**THE JANE AND RON
GRAHAM CENTRE**
FOR THE SCHOLARSHIP
OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN

SoTL
Research Grants
Handbook

Updated October 2024

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DEFINITIONS

The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) movement and its supporters assert that teaching is serious, scholarly work (STLHE, 2017). You may find the following definitions helpful as you read through the Jane and Ron Graham Centre for SoTL Research Grants Handbook.

What is SoTL?

SoTL is research! SoTL is defined as:

The systematic study of teaching and learning with a focus on improving student learning. It is an evidence-based process that enables the use of various research methodologies with outcomes that can be applied to learning environments. This work focuses on conducting research, developing results for peer review, and publicly disseminating the research outcomes so others can learn them and build upon them.

SoTL vs. Scholarly Teaching vs. Good Teaching

Potter and Kustra (2011) define scholarly teaching as "teaching grounded in critical reflection using systematically and strategically gathered evidence, related and explained by well-reasoned theory and philosophical understanding, with the goal of maximizing learning through effective teaching" (p.3).

Graham Centre for SoTL Grant Purpose

The Jane and Ron Graham Centre for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, at the University of Saskatchewan, is committed to promoting the development of capacity for SoTL research among tenure track faculty and students. The Graham Centre for SoTL recognizes the importance of providing support to faculty, masters and doctoral students to enable them to develop and prepare high quality SoTL research projects. To this end, the Centre has established three grants to support this commitment:

- **SoTL Flicker Grant (for graduate students)**
- **SoTL Spark Grant (for tenure track faculty new to SoTL)**
- **SoTL Ignite Grant (for tenure track faculty experienced in SoTL)**
- **SoTL Flare Grant (for SoTL research within a College or School, to be lead by tenure track faculty)**

SoTL Research Grant Comparison Chart

	Flicker	Spark	Ignite	Flare
Eligibility*	Master's and Doctoral students	Faculty new to SoTL	Experienced SoTL Faculty	Experienced SoTL Faculty
Funding Amount**	$2,500	$5,000	$10,000	$25,000
Number of Awards	2	3	3	1
Duration of Award	24 months Beginning September 1	24 months Beginning September 1	24 months Beginning September 1	24 months Beginning September 1

*Applicants may receive each award only once.

**All funds not spent by the end of the grant period will be returned to the SoTL grant fund. Over expenditures of grants are not permitted and will become the recipient's personal liability.

Eligible Expenses

Expenses	Flicker	Spark	Ignite	Flare
Conference Fees	✓	✓	✓	✓
Travel Expenses	✓	✓	✓	✓
Research Assistants*	–	✓	✓	✓
Participant Incentives	✓	✓	✓	✓
Design-related materials/equipment	✓	✓	✓	✓
Transcription Fees	✓	✓	✓	✓
Technology	✓	✓	✓	✓
Course release**	–	–	✓	✓
Article Processing Fee	–	–		✓
Hardware	–	–	–	
Personal Software	–	–	–	
Phones	–	–	–	

*Research Assistants are paid $22.12/hour. Information on roles and responsibilities of research assistants can be found at:
    careers.usask.ca/agreements/psac/agreements/graduate-students/psac-table-of-contents.php

**Course release must be approved by College Dean or designate.

Grant Overview

The Jane and Ron Graham Centre for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) is dedicated to building capacity for SoTL research at the University of Saskatchewan. The Centre recognizes the necessity of providing tenure track faculty and graduate students support to develop and prepare high quality SoTL research proposals.

Recipients of these grants will be provided with 1:1 support throughout the year to assist them in developing their research proposal. Grant recipients will meet at least once per semester in a Community of Practice (CoP) format for capacity building and mentoring.

Research fund accounts will not be opened until ethics is received; however, a request can be made for an advancement of funds if required. All funds need to be spent by the end of the term of the grant or they will be returned to the SoTL grant fund.

Application and Deadline:

- Application Deadline: **March 1**
  - *When the competition deadline falls on a weekend, the applications will be extended to the next business day.*
- Notification of the award will be provided within 8 weeks of the competition deadline.
- Extensions for grants are permitted at the discretion of the Director.

Submit your application including:
- completed online application (via link provided for each grant)
- an up-to-date CV (short version)
- a copy of your completed TCPS 2

Please note: Funds for the grants are limited, and the application process is competitive. It is very important that applicants review the submission process carefully to ensure that all necessary information is clearly and concisely provided.

