

“Rise Above” Request for Proposals

The Office of Diversity & Inclusion (ODI) at the University of Maryland is seeking proposals (*up to \$750.00 per awardee*) from the campus community for events and other endeavors that further the overall goals of the “Rise Above” campaign. All proposed projects will be considered as long as funds remain available.

Goals of the “Rise Above” Campaign Grants

The Rise Above campaign focuses our University community on assumptions and biases that we need to overcome and values that we need to embrace in order to create an inclusive campus. The campaign calls on us to "Rise Above" racism, sexism, homophobia, and other forms of bias and, instead, to “embrace” unity and diversity. Through this grant program, ODI seeks to offer members of the campus community opportunities to actively engage themselves around issues of diversity, culture, identity, bias, and difference. Thus, the Rise Above grants aim to help students, staff and faculty:

- Understand more deeply their own and others' identities and the implications of diverse identities for creating an inclusive campus;
- Enhance awareness of their assumptions and biases related to difference (based on race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, socioeconomic status, religion/spirituality, ability, age, education, job position, etc.);
- Strengthen skills in communicating and interacting with others about issues related to identity and difference; and,
- Deepen understanding of, and commitment to, the values of equity, diversity and inclusion.

Consequently, we are particularly interested in projects that undertake the following:

- Overtly and directly engage groups around diversity topics in new and innovative ways that go beyond traditional “panel discussion” presentations;
- Ideally, represent a collaboration of two or more units or groups that typically might not interact or have a history of conflict or strained relations;
- Provide opportunities for experiential learning about identity and difference;
- Foster "difficult dialogues" about identity and difference;
- Explore some of the lesser-addressed "isms", for example, classism, elitism, rankism, religious bias, and ableism;
- Utilize creative ideas for where dialogue and engagement occurs, like online community forums, video conferencing, webinars, group blogs, etc.;
- Address multiple identities and multiple "isms" and their intersections.

Please note: Past experience suggests that some applications for the Rise Above grant, while worthy projects, often do not directly address the need for direct, facilitated engagement with participants (as stated above). Grant applications for traditional panel discussions or symposia will not be funded without more evidence of proactive facilitated engagement with participants.

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Who is Eligible to Apply?

Any student, staff, and/or faculty member at the University of Maryland who wishes to engage in this work is encouraged to apply. Because the dispersal of funds requires a campus account number, the potential grantee must be affiliated with an SGA-recognized student organization or University of Maryland campus unit.

What can the funding be used for?

Funding can be used for space rentals, print resources, small equipment, consumable supplies, refreshments, student assistants, and stipends and travel expenses for consultants and/or facilitators. Grants will *not* be given for presentations by outside speakers, unless there is an additional component that directly addresses one or more of the above goals. Note: priority will be given to projects likely to have ongoing or sustained impact.

Examples of suitable projects for the grants include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Student organizations engaging with each other around issues of race, gender, and/or religion, etc.
- A conversation about gender identity and expression that occurs across Skype from various national and/or international locations
- Dialogue between exempt and non-exempt staff about “rankism”
- Faculty discussion of their academic discipline and what the discipline needs to “rise above” in order to be diverse and inclusive
- Resident Life (Community Directors, Resident Assistants, etc.) staff that create new diversity-relevant training that contains conflict resolution skills for their residents
- Cultural identity groups that have a “within group” conversation about issues of bias or prejudice
- Student group(s) or work unit(s) that utilize a book, movie, or community service project to foster a conversation about diversity issues
- Work unit engages a consultant/facilitator to assist the team in addressing what they need to work harder on in order to “rise above” and what they need to more fully embrace

We recognize that it is often important to have skilled facilitation when engaging people in difficult conversations about identity and difference. We have compiled a list of experienced individuals for applicants to consider if they wish to utilize facilitators. The list of trained campus facilitators (and their respective costs) is available upon request.

Timeline

Proposals will be accepted and reviewed in a *rolling process*; i.e., potential projects will be reviewed at any time (provided that funding is still available).

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Submission Process

Download application forms at the following address:

www.provost.umd.edu/diversity

Email the completed application as an MS Word or PDF attachment to Kumea Shorter-Gooden, Chief Diversity Officer: kshorter@umd.edu

Application

Submit a proposal of no more than 1000 words (using the MS Word application form) in clear, sans serif 12-point font. The application must include:

1. Proposal applicant(s) with complete contact information (including phone and email)
2. Affiliated or sponsoring organization(s)
3. Campus account number that will host the funds
4. Business manager in charge of the account (including complete contact information with phone and email)
5. *Project Synopsis* – Provide a very brief synopsis of the project for purposes of advertising. (No more than 50 words).
6. *Project Objectives* – State specific goals to be achieved and potential for future impact. (No more than 100 words).
7. *Project Rationale* – Describe the background, history, or context that makes this project compelling and timely. How does this project encourage participants to “Rise Above” difference and division? What impact do you hope to have? (No more than 250 words).
8. *Implementation* – Describe the plan for implementation of the project. Be specific: What units and organizations are involved? Who will do what? If specialized skills are required, for example, to facilitate a “difficult dialogue,” indicate who will provide the specialized skills. (If the specific person has not yet been selected, indicate the process for vetting this person.) What is the timeline? How will the project be evaluated? (No more than 500 words).
9. *Line-item Budget* - Template included in application form.
10. *Budget*– Include a justification for the proposed budget request. (No more than 200 words).

Applicants can expect to hear about the status of their application within one full-business week.

Questions or inquiries about the proposal process can be submitted to *Kumea Shorter-Gooden, Chief Diversity Officer, Office of Diversity & Inclusion*, at kshorter@umd.edu or 301.405.6810. We especially encourage work units and student groups that may not have sponsored diversity-related projects in the past to consider applying. If you need help with the application process, please contact us.

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Application Review Process

Proposals will be reviewed by staff from the Office of Diversity & Inclusion. The core criteria for the proposals are:

- *Degree to which the project actively engages participants in thoughtful exploration of diversity topics and issues*
- Degree to which the project contains a potential for future, sustained engagement
- Degree to which the project engages communities or groups that are not typically engaged in diversity programming
- Wise use of funds
- Feasibility
- Degree to which impact can be evaluated