

# The Small Research Grants Program for Gallaudet Faculty & Staff and Students

The Small Grants Program fosters the research activity of full-time Gallaudet University and Clerc Center faculty and staff, as well as University students, by supporting studies with relatively small funding requirements and durations of a year or less.

## Small Grants:

- Application Guideline
- Application Form
- Project Summary
- Project Proposal
- Budget Statement
- Proposal Review and  
Use of Feedback from  
Reviewers
- Other Related Policies
- Final Report

## Institutional Review Board (IRB) Approval Letter

## Datelines:

Accept throughout the year

### ***Scope of the Program***

The specific focus of the funding program is research. Research is defined as any investigation likely to add to the knowledge base in an academic field. This can include replications and pilot studies. Training and curriculum development projects are normally not considered research, *per se*. Thus, they are not supported by this funding program unless they contribute to a research purpose, for example, testing the effectiveness of one training technique compared to another. The Program spans all academic disciplines and areas whether in the liberal arts, fine arts, or the social, physical, or behavioral sciences. Dissertation and thesis studies are welcome from students enrolled in Gallaudet graduate programs, as well as from Gallaudet faculty or staff enrolled in graduate programs elsewhere. Undergraduate students are also eligible to participate.

### ***Typical Eligible Expenditures:***

Testing materials, travel and lodging for data collection, payment to subjects. Expenditures **not** eligible include salary or stipend for investigators, costs of travel to present research findings, and costs of preparing the research report.

### ***Funding Limits per Project.***

#### ***A) Students (projects fulfilling degree or course requirements)***

Regular Small Grant: \$2,500

Mini-Grant\*(Streamlined application and review process): \$750

#### ***B) Faculty/Staff***

Regular Small Grant: \$5,000

Mini-Grant: \$1,000

*\*The Mini-Grant is a special category of Small Grant intended to streamline the application and review process, when funding requirements are especially modest.*

### ***When to Apply:***

Applications can be received and funded any time throughout the Gallaudet University fiscal year (beginning October 1st and continuing until the following September 30th) until funds are exhausted. Because spending must occur before the end of the fiscal year, applications ought to be submitted no later than May 1st.

Electronically submit completed documents by sending a Microsoft Word file to [small.grants@Gallaudet.edu](mailto:small.grants@Gallaudet.edu). The completed printed Application Form and **one** copy of the IRB Approval Letter\* (if human subjects are involved) should be sent to GRI. As an alternative, submit five copies each of the Application Form, Project Summary, Project Proposal, and Budget Statement and one copy of the IRB approval letter to GRI.

# Small Grants Application Guideline

## A. Preparation of the Application

An application consists of the following elements:

1. a completed ***Application Form with signatures***
2. a ***Project Summary*** no longer than 100 words
3. a ***Project Proposal*** of six double-spaced pages or fewer, two pages for Mini-Grants
4. a ***Budget Statement*** of two pages or fewer
5. if human subjects are involved, an ***Institutional Review Board (IRB) Approval Letter***. IRB approval is not required before submitting a project for Small Grants funding; however, funds cannot be made available until the applicant provides a copy of the IRB letter of approval.

## B. Submission of Materials

Electronically submit a Project Summary, a Project Proposal, and a Budget Statement by sending a Microsoft Word file to [small.grants@Gallaudet.edu](mailto:small.grants@Gallaudet.edu). The completed printed Application Form and **one** copy of the IRB Approval Letter should be sent to GRI. As an alternative, submit five copies each of the Application Form, Project Summary, Project Proposal, and Budget Statement and one copy of the IRB Approval Letter to GRI.

## C. Contacts

Questions related to the Small Grants Program may be addressed to Dr. Leonard Kelly, Leonard.Kelly@Gallaudet.edu, Room S-429 HMB, (202) 651-5949 (Voice/TDD).

# Small Grants Application Form

The Application Form of a student must include the signature of the faculty member who is supervising the project. The signature indicates that the faculty member has read the student proposal and considered it in relation to the Small Grants review criteria. The signature of the Budget Unit Head is required of all proposals submitted by Gallaudet faculty and staff members, including those proposals in the Student category.

**1. Project Title:**

**2. Amount of Funds Requested: \$**

**3. Project Dates:** Start \_\_\_\_\_ End \_\_\_\_\_

**4. Principal Investigator**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Other investigators, if any (names only): \_\_\_\_\_

**5. For students in particular:** Indicate circumstances, if any, that might warrant a relatively quick review of your proposal. Such circumstances could include an approaching deadline. If none, indicate so by writing N/A.

