Wellness@Work
Grant Program Overview

BACKGROUND

The University of Guelph is proud to continue the Wellness@Work Grant Program in 2020, to further enhance the physical and psychological health, safety and the quality of life of all faculty and staff. The goal of the program is to promote the wellbeing of the whole person, build caring campus environments that are vibrant and inclusive, open and respectful, where University members and visitors alike know they are valued, and serving others, supporting people locally and globally.

The Wellness@Work grant program encourages faculty and staff across all campuses and research stations at the University of Guelph to help promote wellness in their workplace through the implementation of a tailored health-promoting program, approach or idea in their workplace.

Learn more about the Wellness@Work initiative at https://www.uoguelph.ca/wellnessatwork/.

OKANAGAN CHARTER

In June 2017, the University of Guelph adopted the Okanagan Charter: An International Charter for Health Promoting Universities and Colleges. The Charter calls upon us to:

1. **Embed health into all aspects of campus culture, across the administration, operations and academic mandates.**
   - 1.1 Embed health in all campus policies.
   - 1.2 Create supportive campus environments.
   - 1.3 Generate thriving communities and a culture of wellbeing.
   - 1.4 Support personal development.
   - 1.5 Create or re-orient campus services.

2. **Lead health promotion action and collaboration locally and globally.**
   - 2.1 Integrate health, wellbeing and sustainability in multiple disciplines to develop change agents.
   - 2.2 Advance research, teaching and training for health promotion knowledge and action.
   - 2.3 Lead and partner towards local and global action for health.

The Wellness@Work grant program is an opportunity for departments/groups to help bring to life these calls to action, by using the campus as a living laboratory for innovation, as we build a more empowered, connected and resilient campus community together.

“Health promotion action builds upon the Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion, which emphasizes the interconnectedness between individuals and their environments and recognizes that, health is created and lived by people within the settings of their everyday life: where they learn, work, play and love. Health is viewed holistically, reflecting physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity” (Okanagan Charter: An International Charter for Health Promoting Universities and Colleges, 2015, p.4).
GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

You play a key role in fostering a healthy campus community. This initiative is an opportunity to be innovative as you test out a new healthy workplace idea in your department/group. Departments/groups can apply for a seed grant (up to a maximum of $3000, one time) for their initiative. The number of grants available will be dependent on the number of applications received and the amount distributed for each successful grant.

Departments/groups are encouraged to collaborate with other groups to submit a joint application. In the application review process, selected applications with similar goals or ideas may be matched to collaborate on their workplace wellness idea.

Two orientation session opportunities are organized for grant applicants to walk through key timelines, program expectations and answer any questions. Grant recipients will be required to measure and submit a final report that summarizes how the funding was used and share outcomes of their initiative.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Applications will be reviewed according to a pre-determined rubric by a sub-committee of the Wellness@Work Advisory Committee. Programming and ideas must fit within one or more of the following three elements of the Wellness@Work Initiative: healthy lifestyle, mental health and workplace culture and/or organizational social responsibility.

Not sure what you might be interested in? Learn more about the healthy workplace elements and take a look below for some ideas:

- **Healthy Lifestyle:** Personal resources and lifestyle practices that affect physical and psychological health such as physical activity, eating habits, sleeping, smoking, alcohol, drug, and substance use. It also includes the means by which individuals cope with stress, the sense of control they have over their work and health, and the perception that there is support in times of distress or unhappiness.
  - Start a team health challenge (step/walking challenge, stair challenge, running club, healthy eating challenge, water challenge, stretch daily)
  - Participate in healthy cooking classes, invite a dietician to speak, or build a healthy recipe book for the department/group
  - Invite an Art Therapist to host a session exploring wellness topics using creative materials (i.e. self-compassion or mindfulness)
  - Host a speaker series on positive sleeping habits
  - Run a series of fitness classes for the entire department/group or start an employee sports team or lunchtime league
  - Start a department/group art and creative expression project
  - Host a “learn to” series to develop new skills
  - Start a series of mindfulness classes or participate in the “30-Day Mindfulness Challenge”
  - Host an “unplug and play” event
  - Run a laughter yoga workshop
  - Create “wellness carts” with small equipment and materials to help employees stay active and engaged in improving their overall health
  - Create a garden box for your building and set-up a schedule for regular maintenance
• **Mental Health and Workplace Culture:** This element refers to psychosocial factors of a workplace that affect employee psychological health and safety such as reasonableness of deadlines, organization and design of work, opportunities to influence how tasks are done, relationship with supervisors and co-workers, quality of communications, adequacy of training and development, and the interplay of home and work responsibilities.
  - Invest in mental health training for your team or reduce mental health stigma with a campaign
  - Have a lunch and learn session on stress reduction techniques or build a department/group stress reduction toolkit
  - Organize a team building activity on campus that encourages connectedness (i.e. improv show)
  - Integrate weekly reflection time
  - Launch a book club related to health and wellbeing
  - Host a speaker or workshop on fairness, respect or teamwork
  - Build community, sense of belonging and connection with a department/group activity
  - Develop a SharePoint site with wellness information and events

• **Organizational Social Responsibility:** Organizational social responsibility speaks to ways organizations can be involved in the community and how this can improve the health and well-being of employees, their families, and other members of the community. Organizational social responsibility activities are often seen as voluntary and going above and beyond what is legislated or required, as well as those activities that address workplace aspects such as occupational health and safety, human rights, community development, environmental protection, and emergency response.
  - Start a community garden project
  - Launch a “pay it forward” campaign or create a kindness series
  - Run a food drive or donation drive for a local charity
  - Spent time volunteering in the community
  - Organize a bike-a-thon or athletic event
  - Film a department/group lip-dub video advocating for an important cause

TIP: Consider theming your application around a specific topic that integrates a multi-pronged approach to improve health behaviours rather than a one-off workshop or event.

For example, you could focus on “Balancing Work and Life” and bring in a speaker on thriving in today’s busy world, host a team challenge to build capacity for resiliency and organize a time management workshop. Another example could be “Stress Reduction for Shift Workers,” including a workshop on sleep and shift work, a healthy meal preparation demonstration, a team challenge on mindfulness and some educational material to help employees reduce stress. Or “Healthy Hearts” focused on ways staff can integrate more plants into their diets, achieve 30 minutes of exercise at lunch and offer voluntary heart health screening. Be creative as you propose what will be most beneficial for your department for your unique needs.

• **Physical Environment:** Physical environment refers to all health and safety factors of a workplace, such as noise levels, toxic substances, infection control practices, emergency preparedness, air quality, light levels, equipment, and design of work. This element influences workplace injuries and needs constant attention as organizations introduce new technologies, increase efficiency and effectiveness of work, while trying to remain sustainable (e.g., contain costs).

The fourth element, Physical Environment, is an important pillar to our Wellness@Work initiative, but will not be considered for funding by this grant program because health and safety factors and hazards are addressed through other processes and programs at the university.
For additional information:

- Environmental Health and Safety: [https://www.uoguelph.ca/hr/hr-services/welcome-environmental-health-safety](https://www.uoguelph.ca/hr/hr-services/welcome-environmental-health-safety)
- PR: [https://www.pr.uoguelph.ca/](https://www.pr.uoguelph.ca/)
- Campus Police: [https://www.uoguelph.ca/police/](https://www.uoguelph.ca/police/)

**REIMBURSEMENT GUIDELINES**

All expenses must first be approved by the selection committee in the grant application form. Funds must be spent by March 31, 2021. **Departments/groups will be expected to pay for the initiatives up-front and submit their expenses with the final grant report by March 31, 2021 to get reimbursed for the approved costs.** After receipt of the final report, Human Resources will create a Journal Entry to reimburse departments for the cost of their program.

**APPROVED COSTS**

Successful grant recipients will be notified of their approved expenses at the start of the program. Although not an extensive list, some approved costs may include:

- *Prizes, Incentives or Trophies (not to exceed $500)
- Food and catering (not to exceed $500)
- Promotional materials (not to exceed $100)
- Small equipment purchases that will remain within the department/group (not to exceed $300)
  - Includes pedometers (excludes other fitness tracking devices such as fitbits, jawbones, etc.)
  - If equipment is to be used at work station, please connect with the Rehabilitation Specialist in Occupational Health and Wellness at 519-824-4120 ext. 54283 to discuss your idea before applying
- Room rental fees
- Instructor, speaker or facilitator fees
- Workshop costs
- Kick off or wrap up event

*Gift cards are considered a taxable benefit and must be reported to Human Resources.*

Note: All equipment or materials purchased (including pedometers) must remain the property of the department/group and are not to be personal possessions of the participants.

**NON-APPROVED ITEMS**

Costs that will **not** be approved for a Wellness@Work grant include and are not limited to:

- Operational expenses
- Hiring of faculty/staff/student to coordinate or support the program
- Primary research costs
- Small equipment purchases that are not ergonomically safe or effective
- Renovations, furniture, artwork or special equipment purchases
- The purchase of stereo or electronic equipment
- The purchase of fitness tracking devices such as fitbits, jawbones, etc. (with the exception of pedometers)
- Individual monetary reimbursements for gym memberships/fitness classes/assessments
- Charitable donations in either an employee’s name or the department/group’s name
- Alcohol or any illicit substances
- Activities that are considered risky, dangerous or unsafe
- Activities that take place off-campus (with the exception of volunteering and visiting research stations)
IMPORTANT DATES

- **February 25, 12-1pm and March 9, 10-11am**: Opportunity to attend an information session to learn more about the grant program and ask questions
- **March 31, 2020**: Application deadline
- **April 30, 2020**: Applicants notified of Committee’s decision
- **November 2020**: Mid-term progress check-in phone call
- **March 31, 2021**: Funding spending deadline
- **March 31, 2021**: Final reports due (template will be provided)

READINESS CHECKLIST

I have...

- support and endorsement from my AVP or Dean to submit a grant application and approval to cover up-front costs
- conducted an informal needs assessment to determine what would interest and benefit colleagues in my department/group
- considered the health benefits and potential outcomes of the program or idea on the staff/faculty
- been thoughtful about how to create an accessible and inclusive program for diverse employees
- determined how the program or idea will be evaluated/outcomes measured
- discussed how this initiative might be able to be sustained and continued beyond the one year funding available
- reviewed the application form to ensure all information necessary to complete the grant application has been included

APPLICATION FORM

Interested in helping to build a healthier workplace in your department/group? Please complete the application form now to apply for a grant to promote and enhance workplace wellness (see the Grant Application form). Assistance with the application process is available up to 7 days prior to the application deadline. Please contact Sarah Joosse, Wellness@Work Coordinator at sjoosse@uoguelph.ca or (519) 824-4120 ext. 56705 for any questions or feedback.

Interested departments/groups can submit their application form by 4:30pm on March 31, 2020 by emailing it to sjoosse@uoguelph.ca or sending a printed copy to HR with attention to Sarah Joosse.

U OF G WELLNESS RESOURCES

- View the Wellness@Work website for additional opportunities available for faculty and staff to participate in: [https://www.uoguelph.ca/wellnessatwork/](https://www.uoguelph.ca/wellnessatwork/)
- Learn more about faculty and staff memberships for the Athletics Centre: [https://fitandrec.gryphons.ca/membership-services/memberships/staff-faculty-brochure.pdf](https://fitandrec.gryphons.ca/membership-services/memberships/staff-faculty-brochure.pdf)
- View existing workshops and programs offered for faculty and staff through Learning and Development: [https://www.uoguelph.ca/hr/hr-services/learning-development](https://www.uoguelph.ca/hr/hr-services/learning-development)
- View how the Occupational Health and Wellness team can support faculty and staff: [https://www.uoguelph.ca/hr/hr-services/occupational-health-wellness](https://www.uoguelph.ca/hr/hr-services/occupational-health-wellness)
- Learn more about the Employee and Family Assistance Program: [https://www.uoguelph.ca/hr/staff-faculty-health-well-being/employee-assistance-program](https://www.uoguelph.ca/hr/staff-faculty-health-well-being/employee-assistance-program)
- View training opportunities through Diversity and Human Rights: [https://www.uoguelph.ca/diversity-human-rights/educational-resources-training/training](https://www.uoguelph.ca/diversity-human-rights/educational-resources-training/training)