

David Orr Belcher College  
of Fine and Performing Arts

CATALYST  
GRANTS



## CRITERIA AND GUIDELINES

### PURPOSE

The purpose of the Catalyst Grants is to stimulate innovation in three areas vital to the future of the David Orr Belcher College of Fine and Performing Arts:

- **Curricular Innovation and Development** – What does it mean to be an artist-scholar in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century here in Western North Carolina? How can we better prepare our students to have a sustainable and fulfilling life in the arts? How do we make the Belcher College and WCU our students’ artistic home now and in the future? How do we diversify our enrollment pipelines to attract the students of the future?
- **Creative Placemaking and Community Engagement** – How can we help solve pressing regional challenges and concerns through the arts? What can we do to positively shape the character of our Western North Carolina community as artist practitioners, scholars, and educators? How do we leverage the power of the arts, culture, and creativity to enhance quality of life in our community?
- **Audience Education and Development** – How do we foster artistic curiosity that transforms the lives of WCU’s students and our larger community? How can we inspire new audiences to engage with our art and encourage growth in our existing audience relationships? How do we eliminate economic, cultural, and educational barriers to the arts and foster an inclusive, welcoming, and participative environment that engages our campus and regional community?

With a focus on these three areas, Catalyst Grants are in alignment with WCU’s Strategic Plan: **2020 VISION 2.0**, and serve to advance the mission of the Belcher College:

*To inspire, educate, and train our next generation of artists, scholars, and teachers in the intellectual foundations and creative processes of the fine and performing arts while fostering excellence and artistic curiosity across western North Carolina and beyond.*

## OVERVIEW

The Belcher College Catalyst Grants address **how we make the arts vital** to our current and future students, our university community, and the region.

Projects of any budget, to a maximum of \$10,000, will be considered. Projects of particularly ambitious scope and impact that require more than \$10,000 may be considered, but must be exemplary and uniquely innovative to qualify.

No WCU faculty, staff, or students will be compensated financially for these projects; however, depending on the scale, scope, and potential impact of a proposed project, those involved may be granted a personal research stipend of up to \$500 to support non-project-related professional travel, personal research/creative production, and professional development opportunities. Additionally, a load reassignment to support an initiative for a semester may be requested in the proposal budget.

Proposals must demonstrate a plan for sustainability of the initiative following the period of Catalyst funding. Short term, “one-and-done” projects may be proposed, but must address how the initiative’s outcomes will have continued impact following the funding period.

All Catalyst Grants must also address inclusiveness and diversity by seeking to eliminate barriers to the arts (such as financial, cultural, and educational), as well as presenting and promoting inclusiveness through the creative works or educational innovations developed through any award funding.

**Funded projects must be focused on innovation.** These grants are for innovative and impactful initiatives that change the way we engage our world through the arts. “Business as usual” projects will not be funded, regardless of their likelihood of success.

## ELIGIBILITY

All faculty, staff, and students in the David Orr Belcher College of Fine and Performing Arts are eligible to apply for a Catalyst Grant.

## CRITERIA

Proposals will be assessed on four criteria:

- **Innovation:** To what extent does the proposed initiative represent a new endeavor for the college, or synergize with WCU’s and BCFPA’s existing endeavors in new ways? To what extent does the initiative develop new areas of strength and distinction for the college?
- **Impact:** How well does the proposed initiative identify a target audience (be it student, campus, community, region, or a combination of these) and address how it will deliver meaningful, positive change to that audience’s relationship with the arts?

- **Sustainability:** How well do the proposed initiative's outcomes propagate beyond 2020? Is there a pathway to procuring continuing resources for the initiative in future years?
- **Inclusiveness and Diversity:** How well does the proposed initiative eliminate barriers to the arts (including financial, cultural, and educational), and to what extent does the proposed initiative present and/or promote inclusiveness and diversity through the creative works or educational innovations developed through any award funding?

These criteria will be weighted equally in the review process (see Appendix A: Rubric). Weight will be given also to the proposal's scope, interdisciplinarity, and synergy between critical areas (curricular development, creative placemaking, and audience development), as indicated in the rubric.

## THE GRANT PROPOSAL

Proposals must include the following components:

- **Abstract:** A summary of the proposal's key elements.
- **Narrative:** A description of the project, which must address all four of the above criteria.
- **Projected Outcomes:** An explanation of the expected outcome(s) for both the college and the target audience of the initiative, with consideration of how best to evaluate attainment of the outcome(s).
- **Timeline:** A detailed anticipated progression of the project, from funding, through development and implementation, to post-funding window outcomes reporting.
- **Budget:** A detailed budget, including potential external funding (both during the 2020 funding window and subsequent external sustainability funding). Include faculty release time requirements and infrastructure requirements (space/equipment use, etc.).

Proposals will be submitted via a Qualtrics form (link to be distributed when submissions window opens); submission of optional additional materials (media, bibliography, etc.) will be supported by the form.

## GUIDELINES AND DEADLINES

The Catalyst Grant funding window is 1 January 2020 through 31 December 2020.

Faculty and staff grant proposals will be due **Tuesday, 22 October 2019 at 5:00PM**. Late or incomplete proposals will not be reviewed.

Information and applications for student grants will be disseminated to students across the college after Welcome Week. Student grants will have a rolling submission, and student proposal budgets will be capped at \$5,000. Student grants will require a faculty/staff sponsor.

Grant awards will be announced Monday, 18 November 2019. Grant recipients will be asked to present their project to the college at the January start-up meeting.

All proposals will be reviewed by two groups – a blind review by a committee consisting of external reviewers and select faculty from the college who are not proposing a project. This group will assess and rank proposals based on the rubric.

