

Overview

The Public Interest Technology University Network Challenge

The Public Interest Technology University Network (PIT-UN) Challenge seeks to encourage new ideas, foster collaborations, and incentivize the sharing of resources and information among a national network of universities working to create a robust public interest technology field.

Award Information

Total funding is \$1 million.

Estimated Number of Awards

In 2023 — PIT-UN's fifth year — 14 grants totaling \$1.5 million were awarded to further develop a research community and workforce as passionate about public interest as they are about developing breakthrough technologies.

In Year 6 of the Network Challenge, we anticipate supporting 10–15 projects from across PIT-UN. We are particularly interested in supporting projects that **do not** replicate existing and previously funded projects but offer a new approach or lens for public interest technology.

Purpose

In 2024, the Network Challenge focuses on two specific areas:

- **Educational offerings** that foster cross-disciplinary perspectives and credentialing.
- **Career pipeline/placement** efforts to develop a public interest technology workforce in government, industry, and social impact organizations.

Project themes may include:

- Environmental, climate, or sustainability projects that provide for opportunities for storytelling around the importance of PIT.
- Policy projects with state and local governmental partnership research or briefs that advance PIT in these key fields: data science, artificial intelligence (AI), or quantum computing.
- Technical projects where students and researchers explicitly engage in storytelling about PIT within the work (Quantum, AI, augmented analytics, machine learning, robotics).
- Democracy and voting projects that explore ways to strengthen public interest systems and broaden participation at the local, state, and federal government levels.
- The intersection of gender and technology in the pursuit of justice and equity.

Projects may include:

- Multi-institutional research projects focused on artificial intelligence, quantum computing, or data science.
- Public interest technology certifications, noncredit professional development opportunities, and degree completion projects for all levels of students
 - New models of career training, placement, and/or financial support to develop the public interest technology workforce.
 - Partnerships with nonprofit, private sector, or affinity groups to educate current working professionals in public interest technology.
- Experiential learning opportunities that give students real-world exposure to the practice

- of public interest technology for undergraduate students.
 - Experiential opportunities, including clinics, labs, internships, or apprenticeships at the undergraduate level.
 - Fellowships with an expressed goal of inter-institutional research or dissemination.
- Toolkits and guides that include granular instructions to replicate initiatives yet are not case studies in implementations.
 - Guides should focus on tenure, internships, and hackathons.

Core Elements and Outcomes

The PIT-UN Challenge will prioritize projects that center on the needs of communities that have historically been denied access to new technologies, systematically left out of conversations at the intersection of technology and policy or denied opportunities to join the technology workforce. PIT-UN will prioritize these projects to further the positive social impact of technology for all communities. Projects may demonstrate centering community needs by creating a space for communities to play a role in shaping technology development. Successful applications will meet the follow criteria.

- Have meaningful and equitable partnerships with one or more of the following entities:
 - Other educational institutions outside of the PIT-UN network, in particular minority serving institutions, or serve communities historically denied access to technology, and two-year community colleges.
 - Have project teams that indicate clearly how project objectives and methods and actional plans will address racial, ethnic, linguistic, and socioeconomic impediments that have existed historically so that the entire community can be served.
 - Community organizations that have a specific focus on workforce development and/or creating career pathways for populations currently underrepresented in public service or in the science, technology, engineering, or math fields.
- Have project objectives and methods to address the articulated barriers and gaps for historically marginalized groups and address aspects of racial, ethnic, linguistic, and socioeconomic impediments are reflected in the design and reach of the project (i.e., students served) as well as the staffing of the proposed project team.
- Have a project team that demonstrates the ability to serve ethnically, racially, socioeconomically diverse, and underrepresented populations, perhaps supported by an actionable plan informed by best practices to use this funding to engage and serve these populations.

Funding and Allowable Uses

PIT-UN is inviting proposals in two funding tranches. Budgets should be inclusive of an indirect rate, set at 20% of total direct costs.

Note: Tranche 2 funding has changed for 2024

- i. Tranche 1: Up to \$90,000 for direct and indirect costs (indirect costs are capped at 20%)
- ii. Tranche 2: From \$90,001 to \$145,000 for direct and indirect costs (indirect costs are capped at 20%)

Proposals requesting Tranche 2 funding must include at least 50% in-kind contribution funding from the primary institution.

Note: If the required institutional in-kind funding is less than 50%, the proposal will not be considered.

Eligibility

In this sixth year of the Network Challenge, PIT-UN will accept the following types of proposals in response to its RFP:

- i. **New Projects:** Projects that have not received prior funding from the PIT-UN Challenge (“new projects”).
- ii. **Expansion and Scale of Existing Projects:** Projects that have received prior funding from the PIT-UN Challenge in 2019, 2020, 2021, or 2022, **but have not received three years of Network Challenge funding** can apply for additional funding to expand and/or scale their project (“previously funded projects”).

