Maryland Dialogues on Diversity and Community

Mini-Grant Program

The President's Student Advisory Council on Diversity and Inclusion, in concert with the Office of Diversity & Inclusion (ODI), is seeking proposals from UMD student groups for events and activities that further the goals of the Maryland Dialogues on Diversity and Community. Each awardee can receive up to $750.00. All proposed projects will be considered as long as funds remain available.

Goals of the Maryland Dialogue Mini-Grant Program

The Maryland Dialogues on Diversity and Community have been launched by President Loh in order to increase the campus community's awareness, knowledge and skills related to diversity and inclusion. Recent national events, such as those in Charleston and Ferguson, help to frame the importance of the Dialogues. Moreover, events closer to home, including the misogynist and sexist email written by a UMD student and the renaming of Byrd Stadium, bring even greater urgency to this initiative. The Dialogues begin in Spring 2016 and are expected to continue over several years. The initial focus will be on race, race relations, and racial justice; however, the aim is to address racial issues from an intersectional perspective, thus acknowledging the importance of other identity dimensions, such as gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, religion, ability, and socioeconomic status. Moreover, proposals that do not focus on race will also be considered. Overall, the Dialogue Mini-Grants aim to help students and student organizations:

- Understand more deeply their own and others' identities and the implications of diverse identities for creating an inclusive campus and world;
- Enhance awareness of their assumptions and biases related to difference, particularly racial and ethnic differences;
- Strengthen skills in communicating and interacting across difference about issues related to identity and difference;
- Deepen understanding of, and commitment to, the values of equity, diversity and inclusion;
- Develop more meaningful and productive relationships amongst students and student groups of different cultural or social identities, such that learning occurs, and new alliances are forged, and the culture of the University shifts.

Consequently, we are particularly interested in projects that undertake one or more of the following:

- Overtly and directly engage groups around diversity topics in new and innovative ways;
- Represent a collaboration of two or more groups that typically might not interact or have a history of tension or strained relations;
- Provide opportunities for experiential learning about identity and difference;
- Foster "difficult dialogues" about identity and difference;

- Engage students, staff and/or faculty in discussions of challenging diversity-related topics, like "free speech and hate speech", "trigger warnings", "what are safe spaces and are they important?" and "cultural appropriation"
- Utilize creative strategies for dialogue and engagement, through, for example, storytelling or dramatic arts.

Examples of Fundable Grants

Some examples of suitable projects are:

- A traditional White sorority and a traditional Black sorority host a conversation, led by an experienced facilitator, about how race and racism impact their perceptions of each other and how to forge a path forward;
- Several Asian student organizations sponsor a speaker on within-group ethnocentrism, followed by a workshop that engages students in understanding and addressing intra-group racism, colorism and rankism;
- A Black student organization hosts a panel on misogyny and homophobia in the Black community, followed by a facilitated discussion in small groups;
- An educational campaign co-sponsored by a Muslim student group and a Jewish student group to raise awareness about religious bias, anti-Semitism, and Islamophobia
- An interactive session on White privilege and White supremacy
- Three panelists present on "free speech vs. hate speech", followed by small group discussions and reporting-out by the small groups
- Latinx student groups host a story circle focused on exploring the intersections of their Latinx identities – Begins with a dialogue followed by a poetry writing session

We recognize that it is important to have skilled facilitation when engaging people in difficult conversations about identity and difference. The Office of Diversity & Inclusion has a list of experienced facilitators, some of whom are available for free, others who are available for a fee.

Who is Eligible to Apply?

Applicants should be affiliated with and sponsored by a UMD registered student organization. However, in cases where the student group is *not* registered, the student group must be sponsored by a UMD department, unit or program.

What can the Funding be used for?

Funding can be used for space rentals, print resources, small equipment, consumable supplies, refreshments, 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.

Application Process

The proposal should include:

1. Proposal applicant(s)
2. Registered student group(s) that are sponsoring the proposal
3. *Title of Project*
4. *Project Synopsis* – Provide a 50-word synopsis of the project.
5. *Project Objectives* – State specific goals to be achieved. (No more than 100 words).
6. *Project Rationale* – Describe the background, history, or context that makes this project compelling and timely. How does this project connect to the goals of the Maryland Dialogues? How many students (or other people) do you expect to participate? What impact do you hope to have? (No more than 250 words).
7. *Implementation* – Describe the plan for implementation of the project. Be specific: What groups, units and organizations are involved? 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 or the chronology of the event(s)? What is the marketing and outreach plan? How, if at all, will the project be shared with the broader community, for example, through social media? How will the success of the project be determined? (No more than 500 words).
8. *Line-item Budget* – Include a line-item budget. Note that $750 is the maximum amount that will be allocated through the Dialogue Mini-Grants.
9. *Budget Rationale*– Include a justification for the proposed budget request. Indicate if there are other sources of funding. (No more than 200 words).

Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis and applicants can expect to hear about the status of their application within two weeks.

Note that successful grantees will be expected to submit a brief summary of the project after completion.

Proposal Review Process

Proposals will be reviewed by a subcommittee of the President's Student Advisory Council on Diversity and Inclusion. The core criteria for the proposals are:

- Degree to which the project addresses one or more of the aims of the Dialogue Mini-Grant program (listed above)
- Degree to which the project addresses issues of race, race relations and/or racial justice
- Creativity and innovation in project design and plan
- Feasibility of the project
- Rational, reasonable budget request
- Potential impact of the project -- short-term and long-term

It is *not* expected that all funded projects will be strong in all of these areas.