> **Individuals may not apply for more than one grant at a time in the same academic year. You may receive the Spark grant only once.**
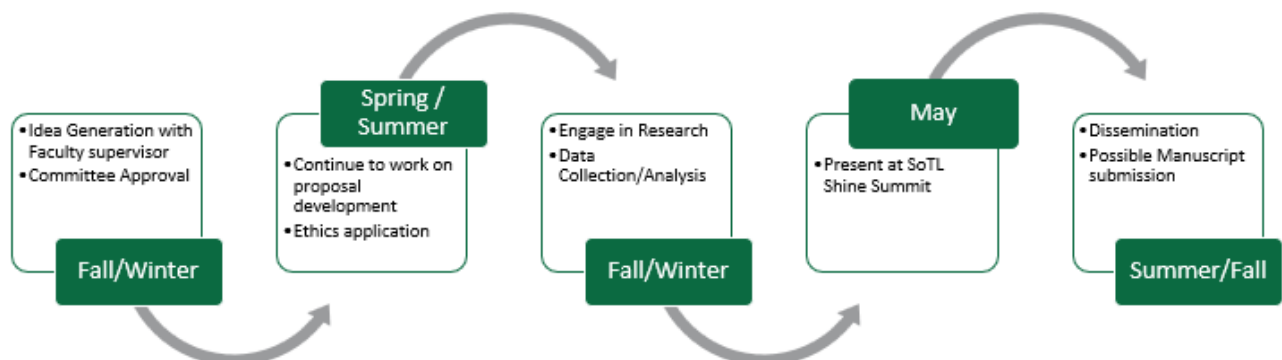
SoTL Flicker Overview

The SoTL Flicker grant offers financial assistance to master's and doctoral students seeking to incorporate teaching and learning aspects into their graduate studies. This grant provides an exceptional opportunity for students to enhance their research skills in the realm of teaching and learning. The support from the Jane and Ron Graham Centre for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning is invaluable in assisting students in crafting high-quality SoTL research proposals that have the potential to make a tangible impact in the field of teaching and learning.

Throughout the grant period, student recipients together with their faculty mentor will embark on a journey aimed at developing a robust SoTL research proposal, securing ethics approval, conducting the research, and formulating a comprehensive dissemination plan. You will be expected to attend the SoTL Shine Summit.

All grant recipients are expected to:

1. **Develop a NEW SoTL Research Project:** Initiate a Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) research project centered around a teaching and learning topic relevant to your classroom.
2. **Complete the TCPS 2: CORE-2022 Certificate:** Successfully fulfill the TCPS 2: CORE-2022 certificate requirements, demonstrating your commitment to enhancing your teaching and research capabilities.
3. **Obtain Research Ethics Approval:** Secure the necessary research ethics approval for your project, ensuring your research is conducted ethically and responsibly.
4. **Attend the SoTL Shine Summit:** Present at the SoTL Shine Summit in May of the first year to share portions of your project.
5. **Provide Regular Reports:** Provide two reports for the project: a mid-project report due January 31 in the first year (part 1) and a final report due September 30 of the second year (part 2).
   a. **Part 1:** Reflect on how the research project is progressing and identify any necessary support for its completion.
   b. **Part 2:** Submit a final research project report within one month of completing the project.

Fall/Winter
• Idea Generation with Faculty supervisor
• Committee Approval

Spring / Summer
• Continue to work on proposal development
• Ethics application

Fall/Winter
• Engage in Research
• Data Collection/Analysis

May
• Present at SoTL Shine Summit

Summer/Fall
• Dissemination
• Possible Manuscript submission

Evaluation Criteria

Applications for the SoTL Flicker grant will be evaluated based on the following criteria:
- Potential Impact on teaching and learning
- Relevance to a master's or doctoral thesis
- Relevance to the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning community
- Incorporation of an EDI and Indigenization lens

Application Requirements

ETHICS

The responsibility for ensuring that the student is adequately trained to conduct the research lies with the mentor and the student. Before receiving the allocated funds, the student must complete the TCPS 2: CORE-2022 certification and obtain ethics approval from the University of Saskatchewan.

SoTL RESEARCH PROJECT

The SoTL project description is a collaborative effort between the student and the mentor, and it should allow for significant opportunities for both independent and advanced work. This project description should be concise, encompassing up to three pages and covering the following key elements:
- Background and objectives of the study
- Methodology (specific details within space constraints)
- Analysis and Interpretation
- Expected outcomes (e.g. conference presentations, publications, reports, new guidelines, etc.)

