

Schwehr Family Global Service-Learning Initiative

Call for Proposals and Funding Guidelines

Fall 2026

Deadline

Proposal deadline: **Friday, October 30, 2026.**

Overview

Clemson University invites proposals for funding to support service-learning projects that engage Clemson students with underserved individuals and communities. This competitive funding supports projects that combine academic and personal development with community-based impact. Projects may be global or U.S.-based but should include a significant element of cross-cultural engagement and learning. To be considered, proposals must demonstrate how grant funds will immediately and directly mobilize students to participate in high-impact service-learning projects with a concrete, defined outcome.

Awards are made possible by the Schwehr Family Global Service-Learning Endowment and the operating fund titled "Global Service-Learning Initiatives." Both funds were established by Michael "Mike" W. Schwehr ('81), along with Mike's two daughters, Laurel Michelle Schwehr and Victoria Leigh Schwehr ('16). The Schwehr family wishes to ensure valuable resources are available for student service-learning at home and in the developing world. Project proposals are solicited and evaluated through the Clemson Office of Global Engagement.

Eligibility

- Each proposal must be spearheaded by a Clemson faculty or staff member, who may work alone or as part of a proposed team.
- Projects may be housed within one or more Clemson departments, schools, or colleges.
- Projects must center student learning and development through defined, hands-on service-learning activities.
- Projects may be open to graduate or undergraduate students.
- Proposed service-learning activities must be impactful; participation is open to all Clemson students whose service-learning activities will benefit underserved individuals and communities.
- Projects should include an element of global or cross-cultural engagement.
- Projects may involve cooperation with third-party organizations, but the primary focus of the project must be impactful service-learning involving Clemson students.

Funding

- Awards are variable depending on need and may be made in an amount less than requested. It is not expected that individual awards will exceed \$10,000 per year.

- All proposals must be accompanied by a budget that outlines the proposed use of funds; insufficient detail may result in denial or reduction of awarded funding.
- Proposed funds may be used to support student travel, supplies, permits, insurance, and associated project expenses.
- Funded expenses must directly support the approved service-learning activities and the related student-learning and community-impact outcomes.
- Funds should be spent over the 12-month period following the award.
- Material changes to the approved use of funds require prior review by the Office of Global Engagement.
- Although funds may be used for project development costs, preference will be given to projects that allocate funding to mobilize Clemson students for service-learning activities that directly impact underserved communities.
- Requests for student wages, including UPIC internships, must identify the student's proposed duties and may not support general administrative work that is not connected to the approved service-learning activities.
- Funds may not be used for parties, social gatherings, or entertainment-related expenses. Food and beverage expenses may be considered only when they are integral to a scheduled service-learning activity with substantive educational or community-engagement content and are included in the approved project budget.
- Funds may not be used for conference travel, faculty-led workshops, direct donations, indirect costs, or expenses that do not directly support student learning.
- Following a successful award, an annual project Outcomes Report must be submitted describing project activities, use of awarded funds, student involvement and learning outcomes, and community impact and outcomes.

Required Proposal Content

Proposals should consist of a project narrative of no more than 1,000 words, a letter of support, and a proposed budget formatted in PDF, Word or Excel. The project narrative should contain the following information:

- Names, titles, and proposed roles of the Clemson project leader and all team members.
- A description of the service-learning activity sufficient for a layperson to understand the activity Clemson students would undertake.
- A description of the impacted individuals or community together with an explanation of how the service-learning activity will directly benefit those individuals.
- A summary of academic relevance and student learning outcomes, including cross-cultural learning targeted as part of the proposed activities. Proposals should specify whether the service-learning activities will take place as part of a credit-bearing course or as a co-curricular activity.
- A timeline for project activities and identification of the number of students and beneficiaries impacted.
- A description of partners involved in the project.
- A plan for assessing student and community impact against stated goals and objectives.

Evaluation Criteria and Procedures

Vetting and review of proposals will be coordinated by the Office of Global Engagement with input from an internally appointed committee consisting of faculty and administrative staff who have experiential-learning experience. The review committee will consider the following:

Impact. Proposals will be favored that demonstrate the clearest possible connection between defined service-learning activities and the needs of underserved individuals or communities.

Clarity of Learning Outcomes. Proposals will be favored that articulate clear and achievable student learning outcomes, identifying a compelling connection between the proposed service-learning activity and achievement of those outcomes for Clemson students.

Financial Stewardship. Proposals will be favored that are likely to achieve the greatest impact among underserved individuals and communities while facilitating positive learning outcomes among the greatest number of Clemson students given the resources requested.

Sustainability. Proposals will be favored that lay the groundwork for ongoing service-learning opportunities through the development of partnerships or additional sources of funding.

Submission

Proposals should be submitted to oge@clemson.edu no later than midnight Eastern Time on deadline identified above.

Award Conditions

Following a successful award, an annual project Outcomes Report must be submitted describing project activities, use of awarded funds, student involvement and learning outcomes, and community impact and outcomes.

Questions

Contact the Office of Global Engagement for questions at oge@clemson.edu.