Konneker Fund for Learning and Discovery

Background

Ohio University alumnus and biomedical scientist Wilfred R. Konneker, in collaboration with former professors Joseph Jollick and Thomas Wagner and then President Charles J. Ping, founded Diagnostic Hybrids in 1983 with the goal of developing innovative laboratory equipment to diagnose and treat diseases. The Trustees of the Ohio University Foundation chose that same year to invest approximately one million dollars in DHI, and over the last 27 years the local company has become a market leader that employs more than 200 people and serves over 700 customers in North America. The company reported $38 million in revenue in 2008 and a three-year compounded annual organic growth rate of 21 percent.

In addition to the Foundation’s investment in DHI, which has resulted in a significant return for the Foundation, Mr. Konneker made a gift of shares of DHI to the Foundation. A portion of the funds generated from these gifted shares, as per Mr. Konneker’s wishes when he made the gift of stock to the Foundation, will support the Cutler Scholars Program and the Kennedy Museum of Art. Another portion of those funds will be used to create a quasi-endowment fund to be called the Konneker Fund for Learning and Discovery that would be dedicated to supporting innovative initiatives designed to enhance Ohio University’s academic mission.

Guidelines for Proposals to the Konneker Fund for Learning and Discovery

The Konneker Fund’s general purpose is to support undergraduate learning as well as research and graduate education, and its specific purpose is to support innovative, high-impact initiatives that will advance Ohio University’s efforts (a) to realize its vision of becoming the nation’s best transformative learning community and (b) to achieve material progress on the following Four Fundamentals that define its academic mission:

1. Inspired teaching and research dedicated to students’ academic success and focused on the connection between student learning and the advancement of knowledge and creative activity.
2. Innovative academic programs that draw on the best traditions and practice in liberal arts, professional, and interdisciplinary education.
3. Exemplary student support services committed to helping students fulfill their academic promise.
4. Integrated co-curricular activities that foster a diverse environment of respect and inclusivity and facilitate students’ development as citizens and leaders.
Proposals to the Konneker Fund are due June 8, 2012 and should address the questions of how their projects would have university-wide impact, how they would be transformative for students and faculty, how they will contribute to continued institutional progress on the Four Fundamentals, and how they align with best practices documented in national research. Proposals to the Konneker Fund may request up to $50,000 for two years, or $100,000 overall. *Faculty and staff are eligible to submit proposals, and collaborative proposals are strongly encouraged.*

Proposals to the Konneker Fund should be no longer than ten pages and should include an abstract and a narrative that addresses the above four questions, identifies the goals of the project, specifies how progress on those goals will be assessed, explains how the project will be sustained, and provides a detailed budget that documents the relationship between expenditures and project goals. Proposals should contain a cover sheet that lists the proposal title, the project director(s) and the home department, school or division, the planning unit(s), and the requested funding. Complete proposals should be submitted electronically to descutne@ohio.edu.

**Proposal Review Process**

Proposals to the Konneker Fund will be reviewed by a committee composed of a representative from Deans Council; the Executive Dean of Regional Higher Education; the Vice President for Student Affairs; the Vice President for Research & Creative Activity and Dean of the Graduate College; and the Executive Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education. This committee, which will be chaired by the Executive Vice President and Provost, will review the proposals and submit recommendations to the President for his review and endorsement. During the July meeting of the Ohio University Foundation Board, the Executive Vice President and Provost will present the President’s recommendations to the Grants and Funding Committee Subcommittee.