SCHOLARSHIP IN ACTION

Grant Application Guidelines

COLLEGE OF THE HOLY CROSS

J.D. Power Center

FOR LIBERAL ARTS IN THE WORLD

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Program Description

At the core of the Holy Cross mission is the idea that a liberal arts education provides meaningful value to the real world. Funded by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Scholarship in Action (SIA) is designed to make consequential impacts on the world through scholarly research in the humanities and the arts in the greater Worcester area. Scholarship in Action grants encourage the development of faculty-driven, community-inspired research that leads to the production of knowledge that serves both community and the wider world. This new initiative reflects the significant role that the liberal arts and the humanities, in particular, can play in addressing the complex challenges facing the world today. This five-year program will help support fourteen grants of $40,000 each to faculty and their community partners to use in a 3-5-year grant cycle.

Utilizing research-oriented classroom environments, experiential learning opportunities, and collaborative working relationships, the Scholarship in Action initiative has four main aims:

- To encourage the Worcester community to think of the talents, capacities, and skills of our faculty and students as a resource available to them.
- To encourage Holy Cross faculty to think Worcester first when developing research agendas, envisioning ways that their research can make a difference right here at home.
- To engage Holy Cross students to undertake scholarly work in Worcester, helping them see ways to ground their liberal arts education within our community.
- To support collaborative sustainable long-term research projects in the community that result in faculty publication and dissemination of research to targeted community audiences.

Building Community Partnerships

Worcester's vibrancy lies in the strength of its communities and its community organizations. Through Scholarship in Action, community organizations partner with Holy Cross faculty to address the issues that matter to them. All SIA grants must feature a community-based partnership that grows organically out of the community partner's stated goals and that proceeds with consistent, mutual cooperation. Applicants must submit a carefully designed plan that reflects how Holy Cross faculty and students will stay engaged with the community continuously throughout the life of the grant—because the community doesn't take a summer break, or order itself according to semesters, this means developing approaches that maintain activity even when the academic calendar takes a pause. All grants must also discuss the significance of the research project to the community partner's own goals and the wider scholarly impact of the grant.

Faculty Research in Worcester

Holy Cross faculty produce world-class research. SIA provides resources for faculty to conduct that same level of high-quality research in conjunction with community-based organizations in the greater Worcester area, and to conduct it in ways that make a meaningful difference. For some faculty, community-oriented research is already second nature; for others, it is a goal that is yet to be fulfilled; still others just haven't yet realized how much of a difference their work

can make in the local community—and how that work can contribute to their scholarly agenda. SIA aims to encourage faculty to think of Worcester first when envisioning their research agendas, actively seeking real world application and community partners in Worcester.

Directed Student Research

Holy Cross students don't just consume knowledge—they create it. Experiential learning in Worcester consistently provides students with meaningful research skills that develop personal expertise and a distinctive educational profile. SIA grants feature opportunities for faculty and community partners to employ student researchers in their projects either through the Research Associates program at the J.D. Power Center for Liberal Arts in the World or through innovative project-based courses offered through the Donelan Office of Community-Based Learning.

Evaluation Criteria

Applicants should read the program's evaluation criteria and ensure that their applications respond to them. Evaluators are asked to apply the following criteria in assessing applications:

Significance The intellectual and practical significance of the project to the local community, humanities scholars, and general audiences; the merit of the resulting interpretive study and publication; the project's potential to stimulate new research; and its relevance to larger questions;

Community Partnership The level of commitment to the project of the community partner; the benefit of the project to the community partner; the relevance of the community partner's needs to the needs of the faculty project;

Student Involvement The degree to which the proposal demonstrates a commitment to significant involvement by students at as many stages of the project as possible; the merit of the learning goals achieved by the student;

Work Plan and Method The clarity and feasibility of the work plan; the clarity of expression in the application; the appropriateness and feasibility of the research methods proposed to answer an explicit set of research questions; the well-considered outline of roles and responsibilities for the community partner, faculty and student researchers; the appropriateness of digital and technical methods and services employed in the project; the participants' ability to access the research site or materials; and a clearly articulated and mutually agreed upon deliverable;

