The Small Research Grants Program (SRG) fosters research activity by Gallaudet and Clerc Center faculty and staff, as well as University students, by supporting research projects with small funding requirements and duration of a year or less. The Fund accepts proposals for studies on any topic of academic significance using any accepted research method. For student applications, the faculty advisor is considered to have primary responsibility for ensuring the quality of the research.

**Award Amount**

- Up to $750 for students who propose research that is undertaken as a course requirement
- Up to $2,500 for students doing research as a degree requirement and/or publication
- Up to $2,500 for faculty and staff members doing research for advance degree
- Up to $5,000 for faculty and staff members
- Only one grant will be provided per study or closely related studies.

**Award Duration**

1. The funds are for use during the current fiscal year that begins on October 1st and ends on September 30th. Your funding cannot be “carried over” to the next fiscal year. Occasionally, if we receive a written, well-justified request prior to the end of the fiscal year (September 30th), we will approve requests to allow a “no cost extension” of your award so that you may proceed in the next fiscal year.

**Deadline and review process**

Awards are made until annual funding runs out, usually by April. Apply early!

Reviewing a complete proposal may take up to 3 weeks; it may take longer if the researcher is asked to respond to feedback from the reviewers. Proposals are reviewed by Gallaudet staff and faculty members who are experienced researchers. The criteria used in evaluating proposals is shown later in this document. If the proposal is included international travel; it will take up at least 1 month for your paperwork to be processed.

**Contact**

Charles Reilly, RSIA Fund Officer, rsia.grants@gallaudet.edu

Senda Benaissa, RSIA Pre-Award Coordinator (in charge of email correspondences and completed application), rsia.grants@gallaudet.edu

Oluyinka Fakunle, RSIA Executive Secretary (in charge of post-award paperwork and payments), oluyinka.fakunle@gallaudet.edu

Various useful documents about Small Research Grants can be downloaded from http://www.gallaudet.edu/Gallaudet_Research_Institute/Research_Funding.html
**Checklist of needed documents**

- a) Cover Page (signatures are required)
- b) Abstract of the study (description of up to 200 words)
- c) Study Proposal (up to 6 double-spaced pages)
- d) Budget Statement (one page) and Budget Justification (one page)
- e) Institutional Review Board (IRB) Approval Letter (email letter from IRB is acceptable)

**Where to send your materials**

The **Cover Page and IRB Approval Letter** should be mailed or delivered to the mailroom at Research Support & International Affairs (RSIA), Dawes House, 800 Florida Avenue, NE, Washington, D.C. ROOM 206.

The **Study Proposal, Abstract, Budget Statement & Budget Justification** should be submitted electronically as one file to rsia.grants@gallaudet.edu.

**Tips for preparing a Small Research Grants application**

*Faculty members are the primary advisors* to the student who seeks a research grant. RSIA should and must rely upon the faculty member to assist with the conceptual and logistical aspects of a student’s research and grant. RSIA aims to establish good working relationships with faculty members who are assisting their students’ research, as we are able to expedite review of proposals only for students who have attentive faculty sponsors.

**a)  Cover Page**

A student must include the signature of the faculty member who is supervising the research. The signature shows that the faculty member has read the student’s proposal, considered it in relation to the Small Grants review criteria, and is available to assist as needed. The signature of the Budget Unit Head is required of all proposals submitted by Gallaudet faculty and staff members.

**b)  Abstract**

In 200 words or less, the Abstract should state the explicit purpose or question of the study, explain the significance of that question, and describe the methods and activities that will respond to the research question. Do not include citations. For tips on writing a scientific abstract, are given on this website: http://www.gallaudet.edu/rsia/research_support/research_resources.html

**c)  Study Proposal**

A suitable proposal has well-defined and feasible objectives, explicit methods of data collection and analysis, and a clear timeline. The level of detail provided in a proposal should accommodate the information needs of specialists in the academic area of the study, as well as scholars who are not specialists.
d) Budget Summary
The Budget Statement of the application should identify the specific costs associated with completion of all tasks. Proposed expenditures should be allowable according to Gallaudet and Program policies, cost-effective, and within the specified funding limit. Please try to use your Department’s resources when available, including equipment, copying and office materials.

