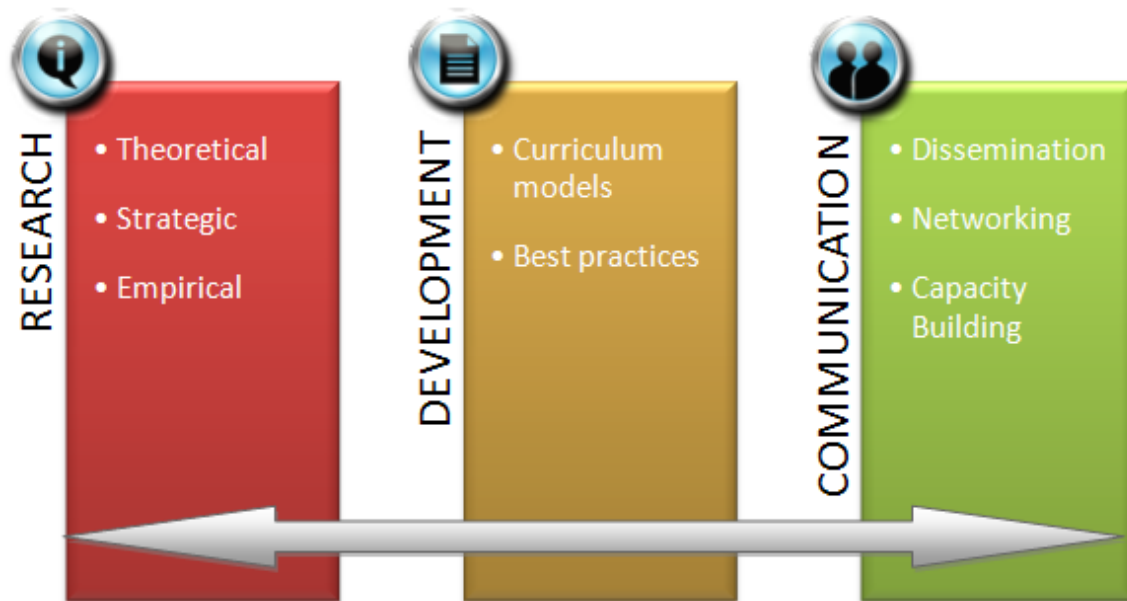


Kuyers Institute Project Categories



Research

Research is central to what the Kuyers Institute is able to contribute as part of a higher education institution. Types of research sponsored by the Institute include *theoretical research* focused on the ways in which Christian teaching and learning are framed and understood; *empirical research* examining how Christian teaching and learning are practiced; and *strategic research* to assess particular current realities and opportunities in relation to the pursuit of Christian teaching and learning.

Development

In order to contribute to the practice of Christian teaching and learning in various educational contexts, the Institute invests not only in theory development, but also in the development of accessible models of good practice that reflect Christian approaches to teaching and learning. These include sample curriculum materials, teaching models, and pilot projects that enable a concrete envisioning of Christian educational praxis.

Communication

Both of the above activities require an emphasis on communication, both in terms of dissemination of the products and acquired understanding that result from Institute projects and in terms of building a strong network of expertise and strengthening the pool of those working on the development of Christian teaching and learning. Publications, seminars, workshops and conferences address both of these concerns.

In pursuing these three areas, the Institute seeks to balance engagement with educators in P-12 and higher education constituencies.

Criteria for Funding of Projects by the Kuyers Institute

The following guidelines explain the criteria for funding of a project by the Institute. These criteria are used by the Institute's governing board when evaluating proposals, and are provided here for the guidance of applicants. As noted below, while a wide range of inquiries is encouraged, projects must involve a member of the Calvin College faculty in some capacity.

1. Framing Considerations

The Institute website states the following concerning the basis and purposes of the Institute:

Calvin College is now home to an institute devoted to the study and promotion of pedagogy, learning, and educational leadership from an integrally Christian perspective. The Kuyers Institute will focus on teaching and learning from pre-kindergarten through college, and will foster research and professional development. The Kuyers Institute will act as a catalyst to gather interested professionals for workshops, conferences, and research seminars, and will coordinate research projects in a variety of settings.

