

# GUIDELINES FOR STUDENT FOUNDATION ACTIVITY GRANTS

## FAQs

**What are Student Foundation Activity Grants and who funds them?** Student Foundation Activity Grants support the academic and creative projects of individual undergraduate and graduate students, student teams and student-faculty teams. Activity Grants are awards of money from The Evergreen State College Foundation and are administered by the Academic Grants office. Charitable gifts to the Foundation support the grants.

**What is the Foundation's goal for Activity Grants?** The Foundation's Board of Governors wants Activity Grants to enable students to complete exceptional academic or artistic projects that:

- Further the students' goals, knowledge and abilities.
- Have academic or artistic significance and a potential legacy to the field, the college, or the broader community.
- Demonstrate the applicants' commitment to Evergreen's teaching and learning values.
- Require financial support for completion.

**How much can I get for an Activity Grant, and what can I do with the money?** Each student may apply for up to \$800. Teams of two students or more may apply for up to \$1,500. A student should only be listed on one grant application (i.e. either as an individual student or as a member of a team, not both). Activity Grant projects are usually carried out in conjunction with academic programs or independent learning contracts and all projects must have at least one faculty sponsor. The program has supported theatrical productions, art projects and exhibitions, scientific research, video and film productions, student literary magazines, expenses for students to attend professional conferences to present their work, and other projects. Equipment purchases and projects involving use of campus facilities and land require special consideration. Please see the Limitations and Special Conditions section below.

**How competitive is the grant selection process?** Very. In a typical quarter the college receives up to 30 to 40 applications and is able to award 10 to 15.

**How are recipients selected?** A panel of staff experts reviews the proposals and makes a ranked list of funding recommendations. Staff in the Academic Grants office fund proposals in rank order. In the event of a tie, a committee of the Provost's staff makes final funding assignments.

**What am I required to do if I receive an Activity Grant?** You must have a faculty sponsor. You are required to complete the project as proposed, in consultation with your faculty sponsor. We also ask for you to submit to the Academic Grants office (Library 2211; [actgrant@evergreen.edu](mailto:actgrant@evergreen.edu)) a final work product (digital pictures of your work, papers, DVD copies of films, audio recordings, etc.) or a report of your experiences upon completion of the project. Specific requirements for awards will also be listed in individual award letters.

Funding is available by reimbursement only; the program does not offer funds in advance. Submit all receipts and an itemized request for reimbursement to the Office of Advancement, Library 3705B and allow up to 30 days for payment. Requests for reimbursement should be submitted promptly—unless you have received an approved extension, not later than the beginning of the following quarter after your award end date.

## ORGANIZATION AND CONTENT OF YOUR PROPOSAL

**General guidance.** A complete application includes:

- A cover sheet
- A narrative description of the proposed project (up to three pages)
- A budget

Your application may also include supplemental documents that support your application. Proposals must be typed in Arial or Times New Roman font, no smaller than 12 point. Single spacing is acceptable, but nothing lower (i.e., .99 and below). The narrative and budget pages should have at least one-inch margins all around.

**Cover sheet.** The form is provided on the Foundation Activity Grant web site ([www.evergreen.edu/sponsoredresearch/foundationactivitygrants.htm](http://www.evergreen.edu/sponsoredresearch/foundationactivitygrants.htm)). Save the document to your hard drive and fill it out completely. (If you have trouble with the Word document, click on the tools menu and select the “Unprotect Document” option.)

- Provide a title, the dates your project will be active, and the amount you are requesting.
- List the quarter for which you are applying
- List all project participants, their role(s), and all faculty advisors to the project. **Be sure to designate one student as the project lead; the project lead will be the point person for all communications about the grant and will be the only person able to request reimbursement.** Faculty may be an active part of a project, but are not eligible for Activity Grant funding.
- Include your [evergreen.edu](http://evergreen.edu) email address (check it frequently) and a phone number where you will be sure to get a message. E-mail will be the primary method by which we contact you.

**Narrative.** The three-page narrative should address the following areas:

1. **Describe your project clearly and succinctly and provide a timeline of key milestones and anticipated completion dates.** State your hypothesis, research question or artistic intention, the steps you will take and methods you will use in your proposed work, and what outcome or end product you expect. Be specific and sufficiently detailed to address how you propose to carry out your project, with target dates for completion of the various stages. Describe the role of each partner involved in the project. If necessary, you may attach references, diagrams, or illustrations as supplemental materials (i.e., beyond the three page limit).
2. **Briefly describe your work product.** What will be the outcome of your project? The product could be a report or paper, a piece of art, a literary work, a performance, or the mastery of a new skill or knowledge base. Tell us how, when and with whom any work product will be disseminated. Will your art, writing, research, film, or report be shared with your academic program, the entire campus community, the local community, or posted on a web site, or by some other means? If your project does not have an intrinsic work product, describe your plan to submit to the Academic Grants office a one-to-two page final report highlighting the learning that you will have gained from this experience.

3. **Explain how this project fits into your current academic work.** Is this project part of an academic program or course, an independent learning contract, or an internship? Describe.
4. **Explain how this project is important to your Evergreen and broader educational career(s).** What past educational or other experiences make this project a next logical step for you? How have you demonstrated the knowledge and abilities to complete the project? How will the project challenge you? How does it fit with your future goals? Tell the story of your passion for this work — where it comes from and where you hope it will take you. Ask friends or faculty familiar with your work and interests to help you think this through.
5. **Discuss how you will embrace one or more of Evergreen’s teaching and learning values.** Foundation Activity Grants support student projects that embrace Evergreen’s core educational values: interdisciplinary study, collaborative learning, learning across significant differences, personal engagement, and linking theory with practical applications. If you’re unclear about these values, visit the college’s web site, “What we believe” ([www.evergreen.edu/aboutevergreen/fivefoci.htm](http://www.evergreen.edu/aboutevergreen/fivefoci.htm)). Discuss them with a faculty member, advisor, or student colleague. Don’t simply state *that* your project embraces one or more of these values. Explain *how* the project embraces these values, and more importantly, why these educational values are important or critical to its success.
6. **Explain the project’s significance.** What makes this project important beyond the immediate experience for you? What meaningful future work will it help you prepare for? Will it bring beauty, knowledge, a new way of seeing to others? Will it expand important knowledge in your field in a relevant way? If the project were to have a legacy, what would it be and what will you do to bring it about?

**Budget.** Only those proposals that present a budget with clearly justified expenses receive consideration. Be specific about and itemize your expenses. Do some research of costs to ensure your budget is reasonable, with detail commensurate with the early but studied planning stage of a project. Inflated costs in applications often result in reduced grants. Arithmetic errors usually bring comment and are not viewed favorably. Ask for what you need, but make use of existing low- or no-cost options at the college or within the community. Do not simply ask for the maximum grant without justifying your request. If your project will cost more than the grant you are requesting, explain how you will make up the difference. A budget for a photo field study of red foxes in the Capitol Forest, followed by a conference presentation, might look like this:

<b>Materials</b>	
<i>Photography paper – 100 sheets</i>	<i>\$15.87</i>
<i>Field books – 3 @ 8.95 apiece + tax</i>	<i>\$29.11</i>
<i>Photocopies for conference poster session – three 4’ by 6’ posters @ 12.07 apiece + tax (Kinko’s)</i>	<i>\$39.25</i>
<i>1 set of ink cartridges for HP PhotoSmart printer (6 @ 14.99 + tax) (about 100 8½ x 11 prints)</i>	<i>\$84.67</i>
<i>Conference Registration (student rate)</i>	<i>\$45.00</i>
<b>Total Request</b>	<b>\$213.90</b>

Awardees may request changes to their budgeted award with an email to [actgrant@evergreen.edu](mailto:actgrant@evergreen.edu). In general, budget changes are allowed if they do not alter the scope and scale of the proposed project that was approved.

**Additional supporting materials** are not required, but you may submit items that support your application, such as photographs, portfolio samples, references, past work, illustrations, diagrams, authorizations for specific kinds of work, etc. Committee members have limited time, so choose carefully. And don't submit anything you want back.

## ***SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS AND LIMITATIONS***

The following special conditions and limitations apply. Please read these carefully and consult with your faculty or the Academic Grants office if you need advice or further information. In all cases, your project must follow college policies.

**Eligibility.** Student Foundation Activity Grants are open to undergraduate and graduate students who are enrolled during the quarter for which they are applying for funding. A student may only apply for one grant.

**Ethical and safe research.** If your work involves human subjects, animal use or collection, use of hazardous substances or radiation, or other activities that could affect public health or safety, you will need appropriate permission from the human subjects review committee, animal welfare committee, or appropriate safety personnel. Consult your faculty for guidance in these areas. Your application should include evidence of authorization for your project in such cases or, at minimum, your plans and timeline to gain such authorization.

**Use of campus land or facilities.** If you are planning to host an event at college facilities or build or install something on campus (a garden, a piece of permanent art, a structure), you must have approval from the appropriate college committees or personnel prior to submitting your grant. If this is to be a long-term or permanent installation, you should also include a plan for how your project will be maintained after you graduate.

**Construction, garden, and landscaping projects.** It is useful to include plans, diagrams and sketches as supplemental documents for projects proposing construction of gardens and structures, whether on campus or not. While it's not necessary to have these items fully developed, they should signal your thinking to date and point out design elements still under consideration.

**Activity Grants are for student-generated and led work.** While faculty are encouraged to take an active role in advising and guiding students on their grant projects, as well as participating as a team member, Activity Grants are intended to fund the learning agendas of students. Activity Grants are not considered for costs normally associated with regular program budgets.

**Travel costs** are not funded. In rare cases, the committee may consider funding conference registration fees.

**Equipment.** By and large, Activity Grants are not designed to fund student equipment or software purchases (i.e., items that will continue to have significant "shelf life" after the end of the grant, such as computers, cameras, GIS instruments, external hard drives, etc.). Grant applicants should

plan projects that will make use of equipment, software and instrumentation that is already available for student use. On rare occasions, the selection committee will provide funding for equipment or instrument purchases that may be used by student applicants for projects, but such items will belong to and stay at the college on a permanent basis. The applicant should submit authorization from an appropriate college official agreeing to take ownership and responsibility for upkeep of such proposed purchases. The committee has also made exceptions where an applicant proposes to *build* a piece of equipment or an instrument as part of the project's learning outcomes; in such cases ownership of the item usually remains with the applicant.

**Hiring guest speakers, consultants, performers, and experts from outside the college.** Use of outside, paid consultants or organizing events with paid, professional performers or speakers is subject to scrutiny by the selection committee. The chief question with a paid consultant or guest performer is whether the information to be gained could be obtained by the students doing study and research. The ability to gain expertise is often an important educational goal, and is valued by the committee. Requests to hire performers or speakers can lead to funding if the organizational effort will be sufficiently instructive or if the student's overall project goal is otherwise satisfied appropriately. This is where the “activity” in Activity Grant receives preference. In general, the selection committee prefers to fund projects where students are readily engaged in learning, not simply passive recipients of knowledge or experiences.

## **HOW TO SUBMIT YOUR PROPOSAL**

**E-mail submissions are preferred.** Send your electronic applications to [actgrant@evergreen.edu](mailto:actgrant@evergreen.edu). **We will only accept Word or PDF files for written documents; .jpg files for pictures and illustrations; .mpeg, .wmv, and QuickTime files for movie/video samples.** You may instead submit a hard copy of your application and/or any supporting documents (for accepted file formats, see above) in person or by mail to Dorothea Collins, Library 2211, MS L3821, Academic Grants office. No fancy covers please; a staple in the upper left hand corner is all that's required.

**Deadlines.** Proposals are due at 5 p.m. on the deadline date, which is published on the web site—[www.evergreen.edu/sponsoredresearch/foundationactivitygrants.htm](http://www.evergreen.edu/sponsoredresearch/foundationactivitygrants.htm). The 5 p.m. deadline is firm. We will not accept late proposals.

## **WHEN WILL YOU HEAR BACK?**

**We will notify all applicants at the beginning of the quarter for which they applied.**

## **SOME TIPS**

**Format and organization:** 1 inch margins all around; 12 point or larger type; single spaced; Arial or Times New Roman font. (Always adhere to a grant funding organization's required formats. Otherwise you risk disqualification, or almost as bad, the resentment of your reviewers.) Use headings and address the grant requirements in the order they are requested.

**Three pages isn't a lot.** Be pithy. Be concise. Avoid repeating yourself unless you have to for clarity, but don't say more than you need or get mired in unnecessary detail.

**Use plain English.** Think of your readers as educated persons who may not be knowledgeable in your field. Imagine explaining your project to someone at your high school reunion. Define unfamiliar terms. Use commonly understood words. Avoid jargon and tech-speak. For example, “anthropogenic environmental degradation” can become “environmental damage caused by humans,” and your reader won’t suffer damage as a result. And though your art project will “employ visual, aural, and tactile modalities,” your reviewer only cares that people will experience it through sight, sound, and touch.

**“I” is O.K.** Some grant applications may require that you write in the third person; this one doesn’t. Don’t be afraid of I, me, we, us. I often find that using the first person makes my writing stronger.

**Use the active voice.** Let your writing to be a crisp salad – not a pureed vegetable smoothie. Make the subjects of your sentences *actors*, not people or things being acted upon. Don’t say this:

*Measurements of rainwater acidity will be taken at the study sites every three days. Data will be downloaded into a database application especially designed for this project. Faculty will be consulted throughout the project and standard research protocols will be followed.*

Instead, say this:

*I will measure the acidity of rainfall at the study sites every three days, and will compile the data in a database especially designed for this project. Throughout the study I will employ commonly-accepted research protocols for water quality analysis. My faculty agrees to consult with me throughout the quarter.*

**Successful grants are not written alone.** Great writers have great editors. Write an early draft and let it season a bit. Rework it at least once, and then show it to others whom you can trust for honest, constructive feedback. Review your application with experts, such as your sponsoring faculty member. If you know writing is a challenge for you, consult the Writing Center. The committee members are eager to fund good applications and projects. The process, however, is essentially competitive. On some level, applications that result in grant funding show quality and excellence, and avoid fatal errors.

**Good grant proposals tell a story.** If you can, let yours tell a story about you. Give it a beginning, middle, and end. In almost every good story, the main character changes, develops. You are the proposal’s main character. Where do you come from, where do you plan to end up, and how will this grant help you along the way?