*Projects ineligible to apply for funding are Network Challenge projects of any year that have **not submitted** their project's final reports (narrative and budget reconciliation) to New Venture Fund using the Submittable grant management system.*

Limits

Limited Submissions

The PIT-UN Network Challenge is a limited submission funding opportunity and limits the number of applications from one institution. These “limited submission” **funding opportunities must undergo an internal selection process** (also known as an internal competition), which is coordinated by the institution. ***Please consult your institution before you develop any applications.***

Additionally, there is a limit to the number of proposals a PIT-UN member university can submit:

- Proposals for up to a **total of three new projects**. Only one of these can fall within the funding Tranche 2 (\$90,001–\$145,000).
- Proposals to expand/scale previously awarded projects, outlined in Eligibility section ii, can fall into either funding Tranche 1 (up to \$90,000) or Tranche 2* (\$90,001–\$145,000).

Proposals requesting Tranche 2 funding must include at least 50% in-kind contribution funding from the primary institution. Proposed budgets should be inclusive of an indirect rate, set at 20% of total direct costs.

Note: Proposals can only be funded with Network Challenge funding for three years.

A person may be listed as the principal investigator (PI) on only one Network Challenge application, but individuals may be listed as collaborators on multiple applications.

Projects that are a partnership between two or more universities should submit one single application from the lead institution. Projects should explain the nature of the partnership, including the division of labor and funds in the proposal.

Each PIT-UN member has identified one point of contact for submitting all grant applications for their institutions. Only that point of contact should be accessing the online grant platform. If you do not know who your PIT-UN member Network Challenge point of contact is, get in touch with your institution's PIT-UN designee.

Timeline

Dates subject to change

- March 29, 2024: Public announcement of the Network Challenge
- April 1: Grant RFP opens for applications.
- April 12: Live Zoom sessions. Open office hours to answer RFP questions start weekly on Fridays, noon–1 p.m. EDT.
- April 12: RFP questions due by noon EDT to info@pitcases.org
- April 17: RFP question answers due to be posted to [Network Challenge webpage](#)
- May 17: Applications due in [Submittable](#) by 5 p.m. EDT. **No late submissions will be accepted.**
- September: New Venture Fund notifies grant recipients of their upcoming award.
- Oct. 1: Grant term starts.
- May 31, 2025: Mid-grant interim reports due
- January 30, 2026: Grant period ends
- March 30: Final reports due

Distribution of Funds and Reporting Requirements

Grant funds must be spent within 16 months of receipt of funds. Unspent funds will be required to be returned. Due to the extended grant period, no-cost extensions are not granted.

Grant recipients will be required to submit mid-term and final reports describing their project, including budget reconciliations. Recipients will work with New America and the New Venture Fund throughout the award period to evaluate their projects and present their work.

Key Processes

- A. Submitting Questions about the Request for Proposals
 - a. Any questions regarding this RFP must be submitted by email to info@pitcases.org by noon EDT April 12, 2024. Submitted questions must say “Challenge Grant Questions” in the subject line. PIT-UN assumes no liability for assuring accurate/complete/on-time email transmission and receipt.
- B. Submitting your Application
 - a. Applications due: Applications must be received by 5 p.m. EDT May 17, 2024. *Applications received after the deadline will be ineligible for award consideration.*
 - b. Submission instructions: Applications are to be submitted at <https://pitcases.submittable.com/submit> by the submission deadline.

Note: The grant management system, Submittable, will allow only one application to be completed at a time. Please have all the application answers and the necessary documents in hand before starting an application.
- C. Selection Procedure
 - a. A qualified evaluation team will evaluate proposals. Applicants may be contacted in writing to answer questions or provide clarification to the evaluation team. Upon completion of the evaluation process and submittal of supplemental documents, staff will notify all submitters of the proposal status.

Evaluation Criteria

The table below shows the criteria PIT-UN uses when evaluating proposals. This rubric has two parts:

- The left column has the criteria the proposal reviewers will assess. A winning proposal will demonstrate that your project matches or exceeds all criteria.
- The right column has the total number of points (or eligibility status) a proposal can be awarded based on how completely it meets each criterion. PIT-UN will consider proposals with the most possible points.

Application Evaluation Rubric <i>Application must meet all RFP stated requirements for completion.</i>	Evaluation Points
Partnerships The project has meaningful and equitable partnerships with one or more of the following entities: • Other PIT-UN member institutions. • Other educational institutions in their proposals, including those that are not part of the PIT-UN University Network, in particular minority-serving institutions, and two-year community colleges. • Other educational institutions, including those that are not part of the PIT-UN University Network, affinity groups, or organizations that focus on non-tech disciplines such as ethnic studies, disabilities studies, history, humanities, and social sciences. • Organizations that identify as part of disadvantaged/underrepresented communities. • Organizations including those that are nonprofits, private industry, government agencies, affinity groups, or organizations that focus on tech and non-tech disciplines (accrediting agencies, industry representatives, regulators, legislative bodies). • Community organizations that have a specific focus on workforce development and/or creating career pathways for populations currently underrepresented in public service or the science, technology, engineering, or math fields. • Affinity groups or organizations that support academic leadership among communities of color or that are part of the disadvantaged/underrepresented communities. Meaningful and equitable partnerships should include: • Memoranda of Understanding (MOU), Memoranda of Agreement (MOA) for internships, apprenticeships, fellowships, clinics, labs, and practica/practicums. • Articulation agreements. • Documentation of community listening sessions, focus groups, and training sessions. Description of the partnership is clear as to why the involvement of partner(s) is essential to the project and how the partnership will operate, including division of work, role of principal investigators, and allocation of funds.	Up to 20 points