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

The responsibilities of the applicant and the mentor, along with a mentorship plan, should be detailed, specifically outlining the mentor(s) roles in the proposed research project, including their areas of expertise.

Additionally, applicants are required to provide:
- A complete list of references cited
- A brief description of anticipated research training and educational benefits, highlighting the additional knowledge and skills to be acquired, and how this experience will contribute to the current research interests and advance career goals.
- A one-page CV, highlighting achievements.
- A timeline for the study.
- A budget justification, including an appropriate itemized budget.

When creating budgets, applicants should be as specific as possible in justifying appropriate expenditures. Applicants should also include a copy of the proposed budget. Example:

Type	Cost	Rationale
Conference Travel	$1,353.15	Will disseminate findings in June at the STLHE conference. • Conference fees for students $500 • Flight from Saskatoon to Edmonton Return $400 • Hotel (conference rate of $100/night) = $300 • Per Diem ($51/day x 3 days) = $153
Project Cost	$1,353.15	

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SoTL Spark Overview

The SoTL Spark grant provides a valuable platform for tenure track faculty members to begin engaging in their first Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) research project. During the initial year, faculty will work one-on-one with the Director of the Graham Centre for SoTL to develop their new SoTL research proposals, obtain necessary ethics approvals, and to craft a dissemination plan. Recipients of the grant must create a new research project, but the proposal can be based on results from a previous project. In the subsequent year, faculty members will immerse themselves in the research process, encompassing data collection and analysis (with continued support from the Director), all the ultimate aim of sharing their discoveries with the wider educational community.

The financial support offered by the SoTL Spark grant will **primarily cover essential expenses related to attending the Mount Royal SoTL Symposium in Banff**, which typically takes place annually in November. If the grant recipient cannot attend the conference, alternative arrangements may be made in consultation with the Director. The purpose of participating in this conference is to gain familiarity with the SoTL landscape, connect with fellow SoTL researchers, and initiate knowledge exchange, collaboration, and the dissemination of valuable SoTL research findings. Research fund accounts will not be opened until ethics has been received; however, a request can be made for an advancements to pay for the cost of the conference. Any remaining funds may be directed towards supporting your research project, such as hiring a graduate student researcher. Upon the completion of your project, you are expected to present your findings at the SoTL Shine Summit, which occurs during the second week of May each year in Saskatoon.
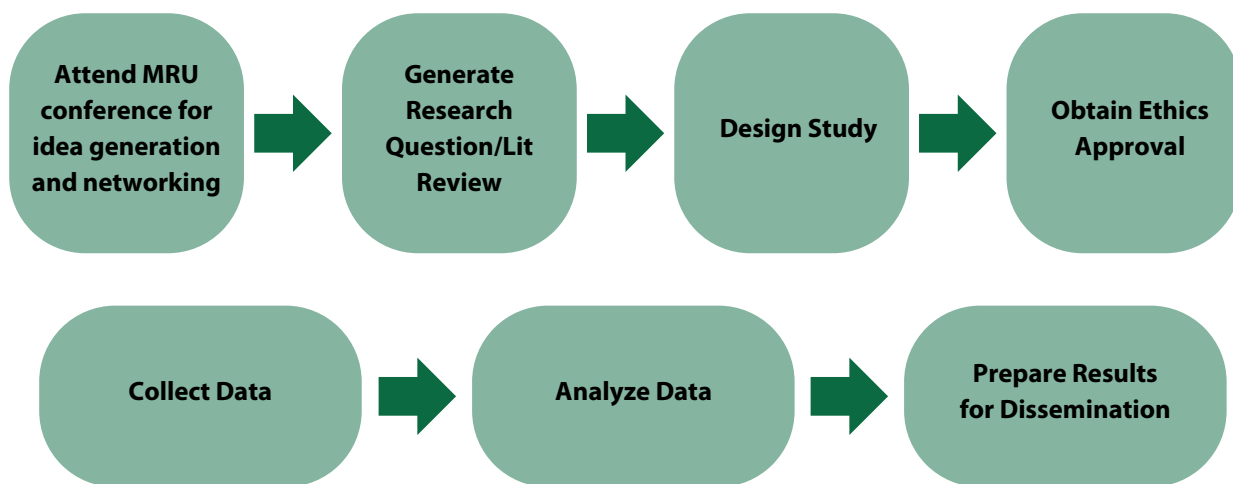
All grant recipients are expected to:

