

Higher Education Equipment Trust Fund (HEETF)

Introduction

HEETF was created in 1986 by the General Assembly to provide a funding mechanism to upgrade a large amount of deficient and obsolete equipment needed for instruction and research in higher education. Per the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV), since 1996 the Higher Education Equipment Trust Fund (HEETF) has been used to accomplish the following goals:

- Significantly reduce the amount of obsolete technology and equipment
- Provide every student with access to an appropriate level of information and technology
- Establish a statewide network that supports and encourages sharing and cooperation
- Provide every faculty member with appropriate equipment and training to use technology in support of teaching and learning
- Support faculty in the introduction of new ways of instruction and learning, provide courses customized to student needs, and take advantage of distance-learning opportunities
- Install high quality, easy-access, network-deliverable student support services, such as transcripts, grades, class scheduling, and account balance and payment information
- Install management information systems that are flexible and directly accessible to users to help support administrative restructuring and cost-containment

VCU's Fiscal Year 2021 HEETF allocation process

Our process is designed to direct resources to meet overarching institutional needs as articulated in the VCU Strategic Plan. This much-valued support, targeted specifically at our instructional, research, and related equipment and instrumentation needs, can do a great deal to help us realize some of the goals identified in our strategic plan. Three HEETF committees, instruction, research and academic support/student service/institutional support, coordinate requests for these funds, thereby assuring non-duplication of expenditures, careful planning toward the implementation of core facilities and maximizing this funding opportunity to the best advantage of the University.

CONTENTS

INSTRUCTIONS	Page 2
FORMAT FOR GOOGLE SHEET TEMPLATE	Page 4
REQUIREMENTS AND ITEMS EXCLUDED FROM HEETF	Page 5
RELATED HEETF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES	Page 6
SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION REQUIRED FOR SHARED MAJOR RESEARCH EQUIPMENT REQUESTS	Page 7

HEETF INSTRUCTIONS

Requests for HEETF are collected as follows.

- The Google Sheet template contains separate worksheets for HEETF requests related to instruction, research and academic support/student services/ institutional support.
- Each school or unit should prioritize the requests submitted in each worksheet. Submissions with the same priority value on multiple equipment requests will be returned for reevaluation, which may delay its review by the appropriate committee.
- Submissions should include enough information for the committee to evaluate the requests. Further guidance for the instruction and research submissions is specified in the following sections 1 and 2.
- Please provide a one or two page memo to the applicable committee explaining the linkage between the requests and plans to implement VCU's Strategic Plan. <https://quest.vcu.edu/>
- Submit the requests (completed google sheet template and cover memo) to your vice president's office by the due date established by that office. Your vice president's office will review and transmit their recommendations to Candy Gordon at crbraswe@vcu.edu **no later than July 31, 2020.**
- If you have any questions, please contact your vice president's office or William C. Nelson, Jr. at nelsonwc@vcu.edu or 828-6361.

1. For instructional equipment requests, please address the following:

- a. The number of students served and the impact if the request is not funded;
- b. A statement of how operating expenses (e.g., maintenance contracts, personnel to operate equipment, etc.) will be funded. This should envision the five year service life mandated by HEETF, not just the immediate post-purchase warranty period;
- c. A statement describing the level of cost matching funds that the requesting unit would be willing to bear in the event that the HEETF review committee determines it is willing or able to fund only a portion of the proposed expense.

2. For research equipment requests, please address the following as applicable:

- a. The sufficiency of the environment into which the instrument will be placed – will renovations be required, are trained operating personnel available, is space available, where will the instrument be located, etc.;
- b. A statement of how operating expenses (e.g., maintenance contracts, personnel to operate equipment, etc.) will be funded. This should envision the five year service life mandated by HEETF, not just the immediate post-purchase warranty period;
- c. Renovations.
 - 2.c.1. If renovations will be required, a commitment they will be completed to allow for HEETF equipment installation, testing and payment prior to June 30, 2021;
 - 2.c.2. A statement of who will be responsible for bearing the expense for any required renovations or ancillary costs related to the installation of the instrument;
- d. Matching funds.

