



UVic highlights opportunities for transformative learning, such as Experiential Learning (EL), as a priority for supporting the personal, career and academic growth of students. Experiential Learning is essentially learning by doing, followed by reflecting on that experience to deepen understanding and inform future actions. It involves iterative cycles of concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization and active experimentation (Kolb, 1984). To learn more about EL at UVic, sign up for [the Field-based and community-engaged learning course for instructors](#).

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About the Grant

Overview

UVic is committed to dynamic learning; engaging meaningfully with our external communities—locally, regionally, nationally and internationally; and promoting civic engagement and global citizenship. The Experiential Learning Fund (ELF) Grant supports these goals by providing support for Community-Engaged (CEL) and Experiential Learning (EL).

The ELF Grant is an expansion of the Community-Engaged Learning (CEL) Grant, which was established in 2014. It aims to: 1) increase opportunities for students to participate in experiential learning; and 2) build capacity for experiential learning at UVic. CEL Office (Co-op & Careers Service) administers this grant and funding is provided by the Office of the Vice- President Academic and Provost and the President’s Strategic Initiatives Fund.

Timeline

- **Application Guidelines:** Materials and submission form available by **October 1st, 2025**.
- **Grant Deadline:** Each grant will be due at **11:59pm, Dec. 19th, 2025**.
- **Adjudication Process:** Grant committees will meet in the following **30-60 days**.
- **Applicants Notified:** Applicants will be notified by **Feb. 1st, 2026**.

Supported Initiatives

EL both on- and off-campus. While there are many forms of EL, the ELF Grant will support two specific areas for experiential learning: **Community-Engaged Learning (CEL)** and **Field-Based Learning (FBL)**.

Community-Engaged Learning	Field-Based Learning
Community-Engaged Learning (CEL) is a form of experiential learning and community-engaged scholarship whereby students actively engage with course content through a combination of collaborations with community and facilitated critical reflection. A broad definition of community is intended.	Field-Based Learning (FBL) is a form of experiential learning whereby students actively engage with course content through a combination of land, sociocultural and/or water-based experiences and facilitated critical reflection. It is often also a form of community-engaged learning.

The ELF Grant also supports small contingency costs associated with fostering reciprocal relationships through the [CEL Emergent Activities Fund](#).

Range of Proposals

The ELF Grant provides support for the integration of community-engaged and field-based undergraduate or graduate curricula through course, lab or program development or redesign^{*i}.

Examples of project types include (but are not limited to):

- projects designed to improve or enhance student learning through meaningful and substantial community-engaged or field-based learning opportunities within the context of a particular course;
- curricular innovation related to community-engaged or field-based experiences within a program with the intention of exploring and improving the student experience.

Eligibility

We encourage proposals from those who directly support student learning at UVic, including research- and teaching-stream faculty, sessional and laboratory instructors, and teaching-related professional staff of the University. You can still apply if you are a previous ELF grant recipient BUT YOU MUST fulfill the obligations of your previous grant prior to being considered for another ELF grant.

Application Process

Application Requirements

Complete the online [grant application form](#) following these guidelines and respecting the word limit for each item. The questions are shared in the Application Questions section of this guide so that you can draft your application; this is recommended because the online form must be filled in and submitted in one session. The APPLICATION MUST BE SUBMITTED ONLINE. Once you have submitted the application, you cannot edit it. If you have questions or need to make an urgent amendment, please contact celoffice@uvic.ca.

What makes a strong proposal?

Broadly speaking, your proposal should clearly outline what you intend to do, how you intend to do it, who will do it, and why you will do it. Bullet-point responses are fine. The key is responding clearly and concisely to each question. The [Field-based and community-engaged learning course for instructors](#) can support you in thinking through the questions, as can the [CEL Office](#).

Human Research Ethics Approval Requirements

Some course instructors' assignments may require UVic students to collect data or information from human participants at host organizations or partner organizations (e.g., through interviews, surveys, participant observation, photos, videos, focus group conversations).

When such course assignments/syllabi **additionally and expressly require** UVic students to use these data and information to fulfill a course assignment (e.g., to analyze or summarize or to write up this information) **the instructor's plan includes more than a learning experience in the community.** The instructor is additionally planning for their UVic students to practice and do research **for the course in the realm of community-based research.** This type of course set-up requires the course instructor to obtain Human Research Ethics Approval.

The above is the difference between the course **going beyond CEL to community-based research.**

In Human Research Ethics Approval for a course, UVic students are "student researchers" for a course. The instructor is the Principal Investigator. The instructor is responsible for ensuring the ethical conduct of the student researchers at the host or partner organization by ensuring the student researchers use the procedures set out in the approved ethics application, such as UVic informed consent forms approved by the Human Research Ethics Board.

Instructor Preparation for Research at Host or Partner Organizations

- If such work is involved, the UVic Human Research Ethics Board (HREB) must approve the UVic student researchers' activities; whether the instructor should use a standard or course-based application will depend on the research activities students will undertake.

- As part of the human ethics application the instructor **must ensure** that they have the permissions from host or partner organizations (e.g., school districts (K-12), private schools (K-12), community organizations, universities and colleges etc.) for the UVic students to enter **and** conduct research. Note that permission to be on site is not the same as permission to recruit for research and/or to conduct research while there. Permission to enter and conduct research must be in place as part of your human ethics application.
- Review of an application by the HREB takes about 4 weeks from time of application receipt. Prioritize this element of your project.
- Provide an e-copy of the ethics approval from the HREB to celoffice@uvic.ca once it is available.

If you are unsure about the need for such approval, we urge you to consult the UVic [Human Research Ethics \(HRE\) website](#) and contact ethics@uvic.ca to discuss.

Project Funding for Grants

Grant funding for any project in a given budget year is a maximum of **\$7,500**. The intent behind this limit is to distribute financial support across meritorious proposals (preferably in a diversity of Faculties, Departments and Schools) to maximize direct benefits to a wide range of student learners and community initiatives.

Budget and Accounting Requirements

Consider how the project budget will be spent and describe exactly how much will be spent doing what; provide a justification for each item. The sustainability of the project is an important criterion. Continuation of the project in post-grant years should not be dependent on continued ELF-grant funding. Clarify whether a project is self-sufficient, has or requires funding from additional sources, or whether it is the first in a series of planned projects which may require funding after the completion of the currently proposed project.

Eligible Expenses

Eligible expenses include but are not limited to:

- paying undergraduate, graduate or other research assistants (RAs). Individuals who hope to be hired on the grant as RAs should not be listed as the applicant or a co-applicant;
- engaging outside consultants that are essential to the successful completion of the grant. If you are requesting such a budget item, please explain the value of this work for the grant. Note that copyright for “products” of work undertaken on behalf of the project is subject to the [Copyright Compliance and Administration Policy](#) (IM7310);
- travel that is necessary for completion of essential components of the project; and,
- gifts and honoraria for community partners.

Ineligible Expenses

Applicants and co-applicants **may not** use grant funds for the following:

- To be reimbursed for work related to the grant;
- To pay for teaching release time;
- To employ Teaching Assistants for timetabled courses (Teaching Assistantships are part of the academic planning of faculties). Students can only be employed as RAs for research towards and development or implementation of an awarded project;
- To purchase equipment or supplies normally supplied by the University;
- To use commercial services (other than those stated in the list of eligible expenses);
- To cover costs of academic work, such as journal subscriptions; and,
- To cover costs of registration for, or travel to, academic conferences for attendance or the dissemination of

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project work as these may be covered through Professional Development or other UVic funds.

Research Assistant Salaries

If the grant application is successful, you must adhere to all university policies and procedures, including those pertaining to wage rates, vacation pay, and appropriate benefits. Please consult the [Human Resources CUPE 4163 salary schedule](#) (Component 1 & 2) TA Appendix – Academic & Scientific Assistants, for current rates.

Note that vacation pay of 4% is to be computed on the wage rate; and that benefits pay of 11.85% is computed on the wage rate + vacation pay. Please indicate the hourly salary, vacation pay and benefits, the number of hours requested and the type of activity to be carried out.

Sample Budget

Below is an example of how you can detail your proposed budget.

- 1) RA to assist with the information-gathering process and the design of the learning modules (\$2,895.03)

May-Aug 2021

- 14 hrs: Environmental scan of relevant courses and community initiatives (including conversations with CEL Office)
- 6 hrs: Meet with Elders to learn how Indigenous peoples perceive health and physical activity
- 21 hrs: Complete transcription and data analysis to identify key learning themes

Sept-Dec 2021

- 7 hrs: Finalize ILOs for learning modules
- 28 hrs: Develop learning strategies and assessment tools that align with ILOs.