1. **Develop a NEW SoTL Research Project:** Initiate a Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) research project centered around a teaching and learning topic relevant to your classroom.
2. **Complete the TCPS 2: CORE-2022 Certificate:** Successfully fulfill the TCPS 2: CORE-2022 certificate requirements, demonstrating your commitment to enhancing your teaching and research capabilities.
3. **Obtain Research Ethics Approval:** Secure the necessary research ethics approval for your project, ensuring your research is conducted ethically and responsibly.
4. **Provide Regular Reports:** Share the progress updates throughout the project, including a mid-project report in the first year (part 1) and a final report in the second year (part 2).
5. **Present your Final Project:** Present the results of your research at the Graham Centre for SoTL Shine Summit in the spring following the completion of your project.

Specifically:

Part 1: Submit a reflective account of your experience at the SoTL Symposium and elucidate how this experience will inform and enrich your research project. The reflection is due by January 31 following your attendance at the symposium.

Part 2: Provide a comprehensive final research project report, which should be submitted one month after the completion of the project, by September 30. This report should encapsulate your research findings and insights gathered throughout the project**.**

Attend MRU conference for idea generation and networking → **Generate Research Question/Lit Review** → **Design Study** → **Obtain Ethics Approval**

Collect Data → **Analyze Data** → **Prepare Results for Dissemination**

Evaluation Criteria

Applications for the SoTL Spark grant will undergo evaluation based on the following criteria:

1. **Potential for Teaching and Learning Impact:** The application will be assessed based on its potential to make a meaningful impact on teaching and learning.

2. **Alignment with the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Community:** The relevance of the proposed project to the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning community will be considered.

3. **Alignment with USask College and University Plan 2025:** The extent to which the project aligns with the goals and objectives outlined in the University of Saskatchewan's College and University Plan 2025 will be taken into account.

4. **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) and Indigenization Lens:** The application's consideration of an EDI lens, as well as its alignment with principles of Indigenization, will be important factors in the valuation process.

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SoTL Ignite Overview

The SoTL Ignite grants are designed to provide support to tenure track faculty members with a demonstrated track record in Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) research. An experienced SoTL researcher is defined as an individual who has previously served as Principal Investigator or Co-Principal Investigator on a successful grant, leading to at least one peer-reviewed publication or conference presentation. These grants are open to all tenure track faculty members at the University of Saskatchewan who are eligible to apply if a full-time member serves as the Primary Investigator (PI). Recipients of the grant must create a new research project, but it can be based on results from a previous project.

We strongly encourage applicants seeking a SoTL Ignite grant to explore collaborative opportunities by connecting with a partner within or between different colleges at the University of Saskatchewan. Collaborative endeavors can enhance the quality and impact of SoTL research, fostering innovation and cross-disciplinary insights.

Research fund accounts will not be opened until ethics has been received. A portion of the funds (up to 20%) can be requested for an advancement if required.
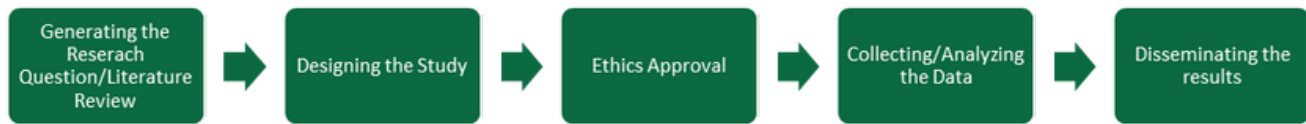
All grant recipients are expected to:

1. **Develop a SoTL Research Project:** Create a Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) research project focusing on a topic relevant to your classroom's teaching and learning.

2. **Complete the TCPS 2: CORE-2022 Certificate:** Successfully fulfill the TCPS 2: CORE-2022 certificate requirements, demonstrating your commitment to enhancing your teaching and research capabilities.

3. **Obtain Research Ethics Approval:** Secure the necessary research ethics approval for your project, ensuring your research is conducted ethically and responsibly.

4. **Provide Progress Reports:** Share progress updates throughout your project, including a mid-project report in the first year (part 1), and a final report in the second year (part 2).

Specifically:

Part 1: Reflect on how the research project is progressing and identify any necessary support for its completion.

