: 1

25. **Name of sponsoring academic division/unit head**

26. **Email address of sponsoring academic division/unit head(s)**

Letters of support from the sponsoring academic Division/Unit

Letters must be signed by the Dean of Division/Unit and/or Principal, Chair or Director of Division. Give yourself at minimum four weeks to obtain signatures.

Applicants will be required to upload the letter of support as part of the final application package.

Proposals are required to outline plans for sustaining the initiative once APUF funds have concluded. Therefore, this letter of support ensures that there is engagement from the sponsoring Division to consider the initiative for ongoing funding (if applicable) upon the completion of the APUF grant.

Letter of support #1 (*upload pdf*)

Letter of support #2 (if applicable)

[APPLICATION END]

Checklist before submitting your application.

- Arrange a consultation with the Access Strategy & Partnerships Office to discuss your proposal.
- Transfer your answers from the Application Guide & Proposal Template Guide to the online application form.
- Attach a signed letter of support(s) from the sponsoring academic division/unit.
- Attach a completed project budget referring to the APUF 2025-26 Budget Guideline.