Our Audience

The Institute will involve a wide variety of participants and address several audiences:

- Practitioners in Pre-K through 16 education, teachers who are seeking to develop more effective practice and deeper reflection on that practice.
- Students, whose improved learning is central to this effort. Stakeholders in local schools and colleges will also be influenced through this work as we articulate best practices, disseminate research findings, and advance theoretical reflection.
- Finally, we hope to speak to and collaborate with the larger community of educators, both in higher education and elementary and secondary settings, in North America and internationally, as we articulate and study the unique contributions of faith to the educational process.

This description encompasses a wide range of audiences and potential specific goals, and does so against the backdrop of limited budgetary and human resources. I suggest that it implies the following broad considerations when approaching choice of projects:

- a. **“from an integrally Christian perspective”**; **“unique contributions of faith”** While there is a wide range of possible activity that could, through research or intervention, improve education, and it is legitimate and valuable for Christian scholars in general to be engaged in this activity, the specific role of the Kuyers Institute is to foster reflection and innovation that are integrally Christian in nature. Proposed projects should show evidence of an integrally Christian approach and should ideally be moving forward our understanding and practice of Christian teaching and learning.
- b. **“the larger community of educators”** This does not imply that the target audience is limited to Christian schools; the Christian element will be looked for in approach rather than in audience. This means both that the Institute affirms the offering of Christian insight to other educational settings and that it will collaborate with, but not duplicate, general-purpose resourcing organizations for Christian schools.
- c. **“study...”**; **“research...”** The Institute must maintain a clear research focus; while other organizations offer a variety of Christian educational services, part of the distinctive role

- of the Institute will be to promote an increase in the quality and quantity of serious scholarly attention to teaching and learning issues from a Christian perspective.
- d. **“...and promotion”; “...and professional development”** Balanced against this is the Institute’s concern for professional development. This is not in opposition to the research focus; the potential for research sponsored by the Institute to impact schools may depend in part on maintaining interest in the work of the Institute on the part of practitioners and helping to bridge research and praxis. This means that at any given time the Institute’s research projects should be accompanied by projects oriented towards education professionals at various levels of education.
 - e. **“speak with a louder voice”; “disseminate”** One concern when considering any proposal should be the means and effectiveness of dissemination – what are the likely audiences, by what channels will the project reach them, and does the project relate to them in terms of significance and/or timeliness.

2. Draft Criteria

Projects funded by the Institute may include but are not limited to:

- Professional development events
- Research projects
- Development of new approaches to curriculum
- Study groups
- Research seminars
- Publication, including Internet projects
- Public lectures and conferences

Though the Institute welcomes all proposals and inquiries, projects must involve a member of the Calvin faculty.

In the light of the above, the following criteria are suggested for evaluating funding applications:

A. Quality of proposal

- i. Is the goal of the project clearly articulated and convincing?
- ii. Are the means proposed appropriate for meeting the goal?
- iii. Do the participants in the proposed project have the ability and expertise to reach to goal of the project?
- iv. Is the budget feasible and appropriate?
- v. Is the timeline feasible and appropriate?

B. Relevance of proposal

- i. Will the project contribute significantly, either theoretically or practically, to the relating of Christian faith to teaching and learning?

ii. In the case of curriculum projects, will the project model fresh approaches to the integration of faith and teaching?

iii. Is the project timely and of significance to a broader educational community?

iv. Does the project relate to broader emphases that the Institute may adopt for its programming at particular times?

C. Nature and audience of proposal

i. Will the project contribute to the balance of projects in the present and/or immediate future in terms of the Institute's goal of fostering both research and professional development?

ii. Will the project contribute to the balance of projects in the present and/or immediate future in terms of the addressing teaching and learning across a variety of curriculum areas?

iii. How and how widely/effectively will the proposal's substance or outcomes be disseminated?

D. Other considerations

i. Provided that other criteria are met, the Institute will also seek balance among projects accepted in terms of the gender distribution and ethnic distribution of applicants; in the case of repeat applicants, new applicants may be preferred if an applicant has recently received Institute funding.