

## PREPARING FOR A FUNDING NEEDS ASSESSMENT

### **What is a needs assessment?**

Needs assessments are collaborative meetings of the College's grant-seeking departments—Grants Development and VC Foundation—with each VC department head (Executive Director, Director, Department Chair, Program Chair, or Manager).

### **What should employees and supervisors do?**

Employees should communicate their needs and ideas to department heads, unless your department head specifies that the entire department will participate in the needs assessment meeting. Include (1) a brief justification, (2) the quantity desired, and (3) a cost estimate.

### **What can we include in our list?**

Things beyond the scope of your department's budget are the type of wish-list items you should convey in your needs assessment. They may range from necessary items to innovative new ideas. Some needs are ongoing from year to year until we find a grant.

### **What are examples of funding requests?**

All funders have different priorities. Grants can fund new and/or innovative equipment, software programs, professional development, technology, instructional or support programs, and more.

### **Is it better to “make do” if I can?**

Does a piece of equipment work today, but if it broke tomorrow we'd be in a bind? Write it down. Does a support services activity have promising evidence of success, but you're afraid it'll be too expensive? Write it down. Don't limit yourself before asking.

### **What else should I consider when making my list?**

1. Scope: If you can show other departments on campus can use/benefit from your request, that builds your case and makes it more cost effective. 2. Sustainability: Will your request require ongoing maintenance, license fees, or salaries? How will the department cover them long-term?

### **How do we schedule an assessment?**

GDO and VCF invite department heads to choose a meeting time. Department heads share their department's compiled needs list with GDO and VCF, but the meeting can include the entire department if that's what the department head prefers.

### **Where will we meet?**

Meetings are usually scheduled at the department's location so VCF and GDO can do walk-through needs assessments in classrooms, laboratories, workspaces, etc. This can help us identify needs that might otherwise go unnoticed.

### **What happens next?**

Grants Development and VC Foundation meet with administrators (deans and VPs) to prioritize funding requests for their divisions. They then try to identify funding opportunities and contact each department if/when it's time to work on a proposal. Be patient and positive.