Project Plan <i>Proposals for new projects:</i> The project has clearly defined objectives, a well-designed method, and a process and timeline to achieve its goals; provides an evaluation plan with measurable indicators of success; and is feasible and likely to succeed. <i>Proposals for previously funded projects:</i> The project has clearly defined objectives, a well-defined method, and a process and timeline to achieve its goals. The project has an evaluation plan with measurable indicators of success and clarity on how it will build upon both accomplishments and lessons it has learned to date.	Up to 10 points
Impact <i>Proposals for new projects:</i> The proposal clearly articulates the rationale for the project. That is, the proposal explains how the project will create meaningful educational offerings or strengthen the career placement pipeline for the field of public interest technology. It will be helpful to list the assumptions the project is making about its work, its prioritized activities, and its intended impact over time. <i>Proposals for previously funded projects:</i> The proposal clearly articulates the rationale for continuing the project, what the project has accomplished to date, and how extending the project will generate a meaningful contribution to educational opportunities or career pipeline opportunities in the field of public interest technology. It will be helpful to list the assumptions the project is making about its work, its prioritized activities, and its intended impact in a potential second or third year of funding. For previously funded projects, it clearly connects to PIT-UN's theory of change.	Up to 25 points
Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion The proposal clearly articulates that the project team understands historically people of color, women and people with disabilities have experienced impediments to full participation and access to technology as identified by gaps in the public interest technology workforce pipeline. The articulated barriers and gaps that have historically existed (racial, ethnic, linguistic, and socioeconomic) are clearly addressed in the design and reach of the project (i.e., students served) as well as the staffing of the proposed project team. The project team demonstrates the ability to serve ethnically, racially, socioeconomically diverse, and underrepresented populations, perhaps supported by an actionable plan informed by best practices to use this funding to engage and serve these populations.	Up to 35 points
Qualifications and Capacity The proposal clearly articulates that the project team and institution have deep knowledge of the field of public interest technology and/or other fields relevant for the proposed project. The proposal also articulates that the institution has the capacity and resources to support the project.	Up to 10 points

Budget and Institutional Support <i>Proposals for new or previously funded projects requesting up to \$90,000 (Tranche 1):</i> The project has demonstrated buy-in from the applicant's university to help sustain the project's impact. For example, the host university can contribute funds, provide support from university leaders, or enable collaboration between departments, faculty, or other university groups. <i>Proposals for new or previously funded projects requesting \$90,001 to \$145,000 (Tranche 2):</i> The project team has secured at least a 50% match for requested funding commitments from its university (or universities if part of a collaboration). Such commitments may be in the form of cash contributions (either the value of the effort that university-paid personnel are expending on the project or money from a university gift, endowment, and/or other unrestricted fund) and/or in-kind support (real property, equipment, supplies and other expendable property, or goods and services). <i>Proposals for previously funded projects (Tranche 1 or Tranche 2):</i> The project's institutional plan(s) and related commitments clearly demonstrate the institutionalization of public interest technology within their university. The project team has secured at least a 50% match for requested funding commitments from its university (or universities if part of a collaboration). Such commitments may be in the form of cash contributions (either the value of the effort that university-paid personnel are expending on the project or money from a university gift, endowment, and/or other unrestricted fund) and/or in-kind support (real property, equipment, supplies and other expendable property, or goods and services).	Up to 10 points
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Technical Standards for Assets

New America's PIT-UN program is an investment in the next generation of public interest technology workforce. To ensure that the investment of these funds has as broad an impact as possible and to encourage innovation in the development of new PIT materials, as a condition of the receipt of this grant, the grantee will be required to license to PIT-UN all work (except for computer software source code, discussed below) created with the support of the grant under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 (CC BY) license. Work that must be licensed under the CC BY includes both new content created with the grant funds and modifications made to preexisting, grantee-owned content using grant funds. The use of the CC BY license allows subsequent users to copy, distribute, transmit, and adapt the copyrighted work and requires such users to attribute the work in the manner specified by the grantee. Notice of the license shall be affixed to the work. (For general information on CC BY, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>. Instructions for marking your work with CC BY can be found at http://wiki.creativecommons.org/Marking_your_work_with_a_CC_license.)

Only work that is developed by the grantee with the grant funds is required to be licensed under the CC BY license. Preexisting copyrighted materials licensed to or purchased by the grantee from third parties, including modifications of such materials, remain subject to the intellectual property rights the grantee receives under the terms of the license or purchase. In addition, works created by the grantee without grant funds do not fall under the CC BY license requirement.

Grantee resources will be expected to upload the work to a PIT-UN online library for members funded by the PIT-UN program. Resources will continue to be available through PIT-UN for its members. If applicable, the following needs to be on all products developed in whole or in part with grant funds: "This product was funded by a grant awarded by New America's PIT-UN, funded through NVF."

Compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act

All organizations and facilities must comply with the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Under Title III of the law, all privately operated public accommodations, commercial facilities, and private entities offering examinations or training must make their goods and services accessible to persons with disabilities.

