SIA Seed Grants

SIA Seed Grants intend to develop the capacity for a faculty member from humanities and humanistic disciplines to embark on a community-based research project in Worcester. The current pandemic, with all of its uncertainties, may understandably feed an impulse to put our relationships within the community on hold.   In addition, we are now witness to historic protests happening locally, nationally and globally that are raising voices for meaningful democratic changes to dismantle racism and demand justice at all levels within our society. Rather than put our scholarly work on hold, let us listen to and collaborate with community stakeholders and engage in research that gives insight to existing challenges while leading to better paths forward.

Funded through the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, SIA Seed Grants help faculty jumpstart community-based research projects by providing them with resources that can either develop deeper relationships with community partners with whom they share overlapping interests and/or funds to learn new research methods or technical skills to carry out research projects with the city—particularly if some of this work needs to be done at a distance. Since community-engaged research often serves multiple audiences and communicates knowledge to broader constituencies in varied formats, researchers often have to learn how to share this knowledge through platforms with which they may be less familiar (examples may include digital scholarship or public exhibits). In recognition of these possible exigencies, SIA Seed Grants offer opportunities for Holy Cross faculty to develop a community-engaged research project in its preliminary stages, to build a rapport with community partners, and to acquire skills needed to undertake community-engaged research.

Eligibility:
A limited number of $2000 grants will be awarded this year to faculty from humanities disciplines and the humanistic social sciences. While we're unable to fund projects outside of these disciplines through this SIA grant, please reach out to SIA and we'll work to find other opportunities to help support your scholarship in Worcester. Faculty and departments are encouraged to consider collaborative scholarly projects as well. Awards may provide funds to coordinate with community partners, to support emerging pedagogical goals related to the larger community-based research project, to pursue relevant professional development, to consult with a colleague, to visit site similar community-engaged projects in other cities, or to procure equipment and other resources needed for the project. These supplementary funds may also be used to support student work related to the faculty member's Worcester-based research. These funds do not provide faculty stipends. SIA Seed Grant recipients will have opportunities to share their project plans with each other as well as other interested audiences. Grant recipients will also submit a report detailing how the funds were used and how they supported the development of community-engaged research and a potential SIA grant proposal.

Procedures for Application:
Develop a proposal that includes:
a) Narrative: The narrative (1250 word maximum) should include a description of the proposed project and its potential significance (e.g., for the field, the community partner, the wider community, or for the applicant's own research trajectory). The applicant should also explain what expertise the applicant already has in the field or project and what strides the applicant has made in developing the project (perhaps through a course, similar research in another region, with the partner, or in the research itself). It should be clear what the applicant intends to accomplish through the grant's award. The narrative should also include a description of the items in the proposed budget and a description of how these items support the proposed project.
b) Budget: The budget should contain an itemized list of proposed expenditures, such as travel, course/conference fees, consultation costs, supply/equipment costs.
c) Updated CV.

Selection:
SIA Seed Grant proposals will be evaluated by an SIA selection committee consisting of representatives from the Dean's Office and the J.D. Power Center. Proposals will be evaluated according to the following criteria:
• the persuasiveness of how the preliminary work will enhance the development of a community-based research project in Worcester.
• an explanation of how some of this work could be pursued (whether by faculty or students) if current protocols of physical distancing remain in place.
• an understanding of the components needed to pursue engaged scholarship in the city.
• the degree to which this grant will have an impact upon the faculty member's teaching and scholarship.
• the likelihood that this pilot grant will lead to a sustained Worcester-based project as well as an SIA grant proposal.
• a reasoned explanation of potential budget items to carry out the community-based research project.

The proposal is due through the **Faculty Support Portal by July 16, 2020.** Grant awards will be made on or before August 1.
Questions about the application process should be directed to Mary Conley at mconley@holycross.edu.