

Global Learning Program Development Awards

CALL FOR PROPOSALS 2025-2026

Virginia Commonwealth University's Global Education Office (GEO) is pleased to announce the **Global Learning Program Development Awards**, which will grant at least **five awards of up to \$5,000** for projects related to developing new global learning programs including education abroad, domestic study away with a global focus, or virtual exchange.

To diversify opportunities for students, two **areas of priority** have been established:

1. Proposals in regions of strategic interest, specifically **Portugal, Spain, Japan, or South Korea**;
2. Collaboration with [El Centro at VCU](#).

New in 2025! Additionally, with support from the [L & L Friendship Fund](#), a VCU faculty or staff with a proven track record of successfully developing and leading education abroad programs will have the opportunity to receive **\$20,000** to support programmatic costs for a new or existing faculty-led short-term program aimed at expanding access to education abroad in the **new L & L Friendship Fund Global Access Grant**.

Education abroad

Funding for education abroad is intended to support full-time faculty, departments or schools that seek significant increases in study abroad participation through new short-term programming integrated into departmental curricula in ways that promote academic and financial sustainability. Priority will be given to units not yet offering established opportunities for their majors. Successful programming will articulate with the academic program. Proposed education abroad programs should plan to operate between December 2025-August 2026. Applicants are expected to follow guidelines in the [Education Abroad Faculty Leader Handbook](#) and to also submit a separate [new faculty-led program proposal](#) to the Global Education Office.

Domestic study away with a global focus

Funding for domestic study away programs with a global focus is intended to support full-time faculty, departments, or schools that seek to develop new, domestic short-term study away programs centered on one or more of the [United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals](#). Proposed domestic programs should operate between December-August 2026. Funding may be used to cover expenses related to a faculty site visit conducted between August-December 2025 to explore potential destinations within the United States and its territories. Applicants are expected to follow guidelines in the [Faculty Leader Handbook](#) and to also submit a separate [new domestic program proposal](#) to the Global Education Office.

Virtual exchange

Funding for virtual exchange programs is intended to support those seeking to incorporate a virtual, collaborative, international component into an existing course at VCU. Virtual exchange, also known as COIL, or Collaborative Online International Learning, is an excellent way to increase access to global education, and help students develop

intercultural agility and other skills that will benefit them academically and professionally (watch this video for more on [virtual exchange](#)).

Award amounts & areas of priority

While no fixed number of the awards has been set, we anticipate awarding **five grants of up to \$5,000 each** (with the exception of the L & L Friendship Fund Global Access Grant which is a separate opportunity). The final number and amount of awards will depend on the merits of each proposal as determined by reviewers. Successful applicants will be expected to work closely with staff in GEO's Global Learning department for guidance and support in project development.

These awards are not intended to fund one-time events, attendance at professional meetings, equipment purchases, or other expenses typically covered by existing budgets. While awards may be used for faculty/staff exploratory travel (i.e. site visits), they should not be used to offset student travel costs through direct subsidies (with the exception of the L & L Friendship Fund Global Access Grant). However, if funds remain after the completion of planned activities, recipients may request approval from GEO to allocate the remaining funds toward programmatic expenses.

Priority areas:

1. To diversify opportunities for students, **areas of priority** have been established to encourage proposals in geographic areas of strategic interest, specifically, **Spain** (with an emphasis on reigniting VCU's partnership with the **University of Córdoba**), **Portugal**, **Japan**, or **South Korea**. At least one award in the aforementioned regions is anticipated.
2. **El Centro**: In collaboration with [El Centro at VCU](#), an award will be made to support the development of courses, programs or other initiatives. Possible projects include education abroad or domestic study away programs in Latin America, virtual exchange with Latin American partner universities, courses integrating Latin American case studies or research, or community-engaged global learning opportunities that connect VCU students with Richmond's communities.

NEW in 2025! The L & L Friendship Fund Global Access Grant: With support from the [L & L Friendship Fund](#), full-time faculty or staff will have the opportunity to receive up to \$20,000 towards student programmatic costs for a new or existing faculty-led short-term program aimed at expanding access to education abroad. Priority will be given to the following:

- Full-time faculty or staff with a **proven track record** of successfully developing and leading education abroad programs
- Programs offering course(s) that are widely applicable to **students across majors** (e.g. general education credit)
- Programs offering course(s) with [VCU REAL level 3](#) or 4 designation
- Programs that have submitted a [completed program proposal](#) for 2025-2026 including all required components by May 15, 2025
- Programs aligned with the [United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals](#)
- Programs with **limited student selection criteria** (i.e. open to all students, regardless of year or credits)
- Programs **priced affordably** to ensure they remain accessible in future years, even when the subsidy is no longer available
- Programs that offer **direct career and professional development** opportunities for participants

- Proposals with a **plan for identifying participants** for a limited number of seats

Deadline

The completed proposal should be received by the Global Education Office by **Thursday, May 15, 2025**. Completed proposals must be submitted using the [online submission form](#). Awards will be **announced by June 15, 2025** and should be **used by June 30, 2026**. Award recipients agree to provide a final report at the end of the award period and to provide promotional credit to the Global Education Office. Questions should be addressed to Dr. Jill Blondin, Associate Vice Provost for Global Initiatives (jblondin@vcu.edu) and Stephanie Tignor, Director of Global Learning (davenportse@vcu.edu).

Evaluation criteria

- Alignment with unit's strategic goals and metrics of [VCU Quest 2028: One VCU Together We Transform](#)
- Alignment with the [United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals](#)
- Feasibility of proposed program and evidence that award will result in a sustained, significant impact towards internationalizing VCU
- Promise of sustained enrollment for the program
- Degree of commitment from units and partner universities
- Creativity and innovation of proposed work
- Reflection of current national best practices
- Track record in successful implementation of complex initiatives
- Track record of responsible management of Global Learning Program Development Award funds, if previously received (e.g. reports submitted in a timely manner)

Proposals must include

Project narrative, [submitted in the online form](#), must address the following:

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Summary of proposal | <input type="checkbox"/> Timeline of when the project is expected to take place |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Description of the program and the work to be done to establish the program | <input type="checkbox"/> Budget, including how the funds will be spent and any cost sharing provided by department/school (cost sharing is not required) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Relation to current programming, initiatives, or priorities in relevant VCU unit(s) | <input type="checkbox"/> A letter of support from director/chair of each unit involved addressing the proposal's fit with the department and academic unit's strategic goals and campus internationalization |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Relevance of any external partner(s) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Anticipated outcomes and significance of the proposed activity and impact on campus internationalization | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation plan | |