Jan-May 2022

- Implement learning modules in course
- 14 hrs: Adjust module content as necessary

Total: 90 hrs at \$32.17/hr (adjust as needed as rates shift) = \$2,895.03

- 2) Gifts and honoraria for community partners

For Elders' time in meetings and in a class session

Total: (\$500 honorarium each time 2) + (\$50 gift each times 2) = \$1,100

Total budget = \$3995.03

Budget Adjustments

Funds used for items other than those listed in the approved application budget must be pre-approved by the [CEL Office](#). A new budget will have to be submitted based on eligible expenses and to the limit of the approved amount, explaining the modifications, i.e., the initially approved amount cannot change.

Application Approval

The Chair/Director/Dean's support for the project indicates three things:

1. Confirmation of departmental/unit support for this application, including a commitment to project completion.
2. Understanding that, if the grant is approved, the principal applicant must assign a distinct account to the project,

to be used solely for approved budget items related to the grant.

3. Commitment, along with the recipient, to assume responsibility for any deficits accrued in the recipient's grant account.

Where there are multiple proposals from the same unit, we may ask the Dean, Chair or Director to prioritize these proposals within the context of the strategic directions of the faculty, department or school.

Assistance for Completing Your Proposal

We highly recommend that you arrange for at least one consultation on your proposal well in advance of the proposal deadline. The [CEL Office](#) is pleased to provide advice and consultation at both the proposal and the grant implementation stage. In addition, the [Field-based and community-engaged learning course for instructors](#), the [Field School Forum](#) listserv, and Experiential Learning workshops offered by the CEL Office can support your work.

The CEL Office can assist with, among other things: how to define and write intended learning outcomes; how to conduct a focus group; examples of learning principles; principles of UDL; how to provide effective formative feedback to students



Post-Application Process

Proposal Adjudication

After the proposal deadline, all applications will be screened to ensure that the proposals are complete and meet the basic grant criteria. The adjudication committee will then review all applications and make decisions about which projects will be awarded the ELF grant. All applicants will be notified of the adjudication decision by email. These emails will include comments from the adjudication panel. If a grant is successful, the adjudication panel may, on occasion, propose modifications to the budget. The principal applicant will be notified of any recommendations for modification along with the panel's decision. Also note that grant recipients do not always receive the entirety of requested funds. The adjudication panel may give conditional approval of a grant if the project aligns with the adjudication criteria in all but the budget or a specific component of the grant. In this case, the provisional grantee will be contacted with recommendations for modifications; final approval will be granted once the committee's recommendations have been addressed.

Please note: One grant each year will be held for a qualifying project focused on engagement with Indigenous communities (if no qualifying projects are submitted, this grant will be released to general qualifying applicants).

Grant Criteria

General criteria for ELF grant applications include: clarity and specificity of pedagogical principles to be applied to the planned materials towards courses, programs, curricula, or learning resources; the extent to which the Experiential Learning goals are meaningfully reflected into the proposed project; the potential impact of the project on the student learning experience; the location of the project in current scholarly and creative work, and post-secondary educational trends; and the project's feasibility and sustainability within the timeframe and budget presented.

The following criteria will be assessed in all ELF Grant Applications:

Accountability and Sustainability

- A comprehensive budget (detailing requested funds and how funds will be used);
- How the proposed project is feasible within the timeframe and budget presented; and,
- How financial sustainability (for future iterations of the EL experience) will be achieved.

Impact

- The overall goal and purpose of the project and EL opportunity;
- The types of reflection and assessment that will be used to enhance student learning through the proposed EL opportunity;
- The amount of class time dedicated, the significance of the activity, and/or the availability of similar EL opportunities or EL supports;
- How the EL opportunity is tied to module, course and/or program ILOs;
- How many students will benefit from the EL opportunity or support;
- How impacts to learners and community (where applicable) will be measured; and,
- How the project will be shared for the capacity building of others.



Relevance

- How the project and the associated EL experience relates to pedagogical literature, other EL experiences, and/or existing endeavours with community.

The following criteria will be assessed in ELF Grant Applications wherein there is community engagement:

Respect and Reciprocity

- The relationship with community as pertaining to the proposed endeavour; and,
- How respect and reciprocity will be fostered throughout the project, including a clear and realistic description of intended community benefit.

Note: Preference will be given to applicants who have not yet received an ELF Grant.