*Only ask for what you really need! Typically, the award will be given less than the maximum. The investigator and grantees’ department may be expected to contribute toward the study.*

e) Budget Justification
An overall Budget Justification that explains the expenditures must be included in the proposal. The key elements that should be included in the budget justification are:

- A description of the expense or service
- how it relates to and benefits the study
- breakdown of the anticipated cost

*Example: “There are 40 subjects to be interviewed; each subject will participate for 2 hours and will be given $20 compensation.”*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A SRG grant can be used for</th>
<th>A SRG grant can not be used for</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Payments to subjects</td>
<td>Equipment. (Durable equipment and specialized software are sometimes lent to the investigator.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Travel expense for purpose of collecting data (transportation, lodging, meals)</td>
<td>Investigator’s salary, wage, stipend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialized supplies*</td>
<td>Payment to specialists or technicians for completion of work customarily expected of the investigator, i.e., statistical analysis &amp; transcription</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other expenses relevant to the study</td>
<td>Hiring others to do the work for investigator unless it is determined that a study cannot be conducted by the investigator because of language or other limitations.</td>
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*All equipment items purchased with the grant are the property of Gallaudet University. The assignment of equipment after completion of the project is negotiated by the Fund Officer and the grantees’ Department Chair.*

f) Institutional Review Board (IRB) Approval Letter
When the study involves human research volunteers, either on the Gallaudet campus or elsewhere, funding of a study is contingent upon approval by the University’s IRB. IRB approval is not required before submitting an application for Small Grants funding. However, funds cannot be made available until the applicant provides a copy of the IRB letter of approval. Participation of Clerc Center students as volunteers requires additional approval from Clerc administrators. For information on the IRB, see [http://www.gallaudet.edu/institutional_review_board_(irb).html](http://www.gallaudet.edu/institutional_review_board_(irb).html)
Evaluation of the proposal

Proposals are reviewed by skilled researchers and sometimes by persons knowledgeable in the pertinent field of study. If necessary, feedback is given in order to strengthen the chances of funding. Below are three criteria used in evaluation of a proposal. We suggest that you consider these criteria in writing your proposal.

**Criterion 1: Clearly defined research purposed or question.**

*Is the research question or purpose that guides the study clear?*

*Has sufficient and specific information been given as to what the study will test, determine, learn, and/or describe? Is it feasible within the limitations of funding and time?*

An effective proposal articulates a specific and narrowed research question or purpose that can be accomplished within the Program funding limits and within the time limit of one year. Careful articulation of the research question or purpose is crucial, because it is the reviewer’s primary basis for appraising the effectiveness of the research methods presented in the proposal. The statement of the study’s research purpose remains the same throughout the proposal. The proposal presents concepts and defines terminology needed for the reviewer to understand the study’s purpose. A proposal that does not respond well to this criterion leaves the reviewer with appreciable uncertainty about the precise focus of the investigation; key terminology may be undefined. An inadequate proposal also may state a purpose or multiple purposes that are beyond the scope of what can be accomplished within the limitations of time and funding.

**Criterion 2: Significant research question/purpose.**

*Has it been clearly stated how the address a gap in theoretical or practical knowledge? Is the potential gain worth the investment?*

This section should emphasize the contribution that the study will make to the field. What is the uncertainty or information gap in the academic field that justifies the investigation? An effective proposal makes a persuasive case that the findings from the research will constitute a worthwhile contribution to the field, justifying the investment of effort and/or resources. The significance may be based, for example, on potential contributions to improved professional practice, resolution of an arguable gap or inconsistency in the literature of the field, or the addition of authentic new knowledge to the field, including by extension or replication of existing knowledge. When appropriate, the proposal grounds the study in a larger theoretical context in a manner that is selective given the page limits of the proposal. When the application is by a student, there are indications that the study is likely to foster a productive educational experience. If the study is a pilot study, the proposal makes a case for the need for such preliminary work prior to a more complete future study. An inadequate proposal fails to state a rationale for consuming time and resources in order to address its research question.

**Criterion 3: Effective research methods.**

*Are the procedures suitable for the research questions? As the data collection and analytic approach explained in detail?*

The proposal should identify, define, and justify the procedures that will be used to accomplish the research purpose or answer the research question of the study. The methods of the study can include such components as site selection, choice of archives, sample characteristics, data collection methods, experimental design, and data analysis. When judging the merit of study methods, proposal reviewers must evaluate whether each component of the methodology addresses the study’s stated purpose. Thus, a well articulated purpose or question is crucial to a determination of whether the study’s methods are effective. An inadequate proposal fails to describe the methods with sufficient detail for the reviewer to judge whether they respond effectively to the research question/purpose. A proposal also may be inadequate either because a component of the methodology is inappropriate for responding to the research question, or because a necessary component is missing.
Other Related Policies

1. University Accounting Policies. Applicants agree to expend funds and document expenditures in a manner that is consistent with existing University accounting policies and procedures. Researchers who receive awards are responsible for learning the relevant policies pertaining to the cost categories of their study, and should ask for assistance from their Department Secretary and Chair. RSIA’s Executive Secretary will work with you and your Department Secretary to clarify university policies.

2. Only One Time Applying. One faculty member may apply for funding of a study. If faculty or staff members seek to build a research team, consider applying for external funding. You may also consider applying for a Priority Research Fund grant (PRF) that can support multiple investigators and assistants.

3. Priority to Developing Investigators. Due to high demand for funding, we are placing higher priority on full funding of student applications for dissertation and theses. While we will try to provide fundamental support for other studies, faculty and staff applicants will likely see their budgets reduced. This is not a reflection of the quality of the proposal; rather a small fund must be stretched to support a growing number of studies from across the campus. Also, please be reminded of our long-established priorities:

   One goal of the Small Grants Program is to encourage research by new investigators, and funding priority is given to the proposals of applicants who are at the developing stage of their research program compared to applicants with more extensive research experience. Moreover, we encourage researchers who have already received funding to seek external funding to continue and/or to expand their research activity.

4. Hiring Students as Assistants. The hiring of student assistants under this Fund is generally not permitted. These small grants are intended to support individuals in conducting their own research study. We want the primary investigator, whether a faculty or staff member or student, to be fully engaged in the research activity. In general, engaging research assistants is not appropriate for the spirit or the dollar level of SRGs.

   Nevertheless, we may, on rare occasions, allow the use of SRG monies to hire students as research assistants to faculty or staff researchers. The conditions for such approval include our judgment that:
   a. The monies are being used for a distinct research study (not merely supporting an ongoing operation, work relationship or general research agenda);
   b. The researcher has mastery of the field of study and as such offers students a unique opportunity to learn from the researcher;
   c. We have assurances that the student will substantially benefit from the relationship and participation in the research activity;
   d. The inclusion of the student as co-principal investigator or for the student to solely conduct the study by himself or herself is not appropriate.
   e. The learning objectives for the student to be engaged in the study have been specified and the principal investigator agrees to assess the student’s progress by the end of the study.

5. Establishing learning objectives for students involved in research. As part of our consideration of a request for student wages, we will require researchers to determine learning objectives for the student research assistant using the "General Inventory of Research Skills" (GIRS). This determination must be done to satisfaction before a grant is awarded. In short, the researcher will specify the tasks that the students will do during the study and to identify what the student will learn
about research. The response of the researcher to the task of adapting and applying the rubric on research learning will be used in our decision-making on funding. The "general inventory of research skills" (GIRS) may be seen by clicking Research Funding at http://research.gallaudet.edu

After the grant is awarded, the learning objectives may be tailored to the individual student who is hired. The learning objectives become the baseline for later assessment of the student’s progress in learning about research. We require that the researcher assess the student’s progress afterwards, and report to us. In turn, RSIA will report on findings about students learning of research to the university’s Office of Academic Quality.

6. *Documentation for all expenditures* should be submitted by September 7 at the latest. Expenses submitted after this deadline may not be covered. Your funding cannot be “carried over” to the next fiscal year. Occasionally, if we receive a written, well-justified request prior to the end of the fiscal year, we will approve requests to allow a “no cost extension” of your award so that you may proceed in the next fiscal year.

7. *Submission of a Final Report.* The applicant agrees to submit a brief final report that describes the activities of the study and explains how those activities have responded to the research question or purpose of the study.

8. *Submission of an Annual Report of Achievement.* Prior to receiving the award letter, you must provide a summary of your research project to the "Gallaudet Research and Scholarship Database". This information will be listed in the university's Annual Report of Achievements (ARA). Go to http://research.gallaudet.edu/ara_forms and "add a new research project" using the form.