

M | ARTS INITIATIVE M | RESEARCH

Initial Steps

- Carefully read the call for proposals (CFP), focusing specifically on eligibility parameters and deadlines.
- If publicly available, review lists of prior successful projects.
- Identify key terms and ideas in the call.

Clarifying your Project

Define your project.

- In 2-3 sentences, describe your project, focusing on the most significant aspect of the project.
- Consider the draft from different perspectives. How would it be read by someone within your field? Someone adjacent to your field?
- Given how you've described your project thus far, what are the specific ways it connects to key terms and ideas in the call?
- Approach your project idea like a dramaturg, asking: "What does this project bring into the world, and how does it relate (or not) to the times in which we live?"

Who/what will Benefit from the Project?

- Field(s), Discipline(s)
- Students
- Collaborators
- Specific communities (location-wise, demographic-wise, etc.)
- Audiences/Readers
- Policymakers
- You/your career trajectory/research program

Consider what you need in order to make the project successful

- Who do you need to work with? This question might inform your discussion of your research team and/or collaborators.
- What do you need to do alone? With others? This question can inform your description of the project's development, as well as the schedule/timeline.

- When is the ideal timing for the project? This question might help you consider how the project will move into the public. Will it be part of presenters' seasons, a museum exhibit series?
- Where do you (and any collaborators) need to be? This question might inform your schedule/timeline, as well as budget, as you determine the spaces in which you will work, for how long and with whom, etc.

Developing Supporting Documents

The Budget

Expenses to consider for inclusion

- Meetings/gatherings early in the project for collaborators to meet
- Studio time or rehearsals for yourself and/or with others
- Studio visits and/or work-in-progress showings with dramaturgs, editors, critics, and/or other "outside eyes" into the creative process
- Archival, curatorial, and/or ethnographic research
- Site visits with potential presenting/exhibition partners, communities of collaboration, and/or lands and locales
- Supplies and materials
- Time (residency periods, incubation period with collaborators, course releases);
- Personnel (salaries/honorariums/stipends)
- Performances, exhibits, construction, publication, and/or touring
- Documentation/Dissemination (web/digital, video, photography, transcription, publication, etc.)

Income Details to consider

- What is confirmed?
- What is pending?

Other Budget Details

- Has all the math been double-checked? Ensuring budgets are clear and correct is a first step in ensuring a funder you can successfully manage awarded funds.
- If requesting salary and/or course releases from the University, check with the appropriate person(s) in your department or unit to ensure all amounts in the budget are correct and appropriate approvals have been obtained.

Budget Justification/Explanation

How does the Budget and its justifications, which might be included in some budget templates and/or expanded upon in a justification statement, explain the costs of your project? This should include breaking down larger numbers into their component parts, as well as explaining why a budget line is essential to the project.

Related questions:

- How can you make the budget justification/explanation more clear and succinct?
- Do these budget justifications provide context for larger numbers in the budget?
- Does the budget justification/explanation make clear what are essential elements of the project that must be funded? (This can be an important element if reviewers are considering providing partial funding for the project.)

Letters of Commitment

- Are there significant organizational or unit partners that are key to the success of the project?
- Who is the most appropriate person, especially at a named organization/institution, to have a letter of commitment from?

Approaching Funders

- If contact information or aggregate email addresses are available, that is a sign it is acceptable, even expected, for applicants to reach out with questions.