**6. If the study involves human subjects, the IRB application\* is (check one):**

approved       pending approval       N/A

**7. If dissertation or thesis: what is the status of your project with your faculty committee?**

approved       pending approval       Other \* specify): \_\_\_\_\_

**8. Predicted use of the project results:** Please identify the product in which the findings of this research will be used. (e.g., book, chapter, paper presentation, dissertation, database)

**Expected date that the foregoing product will be completed:**

**9. SIGNATURES:**

Principal Investigator: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

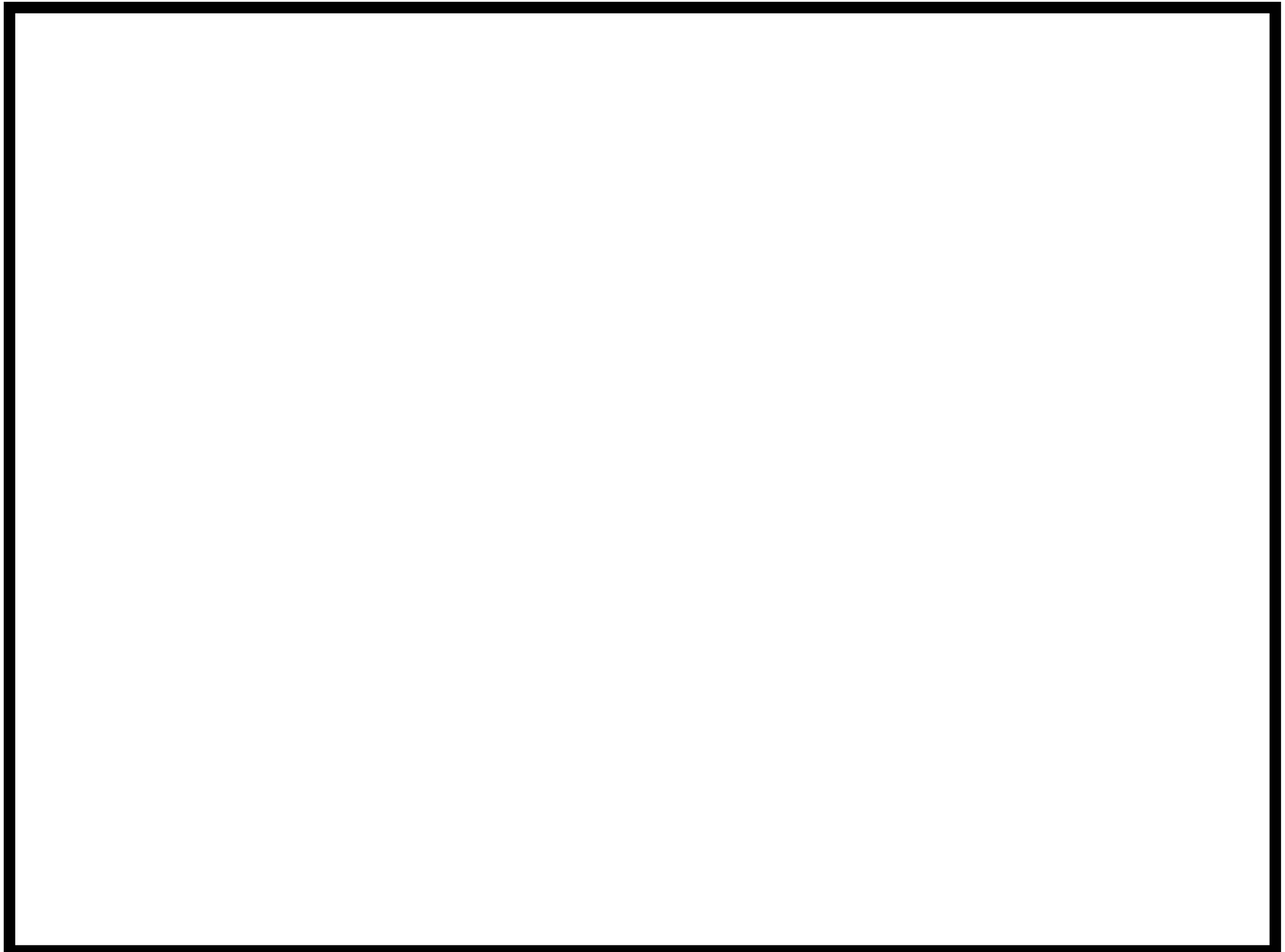
If Faculty or Staff, approved by Budget Unit Head: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

If Student, approved by Supervising Faculty Member\*\*: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*Signature indicates that the supervising faculty member has read the student's project proposal in relation to the three review criteria of the Small Grants Program.