Subsequently, the BCFPA College Leadership Team will evaluate the proposals for impact, feasibility, and funding, and will additionally determine milestones and deliverables for continued needs of the initiatives. These committees may ask for additional information or a discussion with the project team before final decisions are made.

<b>APPENDIX A: RUBRIC</b>	<b>Element Score:</b>	<b>Exemplary - 3 pts / element</b>	<b>Satisfactory - 2 pts / element</b>	<b>Unsatisfactory - 1 pt / element</b>
<b>Innovation</b>		1) A cutting-edge arts initiative: few to no models currently extant either within region or at peer institutions.	1) The initiative builds on successful models implemented at other institutions, OR develops a unique initiative with a reasonable likelihood of enhancing the college's mission.	1) The proposal replicates current offerings of the college, in type if not in particular content.
		2) The initiative synergizes with WCU's and BCFPA's existing strengths in new ways, OR offers a strong likelihood of creating a new, <i>sui generis</i> area of strength for the college.	2) The proposal presents an initiative not currently offered or pursued by the college.	2) The proposal describes an initiative that would be better funded through existing unit, college, university, or external resources.
<b>Impact</b>		1) The target audience is clearly identified, with coherent tailoring of initiative to audience.	1) The target audience is identified, with few or occasional deviations from focus on that audience in initiative development.	1) There is a lack of clarity regarding the initiative's target audience.
		2) The proposal offers demonstrable likelihood of strong positive outcomes on the target audience.	2) The proposal anticipates a reasonable likelihood of positive outcome on the target audience.	2) There is a low likelihood of the initiative's outcomes having a positive impact on the target audience.
<b>Sustainability</b>		1) A clear plan is in place for continuation of initiative beyond 2020, OR a clear explanation of initiative's continued influence on audience and college, once concluded.	1) A plan for continuation of initiative is present and plausible, but may require assistance to bring to fruition.	1) The initiative is limited to a single offering or event that has a low likelihood of continued influence on its audience or the college.
		2) Clear and plausible identification is made of future funding sources.	2) Identification of future funding sources is present, but may require further consultation to bring to plausibility.	2) The proposal lacks a plausible plan for continuation of the initiative.
<b>Inclusiveness and Diversity</b>		1) A thorough consideration of avoiding barriers to accessibility in all parameters of initiative is offered, including planning of initiative's future beyond initial funding.	1) Accessibility is given consideration in many of the initiative's parameters.	1) Accessibility is given limited consideration in the proposal.
		2) Clear consideration of diversity as a potential strength of the initiative is given in all parameters.	2) May require further consultation to explore solutions to unconsidered barriers or limitations of viewpoint.	2) Diversity is given limited or no consideration in the parameters of the initiative. <sup>2</sup>
<b>RUBRIC SCORE:</b>				

**(APPENDIX A,  
CONT'D)**

Rubric

Multipliers:

- A **Scope** (score x 1.0 - 1.1): How wide (classroom to WNC region) is the effect of the proposed initiative? | **MULTIPLIER A = 1. \_\_\_\_\_**
- B **Interdisciplinarity** (score x 1.0 - 1.05): How many college units will the initiative engage? | **MULTIPLIER B = 1. \_\_\_\_\_**
- C **Synergy** (score x 1.0 - 1.05): How many vital areas (see "Purpose," p. 1) does the initiative address? | **MULTIPLIER C = 1. \_\_\_\_\_**

**TOTAL MULTIPLIER [Mult. A: \_\_\_\_\_] x [Mult. B: \_\_\_\_\_] x [Mult. C: \_\_\_\_\_] = 1. \_\_\_\_\_**

TOTAL SCORE:

Total Score = [Rubric Score: \_\_\_\_\_] x [Total Multiplier: 1. \_\_\_\_\_]

## APPENDIX B: EXAMPLES

The **21<sup>st</sup> Century Musician initiative at DePauw** which includes 21CMposium - a gathering of like-minded artists, students, teachers, presenters and innovators reimagining the “best practices” in preparing musicians for the 21st century - and 21CM.org, an online, professional resource created expressly to help serious musicians thrive in today’s modern musical landscape. Geared towards the professional and aspiring musician, the site includes a digital magazine highlighting the people, organizations, projects and innovations advancing 21st-century musicianship, educational and informational resources focused on advantageous 21CM (21st Century Musician) skills, and The Hub — a collaborative and social platform. (<http://21cm.org/about/>)

The **Online Fine Art Degree from the Academy of Art University in San Francisco**. A fully-online MFA in studio arts. The course work includes “beautifully produced videos, narrated slideshows, digital documents, interviews with experts, livestreams” and more. As students complete assignments, they simply upload their work to the Academy’s custom-designed Learning Management System where it is shared with the class, and the instructor can leave visual markups, video, written and recorded feedback. The program has virtual collaboration spaces for students to interact with each other and the faculty. (<https://www.academyart.edu/academics/fine-art/online-degrees/>)

The **Network of Ensemble Theaters’** national symposium, **Intersections**, a meeting exploring the relationship between ensemble theatres and universities. The event brought artists and educators from across the country together to explore their premise: In a university theatre program, the primary intention can’t just be to train artists—it has to be shaping experiences and strengthening skill sets that will nurture strong agents of civic presence, bold thinkers, and empathetic human beings. (<https://www.ensembletheaters.net/gatherings/symposia>)

An example of a simple proposal:

The **Theatre Communications Group (TCG)** created the **Audience (R)Evolution** – a multi-year program to study, promote and support successful audience engagement and community development models. What if a faculty or staff member took an interdisciplinary group of students from across the college to one of the Audience (R)Evolution Convenings and then led a student think-tank (or seminar class) to develop innovative ways to engage students across the campus through the arts? (<https://www.tcg.org/Default.aspx?TabID=1746>)