RFP QUESTIONS

General Information

Asterisk (*) denotes required field(s)

Project Naming Convention

- Primary Institution*
- Proposal Title*
 - This year we are asking for a specific format for all proposal titles that will be used to create a unique identifier for this submission and project.
 - The unique identifier in this step will follow the application form submission through project reporting if accepted.
 - **We need all submissions to follow the same naming convention:**
 - Member institution code (see the adjacent chart) **HYPHEN**
 - Type of submission (N=new, E=Expansion/scale) **AND** if the project also is a (DS=Data Science) **SPACE**
 - Submission Name.
 - You **MUST** start your proposal with the recognized three- or four-letter institution abbreviation associated with your institution (view the codes in the adjacent chart).

Examples of Submission/Project Names

- **New Project Example:** My university is the University of Pennsylvania, and this will be my first submission of a data project titled *Data Anomalies in Justice*. My proposal submission name would start with UPEN-N Data Anomalies in Justice.
- **New Data Science Project Example:** My university is the Missouri University of Science and Technology (MUST) and this will be my first submission of a new project for my institution, the title *Exploration of AI Data in PIT*. My proposal submission name would

Code	Institution	Code	Institution
ASU	Arizona State University	NORU	Northeastern University
BOSU	Boston University	OCOE	Olin College of Engineering
BROU	Brown University	PRGS	Pardee RAND Graduate School
CALP	Cal Poly State University	PSU	Penn State University
CMU	Carnegie Mellon University	PEPU	Pepperdine University
CWRU	Case Western Reserve University	PVAMU	Prairie View A & M University
CEPI	CEPI FGV Direito-Sao Paulo	PRIU	Princeton University
CUNY	City University of New York	RIT	Rochester Institute of Technology
CSUO	Cleveland State University	SJSU	San José State University
COLU	Columbia University	STANU	Stanford University
CORU	Cornell University	STC	Stillman College
DUKU	Duke University	TEMU	Temple University
FIU	Florida International University	OSU	The Ohio State University
FORU	Fordham University	UTA	The University of Texas at Austin
GWU	George Washington University	UOS	The University of the South
GEOU	Georgetown University	UAZ	University of Arizona
GIT	Georgia Institute of Technology (Georgia Tech)	UCB	University of California Berkeley
GSU	Georgia State University	UCSC	University of California Santa Cruz
HAMC	Hamilton College	UCHI	University of Chicago
HARU	Harvard University	UDIN	University of Edinburgh
HOWU	Howard University	UIC	University of Illinois at Chicago
ITT	Illinois Institute of Technology	UMA	University of Massachusetts at Amherst
INDU	Indiana University	UMIC	University of Michigan
JMU	James Madison University	UNCW	University of North Carolina Wilmington
LANC	Lane College	UPEN	University of Pennsylvania
LOC	LeMoyne-Owen College	URIJ	University of Rijeka
MIT	Massachusetts Institute of Technology	UVA	University of Virginia
MMC	Meharry Medical College	UWAS	University of Washington
MDC	Miami Dade College	UVTEC	Virginia Tech
MUST	Missouri University of Science & Technology	WVU	West Virginia University
NAZC	Nazareth College	WMAR	William & Mary
NYU	New York University	WPI	Worcester Polytechnic Institute

be MUST-NDS Exploration of AI Data in PIT.

- **Expansion/Scale Project Example:** My university is the Lane College (LANC) and this will be my third submission that is an expansion of a previous project with the title *Fellowships in PIT Environmental Justice*. My proposal submission name would be LANC-E Fellowships in PIT Environmental Justice.

The difference between data projects and data science/data research projects:

- Data projects use data to solve problems and spot trends. They work with the data as a snapshot of what exists now. Data analysis collects, stores, and maintains data and analyzes results.
- Data science/data research projects use algorithms and machine learning to improve the ways that data supports organizational goals. Data scientists model data to make predictions, identify opportunities, and support strategy. They use data to understand the future.

Institutional Grant Administration Contacts*

- Institution's Grants Office or Sponsored Research Office point of contact first and last name
- Institution's Grants Office or Sponsored Research Office point of contact email address
- Institution's Grants Office or Sponsored Research Office point of contact phone number
- Institutional Signatory's first and last name
- Institutional Signatory's title
- Institutional Signatory's email address
- Institutional Signatory's phone number

Project Questions*

Asterisk (*) denotes required field(s)

- Is your institution a 2022, 2023 grantee? ***All 2022 and 2023 grants must be closed with the final reports (narrative and budget reconciliation) received prior to the RFP closing date of 11:59 p.m. EDT May 17, 2024, to be eligible for consideration.***
- Has your institution submitted all complete grant final reports to New Venture Fund?
- Proposal Summary:
- Project Start Date:
- Project End Date:
- Will this grant be used to support work that includes interacting or communicating with minors (individuals under age 18)?
- *Minors defined as individuals under age 18. If you select "Yes," you are required to submit the NVF Child Safeguarding Policy Information Sheet found at [PITcases.org](https://pitcases.org) within the Network Challenge RFP, Forms and Evaluation Criteria area.*
- Will any part of this grant funding be used to conduct lobbying as defined by federal tax law?

Project Funding Identification Selection*

Asterisk (*) denotes required field(s)

Project proposals can only be funded with Network Challenge funding for three years.

Current network members can submit the following:

- **Proposals for new projects, adding up to a total of three.** *Only one of these can fall within the funding Tranche 2 (\$90,001–\$145,000).*
- **Proposals to expand/scale previously awarded projects.** Any number of these can fall into either funding Tranche 1 (up to \$90,000) or Tranche 2 (\$90,001–\$145,000).