# Small Grants Project Summary (Abstract)

In 100 words or fewer, the Project Summary should state the title, the explicit purpose or question of the project, explain the significance of that question, and describe the methods and activities that will respond to the research question.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thick black border, intended for the user to write the project summary. The box is centered on the page and occupies most of the lower half of the document.

# Small Grants Project Proposal

The maximum length of the project proposal is **six double-spaced pages (two pages for Mini-Grants)**, and this page limitation places a premium on the applicant's succinct presentation of all pertinent aspects of the project. A flexible review process at the discretion of the Small Grants Program Officer will expedite review of Mini-Grant applications. Any revisions requested in the two-page proposal will normally be for the purpose of clarifying the research question and methodology of the project in order to complete the records of the Small Grants Program.

Reviewers of a proposal may include specialists in the academic area of the project, as well as scholars who are not specialists. The level of detail provided in a proposal should therefore accommodate the information needs of both kinds of audiences. The written proposal is the sole basis used by reviewers to decide the merits of the project, and they use just three criteria to focus their attention during the proposal review process. The applicant should address each of these criteria in the narrative. The three criteria ought to be used as tools for self-evaluation prior to submission of the application.

**Criterion 1: Clearly defined research purpose or question.** *What is the research question that guides the project? What will the project test, determine, learn, describe, document, etc?*

An effective proposal articulates a specific and narrowed research question or purpose that can be accomplished within the Program funding limits and within the time limit of one year. Careful articulation of the research question or purpose is crucial, because it is the reviewer's primary basis for appraising the effectiveness of the research methods presented in the proposal. The statement of the project's research purpose remains the same throughout the proposal. The proposal presents concepts and defines terminology needed for the reviewer to understand the study's purpose. A proposal that does not respond well to this criterion leaves the reviewer with appreciable uncertainty about the precise focus of the investigation; key terminology may be undefined. An inadequate proposal also may state a purpose or multiple purposes that are beyond the scope of what can be accomplished within the limitations of time and funding.

**Criterion 2: Significant research question/purpose.**

This section should emphasize the contribution that the study will make to the field. What is the uncertainty or information gap in the academic field that justifies the investigation? An effective proposal makes a persuasive case that the findings from the research will constitute a worthwhile contribution to the field, justifying the investment of effort and/or resources. The significance may be based, for example, on potential contributions to improved professional practice, resolution of an arguable gap or inconsistency in the literature of the field, or the addition of authentic new knowledge to the field, including by extension or replication of existing knowledge. When appropriate, the proposal grounds the study in a larger theoretical context in a manner that is selective given the page limits of the proposal. When the application is by a student, there are indications that the project is likely to foster a productive educational experience. If the project is a pilot study, the proposal makes a case for the need for such preliminary work prior to a more complete future study. An inadequate proposal fails to state a rationale for consuming time and resources in order to address its research question.

**Criterion 3: Effective research methods.**

The proposal should identify, define, *and justify* the procedures that will be used to accomplish the research purpose or answer the research question of the study. The methods of the project can include such components as site selection, choice of archives, sample characteristics, data collection methods, experimental design, and data analysis. When judging the merit of project methods, proposal reviewers must evaluate whether each component of the methodology addresses the project's stated purpose. Thus, a well articulated purpose or question is crucial to a determination of whether the project's methods are effective. An inadequate proposal fails to describe the methods with sufficient detail for the reviewer to judge whether they

# Small Grants Budget Statement

The Budget Statement of the application should identify specific costs associated with completion of all project tasks. Proposed expenditures should be:

- (1) allowable according to Gallaudet and Program policies,
- (2) cost-effective, and
- (3) within the specified funding limit.

When the requested funds are intended to support only a portion of the tasks and resources of a project, the Budget Statement should indicate how the requested amount fits into the entire project budget.

The basis for cost estimates should be spelled out, e.g.,

*\$400 for payment to research volunteers:*

*20 volunteers, two hours each @ \$10/hour.*

The budget is not used as a basis for deciding whether a project merits funding. Rather, once a proposal is judged to merit funding, the budget is examined and modified, as necessary.