Consistency and Sustainability The commitment to a consistent engagement with the community partner throughout the calendar year (or as needed by the community partner); the feasibility of the plans to maintain the operation of the project throughout the life of the grant; the encouragement to consider aspects of sustainability whether in the project or partnership;

care with which the elements of the constituent programs of the Center are utilized in the planning of the project;

Outcome Goals The soundness of the publication, dissemination, and access plans, including the strength of the case for employing print, a digital format, or a combination of media; the sustainability plan for digital projects; the expected results of each participant's (community partner, faculty and student researchers) work and contribution;

Completion The likelihood that the project goals will be completed within the stated time frame; and the reasonableness of the budget in relation to the proposed activities and plan of work. For previously funded applicants, the project's productivity in relation to previous goals and accomplishment

Assessment The inherent assessability of the project; the care with which the applicants have designed an assessment plan and its responsiveness to the articulated outcome goals.

Stages of Grant Development

Successful Scholarship in Action grants will be the result of careful collaboration with the Director of Scholarship in Action, the J.D. Power Center for Liberal Arts in the World, relevant faculty across the college, and community partners. As such, we recommend that applicants engage in an extensive process of grant development to ensure that projects have the support, resources, relevance, and substance to last continuously throughout the grant period. Successful grants will therefore be composed through the following process:

Initial Community Engagement and Community Conversations

Scholarship in Action grants should be the product of an open process of planning between the Holy Cross community, the Worcester community, and the J.D. Power Center for Liberal Arts in the World. The first step in this process is to open up the general idea of the project to the community by convening varied conversations among different stakeholders within the community and the college both to gauge interest and to solicit feedback. Faculty and community partners who are interested in pursuing an SIA grant should contact the Director of Scholarship in Action to discuss potential strategies to develop their project idea.

Proposal Development

Once the general parameters of a project have been determined, grant authors will meet with the Director of Scholarship in Action to start a process of planning a grant schedule. Because SIA grants both make use of existing Center programs, and are intended to fund continuous operation over the course of their existence, it is important to develop a coherent grant schedule with the Director. It is expected that research projects will endure for a minimum of 3 years to build a project that would generate adequate research data and offer a significant product or project for the community partner. Further, the grant development process should be a process shared between faculty and community partners, rather than a research agenda

forced on the community or a community service project that does not advance a faculty member's scholarly career. Together, the launchpad and grant development stages may last a year or more.

Proposal

Once a grant proposal has been developed, proposals will be submitted in early February before the desired grant period. Section 4 of this document spells out the required form of the proposal. Working directly with the Director of SIA is advised. Proposals will be submitted to the Director of SIA, who will forward the proposal to the Selection Committee.

Implementation

Once the Scholarship in Action Committee awards grants in early April, the faculty and community members with the supervision of the Program Director will have a month prior to receiving funding in July to develop a Memorandums of Understanding that clearly articulates expectations going forward and ensures project consistency. Course development and release time would be issued. Within a year of the Scholarship in Action grant being awarded, the College would expect the faculty member to develop a complementary curricular offering. Although it is understood that most projects would complete their goals within this timeframe, it is hoped that some community partnerships would endure and propagate further opportunities for research and/or engagement.

Evaluation and Assessment

Scholarship in Action project directors will complete annual reports, which will be submitted by June 15 to the Director of the Scholarship in Action Program who will share it with the Office of Assessment. These reports will keep faculty and community partners apprised of project progress and help determine if any alterations or additions need to be made along the way. The reports also will be useful for disseminating information regarding the program to City partners and potential investors who might be interested in supporting the projects ongoing. In addition, a separate, but complementary, reflective assessment will accompany the progress reports focusing on student reflection and evaluation of his/her role with the project. The Office of Assessment will conduct annual evaluations of the projects in tandem with the Foundation interim reports, which will be shared with the Scholarship in Action committee.

Preparing Your Application

Your application should be submitted by February 3, 2020 to the Director of Scholarship in Action (mconley@holycross.edu). If you have any questions, please ask. Community Partners are expected to send their letter of support directly to the SIA Director. Faculty CVs and supplemental materials should also be emailed to the SIA Director. All submitted documents should be PDFs. The application should include the following elements:

1. *Title, Applicant Names, and Table of Contents (one page)*
   Provide a list of all parts of the application and corresponding page numbers.