Budgets should be inclusive of an indirect rate, set at 20% of total direct costs. ***Proposals requesting Tranche 2 funding must include at least 50% in-kind contribution funding from the primary institution for this grant.***

I am submitting a Network Challenge proposal for:

- ☐ A new project
- ☐ Funding to expand or scale a previously funded Network Challenge project

Data Science Proposals versus Data Project Proposals

The Challenge Fund recognizes that many of the proposals contain data collection. If your proposal falls under the definition of data science (see below for the distinction between data science and data projects), you will be asked to answer an additional set of questions as indicated. If your proposed project contains significant data research components or proposed projects involve the collection and interpretation of data, these projects will be characterized as data science and may require expert evaluation/review.

Note: Data science projects will not receive special or additional consideration and will not be prioritized above other applications.

The difference between data projects and data science/data research projects:

- **Data projects** use data to solve problems and spot trends. They work with the data as a snapshot of what exists now. Data analysis collects, stores, and maintains data and analyzes results.
- **Data science** projects use algorithms and machine learning to improve the ways that data supports organizational goals. Data scientists model data to make predictions, identify opportunities, and support strategy. They use data to understand the future.

Select the project application funding request for:

- New Submission Funding Tranche 1(up to \$90,000)
- New Submission Funding Tranche 2 (up to \$145,000)
- Expansion & Scale Existing Project Tranche 1(up to \$90,000)

- Expansion & Scale Existing Project Tranche 2 (up to \$145,000)

Note: Proposals requesting Tranche 2 funding must include at least 50% in-kind contribution funding from the primary institution. If the required institutional in-kind funding is less than 50%, the proposal will not be considered.

Identification of Grant Priority Area and Issues*

Select the Network Challenge **priority area(s)** your project addresses (**select one**)

- Educational offerings
- Career pipeline and placement

Select the project **topics** the project addresses (**select one**)

- Select a **primary issue area** that most closely matches the issue area of the proposal you are submitting seeks to address.
- Select a **secondary issue area** that most closely matches the issue area of the proposal you are submitting seeks to address.

Access, Digital Divide, & Digital Literacy

Algorithms

Apprenticeships

Artificial Intelligence

Civic Tech

Collectives & Communities of Practice

Community Technology

Crisis & Disaster Response

Cybersecurity

Data & Algorithms

Data Analytics

Democracy & Voting

Design (accessible, inclusive, participatory)

Digital Privacy & Security

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Education Innovation

Environment, Climate, Sustainability

Ethics

Expansion of labs and institutes

Fellowships

Government Technology

Gender Justice & Technology

Health IT

Human Rights

ICT4D Information & Communications Tech for Development

Internships

Machine Learning

Media & Journalism

Movement, Organizing, & Activist Tech

Network Building

Nonprofit Technology

Open Data & Transparency

Open Source & Creative Commons

PIT Policy (partnerships w/local, regional & state government)

PIT Workforce

Policy (Internet freedom, net neutrality, & more)

Political Technology

Public Health & the Environment

Public Innovation

Public Science

Quantum

Technology Cooperatives

Other _____

Principal Investigators (PIs), Partners and Collaborators Information

Asterisk () denotes required field(s)*

Principal Investigator Information:*

- Select the principal investigator's institution.
- Principal investigator for the project on this application
- Principal investigator's title and department for the project on this application

- Principal investigator's email address

Partnerships

In this section, you are asked to list partners, if any, that you have formally engaged or plan to formally engage to undertake this project. In a partnership, there is a **formal relationship defined by different partnership arrangements (MOU, MOA, Letters of Commitment)** where there is more of a co-mingling of resources. Individuals retain their authority, and a separate structure is developed to oversee or manage the engagement. ***Note that you should upload letters of commitment from all named partners with this application. (There are six fields to list partners.)***

Partnership Types*

See "Evaluation Criteria" for guidance on meaningful and equitable partnerships.

- **Does your proposal have partners, or will it have partners?**
 - Will your project include partnerships with one or more **PIT-UN member institutions?** *
 - Select the institution(s)*
 - Is the member a Minority Serving Institution (MSI) or Historically Black College or University (HBCU)?
 - **Questions to answer for each partner***
 - Describe how you have cultivated a meaningful and equitable relationship with the PIT-UN member. If this project includes a partnership with more than one PIT-UN member, please describe how the partnership will operate, including division of work, role of Principal Investigators, and allocation of funds. Including details for the questions below: **(200-word limit)**
 - Brief description of the partner institution's mission and work
 - Description of the role the partner will play on the project and how the partnership would enhance or expand the impact of the project.
 - A list of deliverables that the partner institution will be responsible for (if applicable)
 - The amount of monetary support the partner will provide (if applicable)
 - The type and value of any in-kind support the partner institution will provide (staff time, facility space, supplies, equipment)
 - Describe why the partner's involvement is essential to the project and how the partnership will operate, including division of work, role of principal investigators, and allocation of funds. **(100-word limit)**
 - Will your project include partnerships with one or more **educational institutions that are not PIT-UN members?***
 - List the non-PIT educational institution(s)*
 - Is the member a MSI or HBCU? Or does the partner organization identify as part of a historically disadvantaged or underrepresented community.*
 - **Questions to answer for each non-PIT UN educational institutional partner***

