

Project Creation Guide

Directions: Follow this guide to help create a project and complete the application.

Step 1: What do you hope to accomplish?

Before you get too far into the “plan,” it is critical that you take time to reflect on your interests. What do you think is valuable? How could you make a difference for UW-Madison and/or the surrounding community?

For inspiration, we recommend reviewing previous Leadership Award proposals. It may also prove helpful to explore recent [project proposals for the Wisconsin Idea Fellowship](#), a very similar program led by the Morgridge Center.

Step 2: Partnerships

Leadership Award projects include collaborations or partnerships with other organizations that exist either on campus or in the Madison community. Many of the selected recipients of the award started their paths by first joining an organization, learning about the gaps/challenges that exist, and speaking with leadership to form a project to address those gaps/challenges.

UW has a host of existing relationships with [campus and community partners](#). Consider exploring these groups, volunteering, and then working with group leadership to identify a topic for a potential Leadership Award project.

Note: It would be important that your project is something that is not already being done and these groups are instrumental in ensuring that you are focusing your efforts on something can truly help existing efforts.

Step 3: Find a faculty advisor.

Your faculty advisor is going to be critical to your success! Your faculty advisor will help you problem-solve and help with long-term planning. Make sure your faculty member is

genuinely interested in your project and is willing to give you time and support to help make it a success.

Step 4: Develop a budget.

Think about what you want to do and what you will need to accomplish your goals. Work closely with your community and/or faculty advisor(s) to try and anticipate some costs. Think creatively, practically, and responsibly about your expenses. Explore campus resources that you can use to support your project.

The Leadership Award includes a \$3,000 budget, but to use that money you have to follow the State of Wisconsin and UW Board of Regents funding and purchasing regulations. Some of the more frequent expenses for students include transportation, supplies, recording or electronic equipment purchases, printing, and computer support (including web development).

We strongly encourage you to meet with L&S Honors Program Administrator Kendra Ramthun (honorsprogram@honors.ls.wisc.edu) in advance of submitting your Leadership Award proposal to make sure that your budget is consistent with state spending rules.

Step 5: Think about continuity!

The intention of the Leadership Award is for students to create a project that can be continued in the long term. Think about how your project might continue after the year of Leadership Award funding. You don't have to have all of the answers now, but you must be thinking about these questions early on.

Step 6: Fill out the application and submit it!

The application is available on WiSH. We would encourage you to complete multiple drafts of your project proposal, seeking feedback each time. Feedback can be provided by many sources, including but not limited to Honors staff members Pete Keys and Kendra Ramthun, your community and/or faculty advisor(s), or even the [UW Writing Center](#).

We encourage you to communicate with your community and faculty advisors early in the application process to obtain their letters of recommendation, as these, too, will be due by the deadline.

Step 7: Congratulations—you received the award! Now what?

During the rest of the spring semester, start connecting with campus and community partners (if you have not done so already) and putting things in place for the fall. The summer can also be useful for planning and getting things started so that you can hit the ground running in the fall.

Plan to meet with Kendra Ramthun to discuss how you can use the project funds. Please reference the student resource document related to budget tips for more information.

The Honors Program is here to support you throughout your project. Please stay in touch with our office, particularly Pete Keys and Kendra Ramthun.