Strengthening graduate education within academic departments and degree programs is crucial for ensuring our students have the best possible educational experiences.

Dynamic changes within universities and disciplines, as well as broader contexts, make thoughtful reconsideration of our approaches to graduate education a top priority. The VPGE’s SCORE (Strengthening the Core) Academic Innovation Funds are available for faculty to scrutinize long-existing practices and test new approaches for graduate education, within a department or across several academic programs. Faculty in 47 departments and units across 6 Schools have been awarded SCORE funding.

When reflecting on graduate programs, faculty have been deliberating about fundamental expectations for advanced study and skill development within their specialized fields as well as identifying opportunities for innovative approaches. Faculty have also been interested in exploring how to prepare graduate students for work and life so they contribute meaningfully for decades to come. We are fortunate that Stanford has outstanding resources for professional development and career exploration that complement what faculty offer locally in departments.

INNOVATION & EXPERIMENTATION
During VPGE’s tenth year, 2016-17, we had a "What's Possible?" web portal. Students, faculty, and staff were asked what they value about graduate education at Stanford and what could be done to enhance the quality of graduate education and graduate students’ experiences at Stanford. Several themes emerged in response to the second question:

- improving the quality of faculty-student advising and mentoring
- fostering a more diverse and inclusive community, while also reducing isolation
- supporting students to explore and prepare for a variety of career paths
- engaging graduate students more fully in Stanford’s collaborative intellectual community

We encourage you to apply for SCORE Academic Innovation Funds for pilot projects of up to one year to address these and other issues that are salient within your department or program. We are particularly interested in supporting innovative ideas that emerge locally, so encourage you to seek ideas from your community of faculty, students, and staff.

HOW TO APPLY
To apply for SCORE Academic Innovation Funds, faculty should submit the following via email to Vice Provost Patricia Gumport, gumport@stanford.edu. Proposals are considered on a rolling basis.

1) A brief project description
2) A brief budget request
Requests of up to $15,000 will be considered. Funds may be used for meeting or event expenses, graduate research assistants or teaching assistants, outside consultants, including focus group facilitators, and other reasonable costs.
3) A brief endorsement from the Director of Graduate Studies, Department Chair, or IDP Program Director (email is sufficient)
SCORE (Strengthening the Core)
Academic Innovation Funds

RECENT SCORE PROJECTS INCLUDE:

**Anthropology: Culture, Minds, and Medicines Seminar Series**
Interdisciplinary seminar about human health and suffering involving faculty, students, and postdocs from the School of Medicine and several Humanities & Sciences departments, combining humanistic and scientific perspectives on research and the nature of data.

**Bioengineering: Bioengineering Student Seminar Series**
Creation of the Bioengineering Student Seminar Series to provide advanced BioE students opportunities to present and discuss their work with other students, postdoctoral scholars, and faculty.

**Biosciences Cluster: Redesign Biosciences Graduate Curriculum**
Support for students working with the Faculty Committee on the redesign of the biosciences curriculum, such as creating mini-courses, interdisciplinary courses, and career development workshops.

**Center for Spatial and Textual Analysis (CESTA): Digital Humanities Graduate Research Fellowship**
Support for curriculum associated with the year-long Digital Humanities Fellowship, specifically for guest speakers and for Fellows to travel to conferences to present their research.

**Chemistry: ChEM-H Annual Retreat and Recruitment**
Support for graduate student participation in the ChEM-H Annual Retreat and for the inclusion of prospective students from local colleges and universities, as a recruitment strategy.

**Civil and Environmental Engineering and School of Law: Roble Living Laboratory for Sustainability at Stanford (ROLLS) Initiative**
Support for the launch of the ROLLS Initiative in Roble Hall, specifically support for the graduate student speaker series, Hard Earth (in partnership with Residential Education).

**English: Redesign Graduate Student Professional Development in Light of Diversifying Job Market**
Redesign department’s “Introduction to Graduate Studies” course and develop programs for students to explore career options in response to the diversifying job market for humanities’ PhD students.

**Humanities and Arts Cluster: Humanities House Graduate Student Facilitators**
A pilot for graduate students to serve as facilitators of undergraduate workshops and discussion groups in the new humanities-focused dorm, Humanities House.

**Political Science: Immigration Policy Lab**
Support for fellowships and research projects for graduate students to participate in Immigration Policy Lab in Summer 2018.

**Sociology: Graduate Student Success and Diversity**
Support for several related projects to strengthen the advising structure and advisor-advisee relationships; build community; and diversify the student population by examining admissions practices.