- Describe how you have cultivated a meaningful and equitable relationship with the partner entity. Please describe how the partnership will operate, including division of work, role of Principal Investigators, and allocation of funds. Including details for the questions below: **(200-word limit)**
 - Brief description of the partner institution's mission and work
 - Description of the role the partner will play on the project and how the partnership would enhance or expand the impact of the project.
 - A list of deliverables that the partner institution will be responsible for (if applicable)
 - The amount of monetary support the partner will provide (if applicable)
 - The type and value of any in-kind support the partner institution will provide (staff time, facility space, supplies, equipment)
- Describe why the partner's involvement is essential to the project and how the partnership will operate, including division of work, role of principal investigators, and allocation of funds. **(100-word limit)**
- Will your project include partnerships with nonprofit, private, or governmental organizations? *
 - Partner's organization:*
 - Partner's name:*
 - Partner's email address:*
 - Does the partner organization identify as part of the disadvantaged/underrepresented communities?*
 - Describe how you have cultivated a meaningful and equitable relationship with the partner entity. If this project includes a partnership with one or more additional non-profit, private or governmental organization, please describe how the partnership will operate, including division of work, role of Principal Investigators, and allocation of funds. Including details for the questions below: **(200-word limit)**
 - Brief description of the partner institution's mission and work
 - Description of the role the partner will play on the project and how the partnership would enhance or expand the impact of the project
 - A list of deliverables that the partner institution will be responsible for (if applicable)
 - The amount of monetary support the partner will provide (if applicable)
 - The type and value of any in-kind support the partner institution will provide (staff time, facility space, supplies, equipment)
 - Describe why the partner's involvement is essential to the project and how the partnership will operate, including division of work, role of principal investigators, and allocation of funds. **(100-word limit)**
- Do you want to add another nonprimary institution collaborator?*

Letters of Partnership Support*

- Upload MOAs, MOUs, and letters of support from the partners.

Project Collaborators

A collaborator has an informal relationship with an agreed-upon way to make decisions yet operates independently. Collaborators retain their autonomy and have complete control over the individual resources they bring to the table.

- Does this proposal have any collaborators?*
- Select Collaborator 1's institution*
- Collaborator 1's name*
- Collaborator 1's email address*
- Do you want to add another nonprimary institution collaborator?*

Project Objectives, Plan, Outcomes, & Deliverables*

Asterisk () denotes required field(s)*

- **Elevator Pitch (25-word limit):** Describe your project in one sentence.
- **Project Plan (750-word limit):** Describe your proposed project, including:
 - Objectives
 - Method and process to meet those objectives
 - Timeline
- **Evaluation plan (200-word limit)**
 - Describe the project's measurable outcomes, indicators of success, and any anticipated open educational resources.

Previously funded projects specific questions:*

Asterisk () denotes required field(s)*

- **Project Plan (750-word limit):**

Summarize the previous outcomes of the project you are seeking to expand or scale. (**no more than 7 sentences**)
Describe your how the expansion or scale of the project is different than your initial project. Include details of how you will expand, and scale based on your project plan including:

 - How do you intend to build on your accomplishments to date and learn from missed opportunities?
 - How will you overcome the challenges you encountered during the previous project?
 - How will you design the project for community involvement, feedback, and shared ownership of the proposed project?
 - Describe: New Objectives, method and process to meet those objectives, and Timeline
- **Evaluation Plan (200-word limit):**
 - Describe the project's measurable outcomes, indicators of success, and any anticipated open educational resources.

Select if the project:

☐ Is NOT a data science project

☐ IS a data science project

Supplemental Questions for Proposals with a Significant Data Science Component
(750-word limit OR a three-page uploaded PDF)

Answer as many of the following questions as apply to your proposed project.

As an alternative to responding to the individual questions in this section, you may create a PDF document of up to three pages that responds to these questions and includes any relevant visuals, diagrams, figures, graphics, and the like. You will upload this document in this section in the “Supplemental Question File Upload” section.

- What is the underlying hypothesis driving your proposed project? What theoretical approaches will you draw from or apply to test your hypothesis?
- What is the current state of research in the field of your proposed project, and how will your proposed project yield something unique and/or additive?
- Why and how is your project team positioned to pursue this project to yield meaningful and impactful results?
- What is your overall research plan, including major milestones or goals, implementation details, and potential risks and mitigation strategies?
- To implement your proposed project, will you be collecting original data, drawing on existing data, or both? What informs your approach to the collection and use of data? If drawing on existing data, specify your anticipated sources.
- What are your plans to disseminate your research findings, and how will you ensure that they are made accessible and enable the advancement of the field?

Impact*

Please provide an answer for all questions:

Proposals for new projects:

- Describe the rationale for the project. That is, explain how the project appears likely to meaningfully advance the field of public interest technology and further the goals stated in this RFP. It will be helpful to list the assumptions the project is making about its work, its prioritized activities, and its intended impact over time. **(500-word limit)**

Proposals for previously funded projects:

- Describe the rationale for continuing the project, what the project has accomplished to date, and how it connects to the project’s theory of change (more information on theory of change can be found on [PITcases.org](https://pitcases.org) within the Network Challenge RFP Forms [section](#)). That is, explain how the project appears likely to measurably advance the field of public interest technology and further the

goals stated in this RFP. It will be helpful to list the assumptions the project is making about its work, its prioritized activities, and its intended impact in a potential second or third year. **(300-word limit)**

- Describe how, if at all, the project will complement your project team's institutional plan(s) to advance the field of public interest technology within academia. How does the project complement or build on existing work at other institutions? **(200-word limit)**

Justice, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion

*Please fully answer the following question**

- Define or describe the target community of your project. **(250-word maximum)**
- Describe how the traditional barriers to access of your target community are benefiting from the project compared to the demographics of the larger population in that (often geographic region) area. **(500-word maximum)**
 - What are the major barriers to equity and access related to public interest technology, as your institution and project team undertake the proposed project?
 - In what ways will your project's objectives and method address those barriers?
 - How will the proposed project conduct recruitment, engagement, and retention activities of historically excluded communities?
 - What sources of bias is this project subject to? What mitigation strategies will be employed to combat bias and generate more equitable outcomes?
 - What record does the project team demonstrate the ability to serve ethnically, racially, socioeconomically diverse, and underrepresented populations, perhaps supported by an actionable plan informed by best practices to use this funding to engage and serve these populations?

Demographic Information

Providing demographic information is designed to help PIT-UN measure our intended audiences and our commitment to eliminating discrimination and promoting justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion in all its practices. PIT-UN invites applicants to voluntarily disclose certain characteristics about themselves and their project team so the organization can measure its progress and strengthen its impacts on historically underserved and underrepresented and marginalized groups. We value transparency and will use this information internally only to understand future funding opportunities for underrepresented communities. PIT-UN uses demographic information to better understand the communities its grant awards serve. If you are interested in a conversation or further discussion, feel free to contact us.

Please share the following information about your project's intended project participants:

- Estimated percentage of non-majority project participants
- Estimated number of project participants who identify as:
 - American Indian or Alaskan Native
 - Asian
 - Black or African American
 - Hispanic or Latino

- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - White
 - Two or more races
 - Different race
 - Information not available
- Estimated number of project participants who identify as:
 - Male
 - Female
 - Non-Binary or Third Gender
 - Transgender
 - Genderqueer
 - Prefer to self-describe
 - Prefer not to answer or information not available

Please share the following information about your project team members:

- Estimated percentage of non-majority project team members
- Number of project team members who identify as:
 - American Indian or Alaskan Native
 - Asian
 - Black or African American
 - Hispanic or Latino
 - Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - White
 - Two or more races
 - Different race
 - Information not available
- Number of project team members who identify as:
 - Male
 - Female
 - Non-Binary or Third Gender
 - Transgender
 - Genderqueer
 - Prefer to self-describe
 - Prefer not to answer or information not available

Qualifications and Capacity*

Please provide an answer for the following questions: (300-word limit)

- What experience or prior work among project team members demonstrates deep knowledge of the field of public interest technology and/or other fields relevant for your proposed project?
- Why are you and your institution well positioned to undertake this project?

Institutional Support and Budget Description*

In this first section, answer the questions regarding funding.

- Identify the number of years this project has received funding.

You will also be required to input the total budgeted amount (revenue) and the total expenses for the major categories (e.g., salaries, travel, community support) in the proposed budget from the line items in the [NVF Budget Template](#).

In the second section, answer the questions below depending on the type of project (new or expansion and scale) and the amount of funding requested.

New Projects

For proposals requesting up to \$90,000 (Tranche 1)

1. **Summarize (300-word limit)**
 - a. The major revenue categories: (e.g., PIT-UN Challenge grant funding, in-kind donations, or support) and how those donations in the budget are accounted for in the Revenue section of the spreadsheet.
 - b. Major expense categories (e.g., salaries, travel, community support) in the proposed budget.
 - c. Describe how the project budget supports the institutionalization of the project after the grant period ends.
2. How has your university or institution demonstrated buy-in for your project that will help sustain the project's impact? **(200-word limit)**

For proposals requesting between \$90,001 and \$145,000 (Tranche 2)

1. **Summarize (300-word limit)**
 - a. The major revenue categories: (e.g., PIT-UN Challenge grant funding, in-kind donations, or support) and how those donations in the budget are accounted for in the Revenue section of the spreadsheet.
 - b. Major expense categories (e.g., salaries, travel, community support) in the proposed budget.
 - c. Describe how the project budget supports the institutionalization of the project after the grant period ends.
2. What specific commitments do you have from your university or institution to support your project and sustain its impact? **(200-word limit)**

Note: If the required institutional in-kind funding is less than 50%, the proposal will not be considered.