Part 2: Provide a comprehensive final research project report, which should be submitted one month after the completion of the project, by September 30. This report should encapsulate your research findings and insights gathered throughout the project**.**

Generating the Reserach Question/Literature Review → Designing the Study → Ethics Approval → Collecting/Analyzing the Data → Disseminating the results

Evaluation Criteria

Applications for the SoTL Ignite grant will undergo evaluation based on the following comprehensive criteria:

1. **Explicit Focus on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning:** The application should demonstrate a clear and direct focus on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL).

2. **Well-Developed Rationale:** The project's rationale should be robust and explicitly elucidate how it will contribute to the SoTL community.

3. **Comprehensive Literature Review:** The application should include a thorough literature review that provides context and background for the proposed research.

4. **Methodological Soundness:** The study design should exhibit methodological rigor, including well-defined research questions, data collection, and data analysis procedures.

5. **Adherence to SoTL Best Practices:** The proposal should adhere to established principles of good SoTL practice, ensuring quality and integrity in the research.

6. **Realistic Timelines:** The application should present realistic and achievable timelines for the project's various stages.

7. **Effective Dissemination Plan:** A clear plan for sharing research findings both within the University of Saskatchewan (USask) and externally through SoTL conferences or journals should be articulated. Pertinent details about the intended publications or conference presentations should be provided.

8. **Thorough Budget Justification:** The budget should be justified in detail, with a clear alignment between budget items and the associated research activities. This alignment ensures that resources are allocated effectively and efficiently to support the research endeavor.

Future Grant Opportunities

While preparing the SoTL Ignite grant application, applicants may want to consider taking advantage of the other USask internal funding opportunities available.

- SSHRC Explore Grants provide up to $7000 of financial assistance over 24 months to support small scale research projects within the scope of SSHRC's Insight program.
- SSHRC Exchange Grants provide up to $5000 of financial assistance over 24 months to support knowledge exchange or mobilization activities within the scope of SSHRC's Connection or Knowledge Synthesis programs.
- Publication Fund provides funding up to $2000 to offset publishing costs, including open access fees, publishing subventions, and learned journal subsidies.

Information about other USask funding opportunities may be found at:
vpresearch.usask.ca/rasi/find-funding/usask-internal-grants-programs.php

How to write an Ignite Grant Budget

It is important to be as detailed in your budget justification as possible.

Step One:
Make a list of everything you plan to do within your research project and who is going to do it. Use your research design as a guide.

Step Two:
The Ignite grant is limited to a maximum of $10,000 so be very conscientious about what funds you may need for each part of the research process. If the costs of your project exceed this amount, you may need to reconsider an alternative, eliminate some items, or scale back the scope of the project.

Budget Item	# of Items	Cost per Item	Total Cost	Notes
Research Assistant Salary	12hrs/week x 8 weeks	$22.12/hr		Data Collection
Honorarium for participants				
Conference Fee	2	Approx $550	$1100	STLHE (June)
Flights	2 return			
Per Diem	6 days	$51/day	$306	4 days at conference (plus 2 travel day)
Hotel	5 days	$200/day	$1000	5 nights at conference
Total Cost				

Step Three:
Provide a brief budget justification for each item in your budget indicating why the costs are reasonable and necessary.

APPLY NOW

SoTL Flare Overview

The SoTL Flare Grant, inspired by the principles of the Jane and Ron Graham SoTL Centre, aims to support innovative Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) projects at the University of Saskatchewan (USASK). This grant, valued at $25,000, is designed to foster collaborative research among faculty members within a specific College or School at USask, addressing a significant teaching challenge unique to their discipline. Projects must focus on solving a significant teaching and learning challenge specific to the applicant's College or School. We recommend limiting the application to 5-6 faculty members to ensure the grant remains manageable. Additionally, we strongly encourage the inclusion of both undergraduate and graduate students in this application, aligning with the Student as Partners initiative and enhancing capacity in teaching and learning research.

Research fund accounts will not be opened until ethics has been received. A portion of the funds (up to 20%) can be requested for an advancement if required.
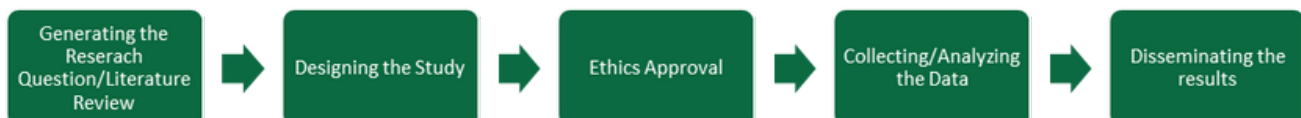
All grant recipients are expected to:

1. **Develop a SoTL Research Project:** Create a Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) research project focusing on a topic relevant to your classroom's teaching and learning.