- 2.d.1. A statement describing the level of cost matching funds that the requesting unit would be willing to bear in the event that the HEETF review committee determines it is willing or able to fund only a portion of the proposed expense.
- 2.d.2. Only amounts offered directly by a VCU unit counts as a match.
- 2.d.3. If the purchase instrument ultimately costs less than anticipated then the match expected will be kept proportional at the same relative percentage. For example, if the original HEETF request included a \$500K instrument and a \$100K match (\$400K or 80% from HEETF and \$100K or 20%, matched), but the instrument ultimately costs \$400K, \$100K less than the original request. In this example, 80% or \$320k would come from HEETF and 20% or \$80k, is expected to come from matching funds. HEETF savings would be released back to fund acquisitions in the 30% overage category
- e. The HEETF Research Committee is requesting supplemental information for equipment requests for shared major equipment (items that cost \$100,000 or more). The intent is to avoid duplication of requests for major equipment items for Core/Shared Instrumentation Facilities that serve multiple users. Please complete the form for each qualifying equipment request.
- f. Quotations from the equipment manufacturer should be provided and be consistent with the dollar amount requested.
- g. In the event a research award is received on a piece of equipment substantially equivalent to a HEETF requested or approved item, the unit is required to immediately notify the committee chairs so that, if necessary, the committee can be convened to determine what should happen with the previously granted request.

FORMAT FOR HEETF GOOGLE SHEET TEMPLATE

1. Name of School/Division and Department (cell D3)
2. Priority within the School/Division (col C)

Assign a priority value to each equipment request. Prioritize the aggregated school or college list and do not prioritize the lists from each department separately. Submissions with the same priority value on multiple equipment requests will be returned for reevaluation, which may delay its review by the appropriate committee.

3. Description: Include a few words describing the piece of equipment (col D)
4. Quantity – number of units requested (col E)
5. Unit Cost – estimated total cost of one unit of equipment (col F)
6. HEETF Cost - estimated total cost funded from HEETF (col G)
7. Matching Funds - amount of departmental, school, or unit funds that will assist in the purchase of the equipment (col H)
8. Total Costs - Sum of HEETF cost and matching funds (col I)
9. Justification - indicate why equipment is needed to include (col J):
 - a. How and where will the equipment be used?
 - b. Identify who will be using the equipment.
 - c. Be brief but clear. Limit number of characters to no more than 500 per cell. Attach additional justification if necessary in a separate document.
10. VCU Strategic Plan-Quest 2025 - include the strategic plan theme and goal numbers that the HEETF request will support. <https://quest.vcu.edu/> (col K)

REQUIREMENTS AND ITEMS EXCLUDED FROM HEETF

Equipment and technology purchased with HEETF funds must cost at least \$500 and have a useful life of five (5) years. HEETF allocations should not be used to purchase equipment and technology for use in Public Service, Operation and Maintenance of Plant, Auxiliary Enterprises or Hospital Services programs.

Excludable Items: the following may not be purchased with HEETF funds:

1. Library books, films, videotapes and library materials
2. Microfilm collection and materials
3. Library shelving
4. Office appurtenances (blinds, carpets, file cabinets, copiers, fax machines and similar items)
5. Office furniture (desks, chairs, tables and similar items)
6. Transportation equipment
7. Equipment normally affixed to a building or functional as a part of an operating system of a building
8. Climate control and security systems
9. General telecommunications equipment
10. Buildings
11. Equipment with a useful life of less than 5 years
12. General application software (Lotus, Excel, Wordperfect, etc.) and site licenses
13. Items costing less than \$500
14. Used equipment

State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) Higher Education Equipment Trust Fund (HEETF) Policies and Procedures:

<http://www.schev.edu/index/institutional/guidance-policies/finance-and-facilities/higher-education-equipment-trust-fund>

Highlights from the SCHEV HEETF Policies and Procedures manual:

Functional Unit – A functional unit is an assemblage of instruments, modules, and components. Together they perform a specific task and remain assembled as a unit. Examples of functional units are oscilloscope with probes, recording spectrophotometer with demountable cell assembly and windows, or a computer with printer. The individual components may cost less than \$500 but the aggregate cost of the functional unit must be at least \$500 to be approved by SCHEV.

Items merely aggregated together so the group costs more than \$500 are not a functional unit. For example, an order for 15 \$100 keyboards for computers is not a functional unit.

When possible, order functional units from one vendor.

Freight Charges – These charges can be paid, if they are included in the total cost of the equipment. Freight charges should be included on the same purchase order as the equipment. They cannot be paid if they are submitted on a separate voucher.

Installation Costs – These costs can be included in the cost of the equipment if they are the cost to unpack, set-up and test the equipment. These costs should be included on the same purchase order as the equipment. They cannot be paid if they are submitted on a separate purchase order. Building modifications, new electrical outlets, etc. are not allowable costs.