Expansion and Scale Projects

For proposals requesting up to \$90,000 (Tranche 1)

1. **Summarize (300-word limit)**
 - a. The major revenue categories: (e.g., PIT-UN Challenge grant funding, in-kind donations or support) and how those donations in the budget are accounted for in the Revenue section of the spreadsheet.
 - b. Major expense categories (e.g., salaries, travel, community support) in the proposed budget. Include any meeting expenses (meals, parking reimbursement, stipends), student stipends, or other costs associated with outreach
 - c. Describe how the project budget support plans to institutionalize the project after the grant period ends.
2. How has your university or institution demonstrated buy-in for your project that will help sustain the project's impact? **(200-word limit)**

For proposals requesting between \$90,001 and \$145,000 (Tranche 2)

1. **Summarize (300-word limit)**
 - a. The major revenue categories: (e.g., PIT-UN Challenge grant funding, in-kind donations, or support) and how those donations in the budget are accounted for in the Revenue section of the spreadsheet.
 - b. Major expense categories (e.g., salaries, travel, community support) in the proposed budget. Include any meeting expenses (meals, parking reimbursement, stipends), student stipends, or other costs associated with outreach.
 - c. Describe how your university or institution plans to support this project after the grant period ends.
2. What specific commitments do you have from your university or institution to continue your project and sustain its impact? **(200-word limit)**

Note: If the required institutional in-kind funding is less than 50%, the proposal will not be considered.

In the final section of the Institutional Support and Budget Summary, upload your project's budget using the New Venture Fund budget template found on [PITcases.org](https://pitcases.org) within the [Network Challenge RFP Forms section](#). **Include any funds that are contributed from your institution or other sources.**

Supplemental Principal Investigator Relevant Work

Please include a link or upload the CV of the principal investigator and any previous relevant work, such as publications. Also include a one-sentence description of what is included in the link.

Due Diligence Document Uploads*

Please upload the following due diligence documents.

If your institution was awarded grant funding in the Year 5 (2023) Network Challenge, you do not have to upload an IRS Form 990, audited financials, letter of determination, and a list of board of directors/trustees.

Our institution was awarded grant funding in the 2023.

- ☐ Yes, then the following documents will be required to be uploaded
 - List of board of directors or board of trustees*
 - List of the main staff for the project*
- ☐ No, then the following documents will be required to be uploaded*.
 - Proof of legal status/IRS Letter of Determination*
 - Most recent audited financials* *Upload audited financials for 2021 or 2022. If no audited financials are available for those years, you will need to provide an explanation for the missing documents.*
 - IRS Form 990*
 - List of board of directors or board of trustees*
 - List of main staff for the project*

Appendix

Background

In the 1960s and 1970s, landmark investments from the philanthropic community elevated the legal profession from a road to wealth and power to a transformational force in serving the public good. With the support of the Ford Foundation and other philanthropies, institutions of higher learning created paths that allowed the brightest minds of the era to find their footing in public service. That leadership allowed the discipline of public interest law to flourish not only as a prestigious area of study, but also as a formal field of practice.

Similarly, institutions of higher learning are now coming together to integrate the fields of technology, public policy, business, law, ethics, governance, and social justice into the field of public interest technology. Public interest technology refers to the study and application of technology expertise to advance the public interest in a way that generates public benefits and promotes the public good, particularly for those who are least well served historically and today because of existing systems and policies. Importantly, it includes individuals who approach these questions from a technological background, those with lived experience and expertise, and those coming from other disciplines (including law and social science and movement-building) who seek to understand, use, and respond to the changes enabled by new technologies.

It can — and should — also include people who may not identify as technologists but are at the forefront of equalizing access to technology and promoting inclusive tech policy. This includes those working in the ecosystems of access, open source and creative commons, digital literacy, inclusive design, movement and activist tech, community tech, and digital privacy and security. By offering a systematic way of studying technology as a tool for addressing social problems in the world — among them unforeseen and adverse consequences of technology (in particular with respect to historically underserved and underrepresented and marginalized groups) and ways to harmonize technology and society — educational institutions can train a new generation of graduates who have both technological literacy and a rigorous foundation to navigate the societal, ethical, legal, policy, and equity implications of the new age.

Public Interest Technology University Network

The Public Interest Technology University Network (PIT-UN) is a partnership of colleges and universities committed to educating students who can better apply technical understanding and practice to questions of individual rights, justice, social welfare, and the public good. As it nurtures the pipeline of emerging technologists prepared to approach these questions, PIT-UN envisions a future where technology policy actively challenges structural inequalities in power, resources, and access by centering the needs of people and communities, particularly for those who have been historically marginalized. In practice, this means that the traditional gatekeepers of technological advancement and public policy interrogate how they can better identify and work with communities in the development of public interest technology as ecosystems and elevate these communities as co-creators and leaders.

The broad goals of PIT-UN are to:

- Connect accredited nonprofit institutions of higher education in the U.S. that seek to take the lead in establishing and defining the field of public interest technology within academia.
- Spur the development of a strong pipeline of students seeking to pursue careers in public interest technology, broadly defined; taking active measures to ensure that this pipeline is

diverse in terms of race, ethnicity, ability, gender, and socioeconomic status and that it is characterized by a sense of inclusion and belonging for students and practitioners.

- Foster collaborations and connections across the network and to practitioners in the wider ecosystem.

The Public Interest Technology University Network's Challenge grants are funded through the support of the Ford Foundation, Hewlett Foundation, Mastercard Impact Fund with support from Mastercard Center for Inclusive Growth, the Raikes Foundation, Schmidt Futures, and the Siegel Family Endowment.

The Network Challenge is a project of the New Venture Fund (NVF), a 501(c)(3) public charity that supports innovative and effective public interest projects.