

Call for Proposals

Graduate Student Summer Minigrants for Multidisciplinary Research on COVID-19 and its Impacts (MRCI)

Funding Period

June 22 – September 22, 2020

The MRCI Graduate Student Minigrant program supports research and creative projects by individual graduate students or teams of UCSB graduate students during the 2020 Summer Session that provide insight into COVID-19 and its impacts. The grant program encourages applications from a wide variety of disciplines to explore the many dimensions of impact.

The purpose of the grant program is not only to fund valuable research and creative projects but also to create a multi-disciplinary community that allows graduate students to learn from each other about different research approaches and about communicating research to a variety of audiences.

To foster this community, the MRCI program will hold a series of webinars as part of the proposal and research funding process. Awardees will also participate in discussions and share their final research findings with the community.

Goals of the Minigrants

- To encourage and enable graduate students to use their disciplinary expertise to produce research and creative projects that explore, analyze, and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and its impacts on society
- To create a multidisciplinary graduate-student community through intellectual dialogue about research and creative projects related to the COVID-19 pandemic
- To enhance the communication skills of graduate students, especially around discussing their work in multi- and interdisciplinary contexts
- To generate research and creative activity that could contribute to degree milestones and that would provide additional learning and experience
- To seed the creation of grant proposals, articles, works of art, or other scholarly products by graduate students

Funding Details

- Award period: June 22 – September 22, 2020
- Individual or collaborative grant proposals accepted
- Award: \$2000 stipend for each awardee, paid at end of June. The stipend is intended to be supplemental to other summer funding. In addition, the award may include funding for direct project research costs (up to \$500). However, given budgetary uncertainties, these additional direct research cost funds are not guaranteed.

Proposal Development

Proposal deadline: June 1, 2020

Student Eligibility Criteria

- Currently enrolled in doctoral, MFA, or MESM programs
- Registered full-time in spring 2020
- In good academic standing
- Within time-to-degree and time-to-advancement, after the application of the exceptional one-year extension granted by the Graduate Council in Spring 2020

Proposal components:

- Contact information page
 - Name, degree program, department, faculty project mentor
- Project description (2 pages, single spaced)
 - The project description must include a description of a deliverable that will be the output of the project (e.g., grant proposal, paper, work of art), as well as a clearly stated research question or proposal for creative activity (see selection criteria below)
 - If any research compliance or safety approvals are required, such as Human Subjects Committee approval, describe your plan for obtaining those approvals and how that process fits into your project timeline
- Statement of support from a faculty member, confirming commitment to act as faculty mentor (1 page)
- Budget and justification, if research funds are being requested (1 page)
 - Budget for project expenses (up to \$500 for direct research costs; however, given budgetary uncertainties, these funds are not guaranteed.)
 - The budget justification should explain why the funds are needed and how the cost was determined.

Allowable budget expenses include:

- * Payments of human subjects
- * Survey expenses
- * Materials for research or creative activities (including software)
- * Undergraduate assistance
- * Travel (allowable if travel restrictions are lifted and in accord with policy and safety; use [Academic Senate guidelines](#) for travel expenses)

Criteria for Proposal Selection:

- Originality of idea and distinctness from ongoing research projects in the student's research group
- Clearly developed research question or proposal for creative activity
- Scope and feasibility of implementation plan for the 3-month timeframe
- Promise of contribution to research or creative activity
- Statement of support from student's faculty mentor
- Priority will be given to students that need to reshape their research trajectories due to limits put on their research by the pandemic, a point which should be addressed in the mentor's letter
- Participation in proposal development activities

Submission:

All proposals should be submitted to graddeans@graddiv.ucsb.edu. The four proposal components (contact information, project description, faculty support letter, research compliance statement, and budget/justification) should be submitted as a single PDF document.

Questions:

For additional information, please contact graddeans@graddiv.ucsb.edu.

Proposal Development Workshops | Thursday, May 21 | 1:30 to 3 p.m.

We will give a brief overview of the minigrant program and highlight the key elements in the call for proposals. Afterward, we will transition into walking you through what the review committee considers vital for a strong proposal. First, we will break down the evaluation criteria so that applicants understand what the evaluators are looking for. With this information in mind, we will then explore exercises that will allow you to transform your ideas into a proposal format that strategically addresses the criteria. Once you have an idea of what your proposal strategy is, we will proceed to outline the various sections of the proposal and offer models on how to write them well. [Click here for more information and to register for the workshop.](#)

Proposal Awards

Notification of Awards: Recipients will be notified by: June 19th at the latest

Requirements for Recipients::

- Participation in the MRCI Collaborative, including synchronous and asynchronous discussions and other activities
- Written 2-page report on activities and outcomes (due October 1)
- 1-page reflection on multidisciplinary interaction and its impact on the project and the student's long-term research goals (due October 1)
- Participation in the Fall MRCI Symposium: Date to be determined, may be virtual or face-to-face as needed

ABOUT THE MRCI COLLABORATIVE

The MRCI Collaborative is a forum to support the development and exchange of research ideas among MRCI mini-grant recipients. Activities will include:

- Meeting twice in the summer to discuss progress, challenges and research communication
- Asynchronous communication based on group needs
- Encouragement of small group interaction based on prominent themes (e.g., recovery, response, trauma, community, political upheaval, innovation, documentation, human experience and behavior, social justice, public policy, environmental impact, socio-economic changes, human health, medicine, technology, data science, education, etc.)
- Workshops on research communication (in oral and written formats)
- Small-group support for oral or written presentation of research