2. **Complete the TCPS 2: CORE-2022 Certificate:** Successfully fulfill the TCPS 2: CORE-2022 certificate requirements, demonstrating your commitment to enhancing your teaching and research capabilities.

3. **Obtain Research Ethics Approval:** Secure the necessary research ethics approval for your project, ensuring your research is conducted ethically and responsibly.

4. **Provide Progress Reports:** Share progress updates throughout your project, including a mid-project report in the first year (part 1), and a final report in the second year (part 2).

Specifically:

Part 1: Reflect on how the research project is progressing and identify any necessary support for its completion.

Part 2: Provide a comprehensive final research project report, which should be submitted one month after the completion of the project, by September 30. This report should encapsulate your research findings and insights gathered throughout the project**.**

Grant Objectives

1. Encourage interdisciplinary collaboration among faculty members.
2. Address and solve a complex teaching challenge specific to a College or School.
3. Enhance the quality of teaching and learning through evidence-based research.
4. Promote the dissemination of successful SoTL practices across the university.

Eligibility Criteria

- The grant is open to groups of faculty researchers within any College or School at USask.
- Each College or School may submit **one** grant application. If multiple applications are proposed, the College or School must determine which one to submit. However, due to the size of the College of Arts and Science, **three** submissions will be accepted.
- All grant applications must include the Dean or Designate's letter of support.
- Projects must focus on solving a significant teaching and learning challenge specific to the applicant's College or School.
- Proposals should demonstrate a clear plan for collaboration and impact on teaching practices.

Examples of Complex Teaching Challenges

These are suggestions and not mandatory topics

- **Student Engagement in Large Classes:** Finding effective ways to engage and assess students in large lecture-based courses.
- **Keeping Up with Rapid Advancements:** Ensuring the curriculum stays current with the fast-paced development in AI technologies and methodologies.
- **Assessment of VR-based Learning**: Developing methods to assess student learning and engagement in VR environments effectively.
- **Indigenous Education:** Create assessment tools that respect and reflect Indigenous ways of knowing and learning.
- **Principles of Equity, Diversity & Education:** Implement and assess teaching methods that cater to a wide range of learning styles and backgrounds.

Application Process

1. **Proposal Submission:** Interested faculty groups must submit a detailed proposal outlining the teaching problem, research methodology, expected outcomes, and a budget plan.

2. **Well-Developed Rationale:** The project's rationale should be robust and explicitly elucidate how it will contribute to the SoTL community.

3. **Comprehensive Literature Review:** The application should include a thorough literature review that provides context and background for the proposed research.

4. **Methodological Soundness:** The study design should exhibit methodological rigor, including well-defined research questions, data collection, and data analysis procedures.

5. **Adherence to SoTL Best Practices:** The proposal should adhere to established principles of good SoTL practice, ensuring quality and integrity in the research.

6. **Realistic Timelines:** The application should present realistic and achievable timelines for the project's various stages.

7. **Effective Dissemination Plan:** A clear plan for sharing research findings both within the University of Saskatchewan (USask) and externally through SoTL conferences or journals should be articulated. Pertinent details about the intended publications or conference presentations should be provided.

8. **Thorough Budget Justification:** The budget should be justified in detail, with a clear alignment between budget items and the associated research activities. This alignment ensures that resources are allocated effectively and efficiently to support the research endeavor.

Evaluation Criteria

Applications for the SoTL Ignite grant will undergo evaluation based on the following comprehensive criteria:

1. **Explicit Focus on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning:** The application should demonstrate a clear and direct focus on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL).

2. **Well-Developed Rationale:** The project's rationale should be robust and explicitly elucidate how it will contribute to the SoTL community.

3. **Comprehensive Literature Review:** The application should include a thorough literature review that provides context and background for the proposed research.

4. **Methodological Soundness:** The study design should exhibit methodological rigor, including well-defined research questions, data collection, and data analysis procedures.

5. **Adherence to SoTL Best Practices:** The proposal should adhere to established principles of good SoTL practice, ensuring quality and integrity in the research.

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BE WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS