



ORGANIZATIONAL UNIT PROPOSAL
FORM

DIRECTIONS: *Use this form when proposing a new organizational unit, center, institute, department, school, or college.*

DATE OF REQUEST: May 12, 2020

INSTITUTION: University of Nevada, Reno

NAME OF PROPOSED UNIT: Guinn Center

DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION: August 1, 2020 (or upon approval)

<i>Date of AAC Approval:</i>
09-09-20
<i>Date of Board Approval:</i>

PART 1

A. Action requested

Request approval to locate the Guinn Center, an existing statewide, independent, nonpartisan, independently funded policy center, at the University of Nevada, Reno.

B. Brief description and purpose of proposed unit

In the past 10-15 years, Nevada has witnessed tremendous population growth and weathered a deep economic recession. The demographic changes and economic volatility have forced decision-makers in Nevada to address fiscal constraints, identify and weigh competing policy goals, and assess legislative priorities.

Consequently, in 2014, a group of Nevadans established the Kenny Guinn Center for Policy Priorities (“Guinn Center”), which seeks to improve the quality of policy discussions and public debate about critical public policy issues facing Nevada. The Guinn Center’s founders recognized that term limits, increasing partisanship, declining trust in institutions and media, geographic divides, and changes in the media landscape would make a statewide, nonpartisan policy institute a compelling and valuable proposition. The Guinn Center has hewed to its founding mission by advancing evidence-based policy solutions for Nevada through research, public engagement, and partnerships.

UNR has several existing centers and institutes. However, none are singularly focused on state and local public policy. The Guinn Center has established itself as a statewide resource in successfully bridging political, institutional and geographic divides. While the Guinn Center’s main office is located in Las Vegas, the organization has staff located in Reno and Las Vegas, and has hosted events and participated in meetings across the State. Its work considers the

perspectives and challenges of residents who live in both rural and urban areas. The Guinn Center's Board of Directors and Advisory Council reflect our geographic diversity.

To date, the Guinn Center has built a repository of credible research that has informed legislation and administrative policy reforms, strengthened its footprint around the state, and expanded its services and support of public, private, and nonprofit decision-makers in Nevada. The Guinn Center has become a critical resource to individuals and businesses in Nevada given its commitment to provide independent analysis and practical, actionable recommendations. In addition, the Guinn Center is committed to increasing public engagement in policy debates and the policy-making process. While the Guinn Center is not an advocacy group, the organization is committed to ensuring that stakeholders can use its research to become better advocates for their respective causes.

Moreover, the Guinn Center is establishing itself as a "policy lab" that works closely with practitioners to provide relevant analysis, develop and implement evidence-based programs, and test actionable solutions. For example, as part of this practice, the Guinn Center is developing a governance training program for school board trustees, in partnership with the Nevada Department of Education.

The Guinn Center's work aligns with UNR's strategic plans to sustain its "R1" classification (referenced below) and continue its commitment to produce high-quality research.

Discovery. "Create new knowledge through basic and applied research, scholarship, and artistry in strategically selected fields relevant to Nevada and its role in the wider world. Enhance the quality, value, and range of the University's research and artistry. Attain classification as a "Carnegie Research University/Very High." Invest in disciplinary and interdisciplinary research areas that build upon existing strength and that are responsive to emerging needs and opportunities."

The Guinn Center examines a broad range of policy challenges that affect the long-term economic growth of Nevada and the well-being of its residents and provides actionable policy recommendations informed by data and rigorous analysis. With over 60 reports published, its research products adhere to the high-quality assurance standards of universities, academia, and national think tanks (e.g., RAND Corporation) in that all its reports are peer-reviewed by subject-matter experts. Many of its policy reports have attracted national and local media attention and its recommendations have informed legislation and administrative policies. In several legislative sessions, the Guinn Center's research and data analysis were used to inform legislative debates.

The Guinn Center's work also aligns with UNR's strategic plan around "R1" efforts and the commitment to build community partnerships and improve the well-being of Nevada.

Engagement. "Strengthen the social, economic, and environmental wellbeing of Nevada citizens, communities, organizations, and governments through community outreach and reciprocal partnerships. Work in concert with government and industry to diversify and develop Nevada's economy and communities. Improve mental and physical health and quality of life for Nevada's diverse and growing population. Provide access to informal and formal learning and services for citizens

[.....].”

The Guinn Center has become the connective tissue across stakeholders in the private, public, and nonprofit sectors and throughout Nevada. Recognizing the value of collaboration and the importance of bridging Nevada’s policy and geographical divides, the Guinn Center has established formal and informal relationships with its university partners across departments and schools. At the same time, the Guinn Center has built strong partnerships with community organizations and has provided technical assistance, grant writing support, and data analysis.

