**SOTA Student Interdisciplinary Research Grants**

The School of the Arts is offering funding for arts students to conduct interdisciplinary creative and scholarly research projects focusing on a theme.

Grants, focusing on a theme(see below), in the amount of up to $1,000 with additional funds for expenses related to the public component of the project up to $150 are available.

**There is one funding period per year. Applications are due the day before Thanksgiving break each fall.**

You will choose the theme based on the Bold Aspirations Strategic Initiatives. Please indicate your choice on your grant application.

Theme Choices:

* Sustaining the Planet, Powering the World
* Promoting Well-Being, Finding Cures
* Building Communities, Expanding Opportunites
* Harnessing Information, Multiplying Knowledge

See the Provost’s website (http://www.provost.ku.edu/strategic-initiatives) for additional information.

***Program Overview***

* Students should apply for the theme they wish to explore in their scholarly or creative research.
* All undergraduate and graduate students majoring in one of the departments in the School of the Arts are eligible to apply. Students may receive a grant each year.
* Students must submit a clearly-written proposal for the research they intend to conduct.
* If funded, students will be provided with a contact faculty member outside the School of the Arts who has expertise in the theme and who will act as a resource in further developing and executing the project.
* Students must have a faculty sponsor from their home department and one other faculty referee.
* To support student activities and faculty research, the faculty sponsors (from SOTA department and outside the school) will each receive $250 to assist their research or teaching activities and the departments will receive $500 in the form of Differential Funding for each successful student grant.
* As part of the project, students must plan to include a public component such as a performance, exhibition, screening, or presentation - appropriate to the discipline and the project.
* The SOTA Student Board will evaluate all proposals following a blind review process.
* Following completion of the project, students must write a short one-page report discussing and reflecting on what they accomplished and what they learned as a result of the project. Images documenting the completed project may be requested.

**SOTA Student Interdisciplinary Research Grants (SIRG)**

***Information and Application Form***

***I. General Information***

The arts have a role to play in framing, interpreting, and solving the pressing challenges of our day. The Student Interdisciplinary Research Grants (SIRG) provide support for original, independent creative and scholarly research by undergraduate and graduate students majoring in the departments in the School of the Arts, under the general guidance of an arts faculty member and in consultation with an individual outside school whose research focuses on the designated theme. Several overarching goals provide a framework for these grants:

* To provide students with support and opportunities to work on creative and scholarly projects outside of a scheduled class with feedback from a SOTA faculty sponsor and a faculty member outside the department whose research focuses on the designated theme.
* To encourage students to explore topics of relevance to KU and our broader society.
* To foster students’ interdisciplinary exploration and collaboration.
* To facilitate students’ professional development in the arts.

These grants are not intended to provide faculty members with assistants, but students may well be associated with faculty research projects as independent investigators. SIRGs are awarded on the merit of the applicant's proposal, the applicant's academic record, and recommendations from faculty members who are familiar with the applicant and the proposed project. For the purpose of this competition, 'research' should not be construed too narrowly but can incorporate a variety of creative and scholarly methods. SIRGs are for the support of independent projects that constitute work that is original and substantive given the standards and objectives of the field. Furthermore, each SIRG will focus on a selected theme of relevance to the School and University. The SIRGs are not intended, for example, to support trips to workshops or the like; something original has to be discovered or created.

**Grant Amounts**

Grants up to $1,000 are provided from SOTA Differential Funding to conduct traditional scholarly research or complete creative projects in dance, film and media studies, theatre, and visual arts.

* Additional funding may be available for expenses related to the public component of the project, up to $150.
* Students must use these funds to directly support their research and its dissemination.
* SOTA faculty who sponsor a student project will be provided with $250 to assist their research or teaching activities. The faculty member who serves as the outside expert consultant and resource for the student-researcher will also receive $250 to assist with their research or teaching.
* The student recipient’s department will also receive an additional $500 in Differential Funding for other activities, projects, materials, or equipment to support student learning and professional development.

To be eligible you must be either an undergraduate or graduate student in one of the departments in the School of the Arts. You must be enrolled full-time at the time you apply for a SIRG and must intend to be enrolled full-time during the semester you conduct your project. If you think an exception should be made, or if you have questions about your eligibility, contact Dr. Liz Kowalchuk, Associate Dean, School of the Arts, 200 Strong Hall, (785) 864-3661.

***Each SIRG proposal must be sponsored by a member of the School of the Arts faculty who has read and approved the proposal and who agrees to oversee the conduct and completion of the project****.* Recipients will be selected by the SOTA Student Advisory Board, composed of students representing all departments in the school. Decisions of the committee are final. Applicants will be informed of the committee's decisions before the end of the semester they apply.

Note: *Grants may be considered taxable income to parents or to students who have “independent” financial aid status. Special tax rules, which vary by country, may apply to international students. Furthermore, students may be required to pay all outstanding KU fees or tuition prior to receiving a SIRG to support their projects.*

***II. The Application***

A SIRG application consists of:

1. A completed application cover page (see form below).
2. A typewritten proposal *not to exceed four single-spaced pages* (following the guidelines in section IV, below). Use a 12-point font.
3. A completed budget page (see below).
4. Two supporting letters from members of the faculty (not graduate student instructors), one of whom is the faculty sponsor, and the other of whom is in the general area of your discipline.
5. Both letters must be accompanied by a signed letter of reference form (attached). **Applicants are responsible for collecting the reference letters and turning them in to the School of the Arts *by December 4, 2013 at 5:00 PM*** and signed across the seal by the recommender.

In special cases, the application may also involve other items:

1. *If* you are submitting a proposal involving creative work, you may submit DVDs or slides of your previous work. This is not required, but it may help reviewers better understand the proposal.
2. *If* you have previously received a SIRG you *must* provide a statement showing why you believe you should be awarded another grant. Summarize what was accomplished under the previous grant and explain how the current project differs from the earlier one.

You should deliver the above items to the School of the Arts, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Strong Hall, Room 200, ***by 4:00 p.m. on December 4, 2013.***

***III. Evaluation Criteria***

Proposals will be evaluated by the following criteria, all of which should be addressed in the proposal:

1. The project's potential contribution to knowledge related to the theme from an arts perspective;
2. The likelihood of completion within the available time and budget;
3. The student's qualifications, based on ability and experience, to complete the proposed research project successfully;
4. The project's educational value for the student (professional development);
5. The sponsor's willingness and availability to oversee the research and its completion.

***IV. The Proposal***

Make clear what will be investigated or created and why. Your proposal is the basis for evaluation of your project. An outstanding academic record and glowing recommendations cannot overcome the deficiencies of a poor proposal. Your proposal should be clearly written, substantive and detailed***, and also understandable by an intelligent non-specialist.*** (For example, your proposal will be read by students in the arts, but the reviewers will not necessarily be in the particular department or sub-discipline of the project.) Avoid technical jargon, acronyms, etc. ***The Committee strongly advises that you seek the advice of your faculty sponsor as you prepare the proposal. Have her or him read your drafts and the final version submitted.*** *Your proposal should be at least two, but no longer than four pages, and it should be organized to include the following material:*

***A. Project description***: Identify the aim of your project and explain how you intend to accomplish that aim *giving special attention to what you will actually do* during the grant period. A typical project description will contain the following items:

1. A 1-2 sentence summary of purpose of the project;
2. Introduction/background/context (i.e, what is currently known? Why is it important to know more? How might the arts be uniquely placed to respond to the problem?);
3. The question you are asking, the aim of your project (connect it directly to the theme);
4. Significance to the arts*.* Make clear what will be studied or created and why. This is important, both to those who are in your field and to those who are outside it;
5. Methods. How will you do the research or project? This is an essential section. No matter how wonderful your aim, or how significant the possible results, the proposal will not be judged as strong unless it is clear that you know what you will be doing. A timeline can be included. Also, if the project is part of a larger research program or a long-term interest, make clear what part of the larger whole is to be supported by the SIRG and completed during the term of the grant.
6. If your project involves the use of human subjects, indicate how you will meet the requirements of the KU Human Subjects Committee (HSCL). Consult your sponsor for assistance with this. Some information is available at <http://www.rcr.ku.edu/~rcr/hscl/about_hscl.shtml> .
7. Include references to the material you are citing.

***B. Significance to the applicant****:* Explain how the project will contribute to your development in the arts (preparation for graduate study or career?) and also what you propose to do with your results or final product. What public component will you include so that others can learn about your project (performance, exhibition, presentation, publication, poster series, workshop, or other? Where? How?)

***C. Applicant's qualifications***: Describe the background and preparation that qualify you for this project. You may wish to mention past research, independent study, courses taken in the area of the proposed research, bibliographic or other background research already done, related projects already completed, language or laboratory skills, etc. In short, show the Selection Committee how prepared you are to undertake the project.

These guidelines are intended to help you prepare a good proposal. They are not meant to confuse or constrain. Where they are not applicable to your project, consult with your faculty sponsor and use your best judgment. Feel free to consult with Liz Kowalchuk, Associate Dean, School of the Arts at kowalchu@ku.edu or (785) 864-3661.

***V. Advice on Writing the Research Proposal***

*The following advice is meant to supplement and is not meant to replace the suggested format and material outlined in Section IV above.*

Research topics in the arts are sometimes difficult to put into words. Nevertheless, explaining the meaning of a project and submitting written proposals are essential parts of what it means to be a professional in the arts today. We hope the special advice below may help you to write your application to ensure that you represent your proposal well and that you cover the necessary material that will allow a full and fair evaluation of it by the Review Committee. The pointers assume that you have a generalized **topic** that connects to the **theme** such as, for instance, “How X impacts a local neighborhood” or “The story of X community” or “Engaging audience in X”. The pointers also assume that you have a specific task that can be called a research **proposal** within that topic, such as, “To Create a Series of Paintings” or “Make a documentary film” or “Study plays by X and create a performance based on X current event” or “Choreograph a dance that responds to X issue in Kansas”, etc.

Use the **advice pointers** on the website to elaborate on this task. Remember that you should be trying to convince the Review Committee of the value of your project. Some of the members of that Committee will not know your field of study. They will understand that a good research proposal involves the undertaking of actions that result in the making of new knowledge or a new understanding of old knowledge.

***VI. Research Reports***

Students who receive SIRGs are required to file a brief one-page report on the outcomes of their research by the end of the grant period (Reports are due: June 15, 2013). We may also ask you for images associated with your public component (if applicable).