



Announcement of Faculty Grants for Visions and Voices 2017–2018 of the Provost’s Arts and Humanities Initiative

Request for Preliminary Proposals

Focus:

As USC’s newly installed provost in Fall 2005, President Nikias identified as a key priority the need to “affirm what is most essential and most enduring within the human spirit.” The provost also noted that, “There is a difference between knowledge transfer and an academic community. Knowledge transfer you can get anywhere. But we are interested in creating the best possible environment and culture for education, for transformation.” He called upon “all USC students to develop an appreciation of the arts and humanities—regardless of discipline.” Subsequently, in announcing the Provost’s Arts and Humanities Initiative, he observed that “these disciplines fully capture the values of the university and provide students with an outstanding opportunity to examine their own relationship to these values on a truly personal level. The arts and humanities bring these values to life, illuminating their complexities and nuances.”

During the past ten years, the Provost’s Arts and Humanities Initiative has presented Visions and Voices, an exciting and diverse series of over 100 events each year, all funded by the Provost’s Office. The series is continuing, and each year includes many wonderful programs proposed and developed by faculty. *We are now requesting preliminary proposals from USC faculty for the 2017-2018 event series.* These events will continue to broaden the engagement of USC students with the arts and humanities and confirm the university’s commitment to the central role these disciplines play in public life.

As we plan for next year, we encourage you to be creative and propose events that are not only of high quality, but also innovative and impactful. Events can span a broad array of formats, including performances, lectures, screenings, workshops, and panel conversations. Each event should facilitate discussion of USC’s core values through a meaningful encounter with the arts and/or humanities. We encourage well-defined individual events but will also consider series of two to three events across the year. Performance events will need to incorporate a formal discussion or reflective component. All events should address a broad audience with a primary focus on USC students and also enhance USC’s profile as a leader in the arts and humanities. The Provost’s Office will provide substantial funding for several faculty-initiated events during the 2017–2018 academic year. Executive Director Daria Yudacufski and her staff will work closely with grant recipients to support and promote each event. However, primary and substantial responsibility for event planning and production will reside with the grant recipient.

Preliminary Proposals:

Faculty or teams of faculty who are interested in applying for these funds should send a preliminary proposal (500 words) that clearly describes the event and its relationship to the initiative's goals; a 100-word abstract; and, a one-page biography for each team member by Friday September 30, 2016 to the contact person below. ***Your entire proposal should be comprised of a single Word document or PDF.*** In the proposal, please describe the event, why it would be of interest to students, how it will contribute to their exploration of core values, and how it facilitates meaningful faculty/student interaction. *Events that include student organizations, individual students, or staff as team members are particularly encouraged as are events that dovetail with curricular initiatives.* Following an initial review of the preliminary proposals, the faculty advisory committee will provide applicants with information about the full application and review process.

Informational Session:

Tuesday, September 6, 2:00-3:30 PM

Room G 28, Doheny Memorial Library

Applicants are strongly encouraged to participate in this informational session and Q&A to learn more about Visions and Voices, the event production process and what it takes to create a successful proposal and event.

To RSVP, email visionsandvoices@usc.edu

Deadlines:

September 30, 2016, 5:00 PM: Preliminary proposals due

Early December 2016: Request for full applications sent out to successful applicants

Mid-January 2017: Full proposals due

Early March 2017: Successful applicants notified

Mid-April 2017: Event dates, times and locations finalized

Assessment Criteria:

Primary Criteria:

1. Quality and perception: How will the event be of high quality and how will it be perceived as such?
2. Discussion of core values: How does the event relate to USC's core values and how will it incorporate discussion and reflection on these and related values?
3. Student interest and participation: How will the event attract broad student interest? If students are members of the team proposing the event, how have they been involved in conceptualizing the event? How might students be part of the event itself?
4. Feasibility: Can the event be successfully produced and completed in the estimated time?

Secondary Criteria:

5. How will the event promote faculty/student interaction?
6. How does the event connect to broader curricular goals?
7. How will the event enhance USC's reputation as a leader in the arts and humanities?

Contact Person:

Contact Professor Tara McPherson, Faculty Committee Chair, at <tmcpfers@usc.edu> or 213-740-3330 with questions. **Preliminary proposals should be emailed as a SINGLE Word document or PDF to visionsrfp@gmail.com by 5:00 PM on September 30, 2016.**

USC's Core Values

Four sets of core values are particularly critical in this context. First is free inquiry, an institutional commitment to the search for truth that must be defended against any external or internal threats.

The second set of core values is usually described as the values of the Trojan Family, standards which have long defined USC's interactions with its stakeholders and which will continue to guide us in the future. These standards include: caring and respect for one another as individuals; appreciation of diversity; team spirit; strong alumni networks; and a commitment to service.

The third set of core values involves a commitment to informed risk-taking within a culture of targeted experimentation that can help USC prepare for an uncertain future. By crafting experiments related to our vision and strategic capabilities, we will learn what works in a changing world. Such experiments will be most beneficial if we can learn to appreciate the fact that not all attempts at innovation will succeed, and that much can be learned from so-called "useful failures."

The fourth and final set of core values comprises our commitment to ethical conduct as spelled out in our recently adopted Code of Ethics – http://www.usc.edu/about/core_documents/usc_code_of_ethics.html.

These values define our community, sustain a sense of cohesiveness, and connect us to our past and to our future. They will guide us in making difficult and sometimes risky decisions, and will help us make choices that preserve USC's integrity, community, and quality.

—from USC's Plan for Increasing Academic Excellence:
Building Strategic Capabilities for the University of the 21st Century