# Proposal Review and Use of Feedback from Reviewers

A principal goal of the Small Grants Program is to improve the quality of the research that is submitted, and the purpose of feedback from reviewers is either to verify scholarship that is of high quality or to guide revisions that will lead to re-submission and funding of an improved proposal.

Again, reviewers of a proposal may include specialists in the academic area of the project, as well as scholars who are not specialists in the particular domain of the project. In combination, the feedback may reflect on the logic and completeness of the proposal's exposition of the project's purpose, significance, and methods. The feedback may also take the form of precise and in-depth substantive observations that draw directly on the current state of knowledge in the particular field. Reviewers may be members of the University community, or they may be recruited from off campus.

For Student projects, substantial weight in the review process is given to the endorsement by the faculty member supervising the project. A committee made up of University faculty members may contribute to a proposal review before it is synthesized and forwarded to the applicant. Applicants are asked to write a response to reviewer feedback, normally in the form of a revised proposal, and an award of funding customarily depends on a complete response.

In general, applicants can expect a response to their applications (notification of an award and/or feedback on the proposal) within one month of a submission. For Mini-Grant applications, the process requires less time.

# Other Related Policies

**Priority to Developing Investigators.** One goal of the Small Grants Program is to encourage research by new investigators, and funding priority is given to the proposals of applicants who are at the developing stage of their research program compared to applicants with more extensive research experience.

**Priority to Less Recent Users.** A goal of the Small Grants Program is to enlarge the pool of active investigators. Thus, funding priority is given to proposals from less recent recipients of Program funds as opposed to investigators who have recently been awarded funding from the Program.

**Prior Feedback.** Applicants may request feedback from the Small Grants Program staff before they submit a formal proposal.

**Submission of Expenditures.** Projects funded by the Small Grants Program normally should expend approved funds within a single fiscal year. **By prior arrangement**, certain other projects may expend funds in two separate fiscal years. Regardless of whether a project's work is completed in a single fiscal year or in two, the investigator agrees to submit all documentation of expenditures during the fiscal year in which the funds are expended. As a practical matter, that means that all expenditure documentation must be submitted by August 31st of the fiscal year in question.

**University Accounting Policies.** Applicants agree to expend funds and document expenditures in a manner that is consistent with existing University accounting policies and procedures. Researchers who receive awards are responsible for learning the relevant policies pertaining to the cost categories of their projects, and Research Institute personnel will be available to advise and assist them in this process.

**Allowable Program Expenditures.** Under normal circumstances, Program funds can be used for the following: subject remuneration, payment to specialists or technicians to complete tasks not customarily expected of the investigator, disposable supplies, and travel for data collection (transportation, lodging, meals). Durable equipment and specialized software for data collection or analysis are sometimes purchased with Program funds and lent to the investigator until completion of the project, but only if it is determined that they are not available elsewhere on the Gallaudet campus. Expenditures expressly prohibited by Program policies include the following: salary payments to the proposing investigator(s), costs for publishing the research results, costs for typing the manuscript of the research report, costs for travel to present the results of the research, and payment to specialists for completion of work customarily expected of the investigator, such as statistical analysis.

# Submission of a Final Report

1. The applicant agrees to submit a brief final report that describes the activities of the project and explains how those activities have responded to the research question or purpose of the project.
2. Applicants also agree to timely entry of project information into “*The Gallaudet Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity Database*” for inclusion in the publication “*The Annual Report of Achievements: University, Research, and Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center.*”
3. Applicants may be asked to present their projects at a University symposium convened for that purpose.
4. Applicants are encouraged to contact [senda.benaissa@gallaudet.edu](mailto:senda.benaissa@gallaudet.edu) for presenting a lecture as part of the research lecture series at the Gallaudet Community under the **GRI First Wednesday Research Seminar Series**.

# Institutional Review Board (IRB) Approval for Small Grants Project

When the project involves human research volunteers, either on the Gallaudet campus or elsewhere, funding of a project is contingent upon approval by the University's IRB. IRB approval is not required before submitting an application for Small Grants funding; however, funds cannot be made available until the applicant provides a copy of the IRB letter of approval. Participation of Clerc Center students as volunteers requires additional approval from officials there.

Once you get the IRB letter of approval, send a copy of the letter to [small.grants@gallaudet.edu](mailto:small.grants@gallaudet.edu).

[IRB instructions and application form](#)

<http://aaweb.gallaudet.edu/Documents/Academic/GSPP/irbapplication.doc>