2. *Abstract (one paragraph)*
   Create a brief abstract, written for a non-specialist audience, that identifies the applicants, offers an overview of the project and its central goals, and explains the importance of the proposed work for the community partner and other intended audiences.

3. *Statement of significance and impact (one page)*
   Expanding upon the abstract, the statement of significance and impact highlights the significance of the proposed work and its relation to larger issues in the field. The statement would also explain how the project relates to different audiences and results in future scholarship. This section should state the publication goals and other expected outcomes of the project.

4. *List of participants (one page)*
   Provide a list, in alphabetical order, of all collaborators (including those at other area colleges) and other participants in the project, designating the project director and if applicable the co-director(s) from the College and the relevant community partner(s). A scholar of the proposed subject matter should serve as the project director and devote a significant percentage of time to work on the project. Include institutional affiliations for all participants. If multiple Holy Cross faculty are listed as collaborators, they are each expected to submit a signed separate letter explaining their commitment to the project and their role within it.

5. *Narrative (5-6 pages)*
   The narrative should be introduced with a project title that describes the proposal and notes the specific collaborators. Following a brief introduction to the subject, the narrative should focus on the intellectual justification for the project, the benefits to the community partner, the research and publication goals, and the work plan to achieve them—including careful attention about key elements of the timeline and the role that students would play in the research. Applicants should write their proposals with the evaluation criteria in mind and should not assume any specialized knowledge on the part of readers. It must be free of jargon and define field-specific terms. If faculty applicants bring certain wisdom or skills to the community project that was gained or were

acquired from prior relevant research, teaching or experiences, applicants should share those insights in the narrative. This is also an opportunity for faculty applicants to explain the rationale for the choice of community partners and collaborators.

6. *Project timeline (2-3 pages)*
   Applicants should submit a project timeline covering the life of the grant and specifying the order in which programs will be utilized throughout the project. It is important to demonstrate how the project will be in action each semester and summer, ensuring continuous work for faculty, students, and community partners.

7. *Budget (see sample attached)*
   Provide a clear budget outlining the specific categories of funding over the timeline of the grant. Please note that the budget template provides the eligible categories for funding.

8. *Statement of community partner support (1-2 pages)*
   Although it is expected that the Community Partner collaborate fully in composing the proposal, the Community Partner must submit a separate Statement of Community Partner Support directly to the SIA Director that includes a checklist and outlines the partner's support for the project and for the details of the grant proposal. It should also express a specific commitment to working with the faculty member throughout the project, a plan to provide needed support, guidance, and supervision to student researchers, and list any other support (financial or otherwise) the community partner will be obtaining for the project.

9. *CV for Holy Cross faculty applicant(s)*

10. *Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statement*
    The College supports and encourages relationships that advance academic research; however, potential, perceived, and actual conflicts of interest must be managed to avoid favoritism or the appearance of such in an Investigator's activities and responsibilities, in order to protect the integrity of the research and the College. In carrying out community-based research, these disclosures are particularly important. Conflicts of Interest do not necessarily preclude funding, but transparency is important to understanding the context of the research's development and the trajectory of the project. Use this space to disclose any potential conflicts of interest connected to your project. The Office of Sponsored Research provides further information to understand conflict of interest issues: https://www.holycross.edu/office-sponsored-research/office-sponsored-research/research-responsibilitycompliance/financial-conflict-interest

11. *Optional relevant materials (uploaded as .pdfs)*
    This is an opportunity to upload relevant material that highlight faculty experience with the community partner (e.g., exhibit photos, website screen shots, community publications) or faculty scholarship on the topic.

Timeline

Because each grant proposal will require different kinds of coordination, the pathway from grant development to final assessment may be different for different projects. However, the timeline of the life of a grant will follow these parameters:

1-2 years before application deadline:	Grant development process begins
February 3, 2020:	SIA applications due
February and March 2020:	Grant review process is underway
Early April 2020:	SIA grants awarded
June 1, 2020:	Memorandum of Understanding due
July 1, 2020:	Funds distributed from SIA and projects begin
June 15 of subsequent years:	Annual reports due to SIA Director
June 15 of final year:	Final report due

Important Contacts in the Application Process

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