- Guinn Center has had formal relationships (e.g., MOUs) with the UNR College of Business’ Department of Economics.
- Guinn Center has collaborated with the UNR Department of Economics, UNR School of Community Health Sciences, Joe Crowley Student Union, and the Desert Research Institute on grants, reports, and events, etc.
- Guinn Center has hosted undergraduate and graduate student interns and has had conversations about hosting faculty members as senior fellows.

Thus, the strategic plan of UNR aligns with the work of the Guinn Center. Collectively, we are working with the aim of marshaling and disseminating knowledge in ways that benefit Nevada. Placing the Guinn Center at UNR would establish an innovative structural arrangement that bridges geographical divides, people and ideas, challenges, and solutions.

The Guinn Center would be located at UNR. It will operate independently from the University with respect to its research and programming, but will otherwise be administered through the University’s Provost Office. The Center will be self-funded.

C. Outline plans for the success of the proposed unit

Through fastidious attention to its mission, the publication of high-quality research, and the development of strategic partnerships, the Guinn Center has built a repository of credible research, strengthened its footprint around the state, and expanded its services and support of decision-makers in Nevada.

The Guinn Center has become a critical resource to individuals, decision-makers, nonprofits, and businesses in Nevada. Like many nonpartisan policy institutes across the country, the Guinn Center is engaging with public sector, private industry, and nonprofit decision makers to identify, evaluate, and implement feasible policy solutions that are effective and scalable. Over the past five years, the Guinn Center has partnered with several government agencies around the Silver State to analyze problems and identify solutions. What it has learned is that there is significant need and tremendous opportunity to connect and support the intellectual knowledge located at UNR toward solving state and local problems.

The Guinn Center is unique in nature due to its statewide footprint. The Guinn Center will seek to leverage resources of the university and serve communities throughout Nevada. Given the Guinn Center’s experience in collaborating across geographic, political, and institutional divides and functioning as Nevada’s only statewide policy institute, the Guinn Center is well-positioned to continue leading and supporting partnerships across the state and stakeholder groups. As part of UNR, the Guinn Center will foster additional collaboration across the campus and facilitate

community engagement activities. The Guinn Center will bring to bear its extensive relationships with rural stakeholders, state and local agencies, and nonprofits.

The success of the Guinn Center will be based on the funding support received from external sources. The Guinn Center will leverage its work and partnerships to secure local and national competitive grants that seek to address policy challenges facing Nevada, test and evaluate policy solutions, and provide educational training and research opportunities. Building on the national reputation of UNR's "R1" status, the Guinn Center would be the vehicle through which applied research and academic scholarship work in tandem to improve Nevada. The Guinn Center regularly hosts UNR student interns and has collaborated with UNR faculty members on research and events that bring the research to legislators, agencies, and the public.

Philanthropic support, in excess of \$250,000, will be in place to facilitate the transition to UNR to cover the initial transition period. This, combined with existing resources and contract work, will provide the financial stability needed to fund the Guinn Center's operations. UNR will not fund the Center. Upon approval by the NSHE Board of Regents, the Center will expand its efforts to serve the university communities and the surrounding statewide and local communities. These efforts will be focused around supporting interdisciplinary collaborative research and scholarship, facilitating policy conversations, providing capacity-building trainings, and training the next generation of policy experts.

PART II

A. Mission statement

The Guinn Center advances evidence-based policy solutions through research, public engagement, and strategic partnerships.

B. Goals and objectives

i. Expand Applied Research

The focus of the Guinn Center is to conduct research and examine a broad range of policy challenges that affect the long-term economic growth of Nevada and the well-being of its residents and identify actionable policy solutions informed by data and rigorous analysis. To date, the Guinn Center has examined the following topics: health outcomes, P-20 education, fiscal and tax policy, economic development, workforce development, housing, 2020 Census, energy, ballot initiatives, governance, changing demographics, retirement security, etc. Their team works closely with private, public, and nonprofit stakeholders to ensure that their analysis is relevant, and their recommendations are both practical and actionable. The Guinn Center, a policy lab, seeks to test and evaluate effective policy solutions by working closely with government, researchers, and the private and nonprofit sectors. The Guinn Center's research has informed local administrative policies and legislation and has been funded by state agencies, nonprofits, and local and national foundations.

The Guinn Center research team is committed to providing a collaborative research platform and, as such, the Center has partnered with university faculty in several departments and schools on several projects and grant applications. The Guinn Center will continue to seek out and facilitate collaborations across departments and across the university campus. The Center will continue to

provide opportunities to undergraduate and graduate students (and faculty) for collaboration and the development of projects that address our state's problems. As a statewide organization, the Guinn Center will support the expansion of collaborative opportunities across the university campus and to other NSHE institutions.

ii. Expand Community Engagement and Promote Service

The Guinn Center seeks to promote additional collaboration across UNR and to facilitate collaboration between the university and community stakeholders around the State. The goal is to leverage university expertise and connect and engage with the private and nonprofit sectors and decision-makers to address and solve some of the state's most pressing problems and challenges. Through these efforts, the Guinn Center will facilitate and strengthen university engagement with the broader community and its stakeholders (e.g., public, elected officials, and not-for-profit groups); as such the Guinn Center will organize and host public events such as lectures, conferences, and colloquia. The Guinn Center will lead and facilitate conversations that bridge geographic, political, and institutional divides. Recognizing the value of collaboration and the importance of bridging Nevada's policy and geographical divides, the Guinn Center has established formal and informal relationships with university partners across departments and schools and with the broader community. The Guinn Center has built strong partnerships with community organizations, state agencies, and decision-makers across Nevada and has provided technical assistance, grant-writing support, and data analysis and research. The Guinn Center will expand these relationships, leveraging the expertise that is housed at UNR.

iii. Support Teaching

The Guinn Center exists as an independent research and outreach initiative and, as such, it will not be directly involved in classroom teaching nor does it intend to offer any graduate certificates. That said, the Guinn Center senior research staff, who have taught at NSHE institutions, are available to address teaching needs at UNR in several disciplines (e.g., political science, public administration, education). The Guinn Center will serve as an additional platform for experiential learning by undergraduate, graduate, and post-doctoral students. Through its existing MOU at UNR, we can provide internships to students, summer research opportunities, and opportunities for post-doctoral and faculty scholars.

C. Major participants or collaborators

i. Internal to campus

The Guinn Center will continue to work with its existing partners at UNR. Among these are the College of Business, the Department of Economics, the School of Social Work, the School of Community Health Sciences, the UNR School of Medicine, the Nevada Institute for Children's Research and Policy, and the International Gaming Institute. The Guinn Center's team will seek to expand partnerships and research collaborations with additional programs.

ii. External to campus

The Guinn Center has partnered with scores of organizations around the Silver State and across the United States. Their team will continue to strengthen those collaborations and develop programming and training that addresses their needs. A selection of past and future partners include: Desert Research Institute, National Judicial College, Washoe County Health District, Washoe County, City of Reno, Nevada Grant Office, Nevada Department of Health and Human

Services, Nevada Department of Education, Nevada Governor’s Council on Development Disabilities, Community Foundation of Western Nevada, Truckee Meadows Community College, Nevada System of Higher Education, Opportunity Alliance, Nevada Housing Coalition, Washoe County School District, White Pine School District, Elko Chamber of Commerce, Clark County School District, Charter School Association of Nevada, State Public Charter School Authority, Casey Foundation, Reno Police Department, and Sparks Police Department.

D. Evidence of contact within and between affected academic units

Not Applicable. The Guinn Center will report for administrative purposes to the Executive Vice President & Provost. The Guinn Center is not seeking to affiliate with a specific department or school at UNR.

E. Proposed physical location

The Guinn Center will be provided office space on the UNR campus.

F. Proposed organizational structure

The Guinn Center will be administered by UNR. The proposed organizational structure of the Guinn Center includes a Director, an Assistant Director, and several subject-matter experts (e.g., Director of Education Policy, Director of Economic Policy, etc.), as well as a Marketing Director and an Administrative Assistant. As a university initiative, the Guinn Center will have an advisory group. The advisory group will provide oversight and guidance on Center initiatives and will be responsible for developing guidelines for the Center; these guidelines will be subject to approval by the Office of the Provost. The Guinn Center will report to the Executive Vice President & Provost for administrative purposes.

G. Activities to be sponsored (e.g. courses, seminars, research, and outreach) – indicate if courses or seminars will be offered through the proposed unit.

The Guinn Center is a research and public engagement initiative. As such, sponsored activities will focus on conducting data analysis and research, providing research support to faculty and students, convening seminars, organizing events, workshops, and panels, and trainings. The seminars, workshops, and outreach activities will be open to public and professionals alike and may require attendees to pay a fee to defray the cost of hosting such activities. The Center will not offer courses for academic credit but plans to offer trainings that may count towards continuing education requirements (e.g., continuing legal education).

H. Resource Analysis – source of funds necessary for the proposed change (enrollment-generated state funds, existing funds, grants, other state funds)

Philanthropic support, in excess of \$250,000, will be in place to facilitate the transition to UNR. This, combined with existing resources and contract work, will provide the financial stability needed to fund the Guinn Center’s operations. UNR will provide office space for Guinn Center employees, but no institutional funds will be provided to the Guinn Center. Additional philanthropic support to expand and enhance the Guinn Center programs and initiatives will continue to be sought by the Guinn Center if the affiliation of the Guinn Center with UNR is formally approved by the Board of Regents. Based on the past six years of activity, it is anticipated that the Guinn Center will continue to generate a significant share of its income from grants activity and contracted (directed) work.

I. Projected Budget – identify portions of costs which will require state resources, grants, gifts and/or contracts. See Attachment 1.

(Please attach any supporting documentation (i.e. support letters from community, industry))

In seeking affiliation with UNR, the Guinn Center will not request financial support from UNR. Founded in 2014, the Guinn Center has been entirely self-funded. Over the past six years, the Guinn Center’s revenues have increased significantly (see Table 1) during each calendar year. During this period, the Guinn Center has become less reliant on the support of its founding board members and, instead, has diversified its funding base with most of its revenues coming from contract work, corporate donations, and awards from national foundations. The Guinn Center has received a clean financial audit every year for which it has completed one (past 3 years).

Table 1. Guinn Center Revenues, 2014-2020

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Total Revenue	\$ 81,814	\$382,627	\$320,783	\$444,233	\$689,334	\$504,273	\$814,500

The preliminary budget for a 3-year period for supporting the activities of the Guinn Center is shown in the attached table. The funds will be generated from Guinn Center internal sources, grants, and/or contracted work. The Guinn Center has received commitments for \$250,000 in donated funds in 2020 to support the transition of the Center to UNR.

ATTACHMENT 1 BUDGET

Proposed Budget			
	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Revenue			
Cash Reserves	\$ 145,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 25,000
Private funding*	\$ 250,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 100,000
Contracted work	\$ 125,000	\$ 200,000	\$ 250,000
National grants	\$ 260,000	\$ 260,000	\$ 300,000
Public funding	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Event sponsorships	\$ 20,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000
TOTAL REVENUE	\$ 800,000	\$ 690,000	\$ 705,000
Expenditures			
Guinn Center Personnel Expenses**	\$ 550,000	\$ 600,000	\$ 625,000
Stipends for Faculty Research (\$5K each)	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000
Undergraduate Intern stipends (\$1K each)	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000
Graduate Intern stipends (\$2.5K each)	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000
Office Space at UNR	in-kind	in-kind	in-kind
Events (speaker fees, travel, food)	\$ 20,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000
Travel	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$ 604,000	\$ 664,000	\$ 689,000

* The Guinn Center has secured more than \$100,000 in private funding annually for the past six years. However, given its recent capital campaign to support the Guinn Center’s transition to UNR, we present a conservative number for private funding revenues for the next two years.

** Guinn Center Personnel Expenses are estimates only. These figures will be updated following a review by UNR Human Resource Departments.

Appendix A. Collaboration

The Guinn Center (GC) has collaborated with and/or has plans to collaborate with the following individuals, listed below with school and/or department affiliation:

A. Department of Economics, College of Business

1. Mehmet Tosun: Hosted MOU between Guinn Center and UNR Department of Economics, College of Business. Partnered to co-host two public engagement events on property taxes; collaborated to co-publish a policy report on property taxes
2. Elliott Parker: Former member of the Guinn Center Advisory Council; helped facilitate a MOU between Guinn Center and Department of Economics; served as external reviewer for several Guinn Center policy reports
3. Julie Hogan: Collaborated on a state request for proposals (RFP)
4. Collaborated with Loretta Singletary and Peter Toth, as part of Desert Research Institute NSF-grant application

B. School of Medicine

1. John Packham: Have had conversations around health-related policies and workforce issues; have had preliminary conversations about collaborating around “social determinants of health” analysis and a presentation before the Legislative Committees on Health

C. School of Social Work

1. Mary Hylton and Jill Manit: Discussed co-sponsorship and joint hosting of capacity building workshop for nonprofits and state agencies
2. Jennifer McClendon: Had preliminary conversations about collaborating around revenue policies, data analysis, nonprofit capacity building

D. School of Community Health Sciences

1. Dr. Trudy Larson: Had preliminary conversation about collaborating.
2. Presented at training organized by Nevada Public Health Training Center; signed MOU to place interns; have presented at several undergraduate classes

E. Latino Research Center

1. Julie Lucero: Working with Dr. Lucero as part of the the Nevada Hispanic Legislative Committee on COVID19 and Digital Divide

F. Nevada Center for Excellence in Disabilities: Interviewed NCED staff (e.g., Mary Bryant) for two reports funded by the Nevada Governor’s Council on Development Disabilities

G. College of Education

1. Cynthia Alcantar: Included as panelist on NSHE conference on Hispanic Serving Institutions

H. Joe Crowley Student Union: Worked with Chuck Price and Helena Farrar to host three public engagement events at the Crowley Student Union

I. Department of Political Science: Hosted student intern

J. Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering: Collaborated with Krishna Pagilla, as part of Desert Research Institute NSF-grant application

K. Environmental Sciences Program: Collaborated with Stanley Omaye, as part of Desert Research Institute NSF-grant application