Trade-ins – The University may trade in equipment without permission from SCHEV provided that adequate records are maintained. The Fixed Asset system should reflect the disposal of the original equipment by trade-in. Further, the equipment traded-in must be replaced with authorized equipment that costs at least as much as the depreciated value of the original equipment.

Lost or Stolen Equipment – Lost or stolen items must also be replaced with equipment that costs at least as much as the depreciated value of the original equipment. The University must maintain a record of replacements to include a reason for the replacement. The original HEETF reference number should be used for the replacement equipment.

Use of Older Equipment – The University has the ability to use HEETF equipment that has outlived its useful life in programs other than instruction, research and academic support. For example, computers that were originally purchased for lab use by students could now be used for administrative purposes once they have exceeded their useful lives. If the University elects this option, the equipment inventory data must be updated to reflect this change in use.

Equipment Audits – SCHEV may conduct on-site verification of equipment location and use.

**SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION FOR SHARED MAJOR RESEARCH EQUIPMENT
REQUEST**

Please complete this form for each qualifying research equipment request that costs \$100,000 or more (in your HEETF Research Code 102 worksheet.) **This completed form should be submitted along with the GOOGLE sheet to Candy Gordon, crbraswe@vcu.edu, Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs.**

Requesting Investigators/Users (attach NIH Biosketch for each, show how need is currently met, list any relevant publications using this equipment, note Current and Pending proposals dependent on this equipment):

Description – As shown on spreadsheet _____

Name	Dept/Unit	Office Phone	Email address name@vcu.edu	PI/CoPI Minor User

Name/possible vendor of Requested Instrument:	Cost: \$ <i>A quotation from the manufacturer must be included supporting the request.</i>
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Insert as many lines or pages into this document as required to be fully responsive to the questions.

1. Describe existing equipment of the same or similar type and capability at VCU (in both your own *and in other units*) and fully justify why the requested item of equipment is needed (*e.g.*, different capability, existing equipment is used at full capacity, *etc.*):
2. Describe all other means by which your unit has sought to acquire similar instrumentation/capability. This should include NIH S10 or NSF MRI instrumentation grants, *etc.* Please indicate the status of any grants (submitted, pending review, reviewed but unfunded, *etc.*). If you have *not* attempted to secure requested instrumentation through such alternative funding mechanisms, please indicate why not, and why you believe HEETF funding is appropriate:
3. What is the estimated annual operating cost of this instrument and required supplies, and how do you propose that these expenses will be paid:
4. Describe and/or provide quotes for annual service contract amounts and how these will be paid.
Please note that it is not acceptable to specify that an institutionally designated core laboratory will

be responsible unless the instrument request is made with the consent of and coordination with the director of the core lab and with the understanding that the instrument will fall under the management of that core. Similarly, it is not acceptable to specify that maintenance contracts will be supported by the Office of the Vice-President for Research and Innovation without the prior consent of the Director for Research Infrastructure. Such requests would normally only be considered for instruments to be placed into designated core laboratories.

5. Describe the proposed location of the requested instrument. *Please note that it is not acceptable to specify that an instrument will be sited in an institutionally designated core laboratory unless the instrument request is made with the consent of and coordination with the director of the core lab and with the understanding that the instrument will fall under the management of that core. Similarly, it is unacceptable to propose location of instrumentation in Division of Animal Resources managed space without the specific consent and prior approval of the DAR Director.*
6. If requested equipment will require a *new* commitment of space, indicate the specific location (room number if possible) where the instrument will be located. Indicate also the academic unit that has agreed to commit this space. If the academic unit committing the space differs from the unit initiating the HEETF request, a separate memorandum of understanding from that unit agreeing to the space commitment should be attached.
7. If requested equipment will require renovations to space, indicate i) the estimated cost; ii) source of funding and; iii) estimated time needed for renovations to be completed: ***Note that the requesting units bears the ultimate responsibility for all renovation associated costs. Further note that it is impermissible to pay renovation costs from core laboratory budgets or from service center associated recharge accounts.*** *If renovations are to be funded in whole or in part from an index not under the control of the requesting unit, or if a request is supported by multiple units and renovation costs are involved, then a memorandum of understanding between the involved units should be included with this application.*
8. Describe system and/or policies for instrument use/access (*i.e.*, charges, scheduling, front end sample submission procedures, attach details of existing system if one exists):
9. Please indicate the proposed instrument operator(s) of the requested instrumentation. This information should include their current position(s) at VCU, a concise summary of their training and experience with this or similar equipment that qualifies them for this role, and how their salary will be supported: