UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS – PRESIDENT’S OFFICE
Program Announcement
2015 Creative Economy Initiatives Fund

Introduction

The University of Massachusetts President’s Office is pleased to announce the 2015 Creative Economy Initiatives Fund. Established in 2007, and intended to complement the President’s Science and Technology Initiatives Fund, the Creative Economy Fund represents a continued commitment to maintaining the University’s central role in the social, cultural and economic development of the Commonwealth and directly supports the strategic goals of strengthening and expanding the University’s research and service contributions.

Purpose of the Fund

The President’s Creative Economy Initiatives Fund supports initiatives which highlight the contributions of the arts, humanities and social sciences to the life of the Commonwealth. The CE Fund seeks to produce immediate benefits to the external communities served, add to the cultural and creative resources and overall quality of life of the Commonwealth (thus making Massachusetts a more attractive location to live and invest), and raise the University’s community engagement and profile. Funding may also support the search for larger grants or follow-on awards; or to support research which informs relevant local, state, national or international decision-making.

As just stated succinctly and effectively by THE BOSTON GLOBE (“Making Arts Policy a Priority,” 14 November 2014):

“The arts are not merely an add-on — a luxury — but an essential component of the state’s quality of life. The Massachusetts arts community encompasses roughly 6,000 arts and cultural organizations that support more than 45,000 jobs. A report last summer by ArtsBoston showed that nonprofit arts and cultural organizations boost the Boston economy alone by $1 billion every year. Arts education has been shown to improve student performance across the disciplines and to transform troubled schools like Roxbury’s Orchard Gardens. … Likewise, an array of arts programs — from the Actors’ Shakespeare Project’s Incarcerated Youth at Play to the Boston Children’s Chorus, Shakespeare and Company’s Shakespeare in the Courts, RAW (Raw Art Works) in Lynn, and Zumix in East Boston — have been instrumental in curbing youth violence across the state and changing young lives. And it is impossible to imagine the turnarounds in economically distressed cities like Pittsfield, North Adams, and Lowell without investment in the arts.”

It is anticipated that Creative Economy Fund awards will be made in the $10,000 - $40,000 range. Total funding available will be contingent on the University’s budget situation. The President’s Office specifically reserves the right to recommend changes or reductions in budget requests. The project period is typically twelve months, starting at the beginning of the University’s fiscal year (July 1). An interim project report is required in mid-December and a final report in mid-June.
Criteria for Awards (a successful proposal need not satisfy all criteria)

- High quality research, scholarly or professional activity;
- Community or other external buy-in and participation;
- Potential for additional external funding;
- Likely positive contribution to economic or social development, cultural or creative richness, or quality of life of local community, region, or state;
- Presence of strong project leadership;
- Multi-discipline or multi-campus engagement where appropriate;

Application and Review Process

The goal of the President’s Office is to keep the process simple and non-bureaucratic.

The timeline for the Creative Economy Initiatives Fund is as follows:

- Fri., Jan. 30: Concept Papers due to campus research offices.*
- Fri., Feb. 27: President’s Office feedback provided to campus research offices.
- Fri., March 27: Full proposals due to campus research offices.*
- Fri., May 8: Announcement of awards.
- Weds., July 1: Project start date

Guidance for Concept Papers

Concept Papers should:

- Be no more than two (2) pages in length;
- Outline the thrust of the project and how it will achieve the goals of the Fund;
- Identify project leadership and estimated budget;

*Campus research offices are expected to complete internal processing and forward materials to the President’s Office within one week—Fri., Feb. 6 for Concept Papers and Fri., April 3 for Full Proposals. Electronic submissions (in WORD, not pdf, please) are preferred.
Describe the external funding opportunities to be pursued, if any, and the expected nature of collaborations on or off campus (on a preliminary basis if necessary); and

Demonstrate endorsement of the Chancellor. All proposals must be submitted via campus Research Offices. Forwarding of concept papers and final proposals from campus Research Offices to the President’s Office will indicate approval of Chancellor.

Creative Economy Fund Concept Papers will be reviewed by the Office of the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, Student Affairs and International Relations, in consultation with campus research offices. Applicants who submit the strongest Concept Papers will be asked to submit Full Proposals. In some cases, where opportunities for synergy exist, separate applicants may be encouraged to combine their concepts into a single proposal.

Guidance for Full Proposals

Full Proposals should:

- Be no more than five (5) pages in length;
- Elaborate on the ideas presented in the Concept Paper and provide a more thorough project description, including anticipated performance milestones and success measures;
- Specifically address how the project will meet the goals of the Fund;
- Identify and address key administrative and managerial challenges to the project;
- Provide a budget for the proposed use of funds; and
- Demonstrate the continued endorsement of the Chancellor (or Chancellors in the case of multi-campus initiatives). All proposals must be submitted via campus Research Offices. Forwarding of concept papers and final proposals from campus Research Offices to the President’s Office will indicate approval of Chancellor.

Proposals will again be reviewed by the Office of the Senior Vice President, which may include consultation with members of proposal teams or other relevant parties. The Senior Vice President will make funding recommendations to the President, who will have final decision-making authority.

Proposal Submission and For Further Information

All Creative Economy Initiatives Fund materials should be sent via campus Research Offices to Professor Edmund Beard, Senior Advisor to the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, Student Affairs and International Relations, UMass President’s Office, 225 Franklin St., 33rd Floor, Boston, Ma. 02110. Electronic submissions (in WORD, not pdf, please) are preferred. For additional information, Ed can be contacted at (781) 848-7681 or at ebeard@umassp.edu. Such consultation is welcomed.