Adjudication Committee

The ELF Grant Adjudication panel includes faculty members, sessional instructors, community representative and/or student representatives, and is chaired by a CEL Coordinator.

Grant Awardee Commitments

ELF grantees are expected to complete their project by March 31 of the year following the receipt of their award (e.g. awarded February 2026, so must complete by March 31, 2027). Should you require more time to finalize your project, please contact celoffice@uvic.ca.

Apart from fulfilling the work outlined in their ELF Grant application, ELF grantees are also expected to be a part of the community of multi-disciplinary colleagues participating in experiential learning. We hope to build on the success and lessons learned through these projects to inform the broader community at UVic about the value of experiential learning and further support the development of ELF research and engagement. Accordingly, we ask that successful applicants participate in occasional update meetings with other awardees and sharing their work on and/or off-campus. Below is a detailed list of what ELF grantees will be responsible for:

- Setting up a specific 10000 account for your grant project
- Receiving approval from HREB where relevant and sharing that approval and the application (where appropriate) with the CEL Office.
- Contacting celoffice@uvic.ca to share and discuss any significant changes to the project (timeline, deliverables, budget).
- Participating in the below sessions with the CEL Office and other ELF Grant Awardees. These are opportunities to learn and share.
 - 1-hour Welcome, Ethics Workshop and Orientation (in the Spring of your ELF Grant approval)
 - 1-hour Progress Progression Workshop (in the Fall of your ELF grant approval)
 - 30-minute exit interview at the end of the grant cycle.
- Sharing your project process, outcomes, lessons, etc. on and/or off-campus (e.g. co-facilitate and/or present at activities hosted by the CEL Office such as CEL Community of Practice monthly meetings; exhibit, present, demonstrate, etc. at the CELebration hosted each Spring by the CEL Office).



Application Questions

Principal Applicant and Co-Applicant Information

First name

Last Name

Email

Position

Department/School and Faculty (on Co-applicant information it asks for Department and Faculty or Community Organization Name)

Co-Applicant Information (same information as items 1-5)

Project Overview

Project title (20-word max)

Project Abstract (75-word max., to be used on website and promotional materials if the application is successful)

Have you previously received an ELF Grant?

Have you received any other financial supports (including internal and external grants, as well as previous ELF grants) for this initiative? (if so, please specify)

Please state any other external or internal grants (including LTSI grants) you are applying to for this initiative.

Does the proposed project have an undergraduate or graduate focus?

Name of the course(s)/program(s) proposed for development or redesign.

How many students per year would be impacted by completion of this project and for how many years?

Will ethics approval be required for your project? (note if “regular” or “course-based”)

Project Details

Clearly articulate the over-all project goals, activities, and timeline. i.e. how you will develop, deliver and evaluate this learning experience. In your response, clarify how the project will be implemented, including who is involved in which deliverables, and what is needed for project success. (400-word max.)

Clearly describe the learning experience(s) that will be delivered and supported by this project. In your response, describe the community-engaged and/or field-based experience(s), how the experience(s) connect with intended learning outcomes, how reflection will be used to integrate theory and practice, and how the overall student experience will be enhanced. (400-word max.)

If applicable, please name the community partner(s) that you are working with on this project and describe how you propose to (or how you did) consult with and collaborate with community on this project; and how will the community benefit? (250-word max.) Think especially of the reciprocal relationships with project partners and the ways in which the community will benefit.

List any other relevant information about this project that would be important for others to know. (75-word max.)

We invite you to attach any additional materials you feel are relevant, such as draft or existing course outlines. Please combine all materials into a single word or pdf file before you attach.



By applying you commit to working with the Community-Engaged Learning (CEL) Office to share your work and disseminate its outcome for the benefit of the UVic community and beyond. Include how you will communicate your work internally and/or externally.

Please briefly describe how your proposal relates to the relevant pedagogical literature, existing and developing collaborations with your community partner, and/or other similar experiential learning initiatives at UVic or beyond. Include a brief literature review of scholarly and, if applicable, other relevant works that inform your project. (250-word max.)

Budget

How will the project budget be spent and how will the project be sustained after the completion of the grant. Provide a rationale for the budget including a breakdown of all the items and a justification for each one, including Salaries, Supplies and Operating Expenses, Travel, and Other. (500-word max.)

Approval

Name and role-based email of Chair/Director or Dean

*As of 2025 course redesign cannot include course release. Course release funds is no longer an allowable expense in ELF applications.