

CRITERIA SAAB GRANT PROGRAM



As SAAB members, one of our most challenging tasks is deciding how to allocate the \$40,000 per year that we give out in academic grants to students. You can read more about our four grant programs and equipment request program in the various pieces of SAAB literature. This document, however, is designed to make you aware of the criteria SAAB looks for in grants and what kinds of projects SAAB funds.

What makes a good application?

This is truly SAAB's perennial question. We receive many applications throughout the year, and each one of them is special and unique. However, we do not have enough money to fund them all. Therefore, we have to pick the "good" from the "bad," a tough choice, to be sure. However, if you look at our criteria with the proper frame of mind, the job becomes much easier.

Criteria

Even before you consider funding an application, there are certain basic criteria which applications must meet in order to be considered. These include the following:

- ❖ Applicant(s) must be full-time members of ASLC, with some exceptions allowed for leave of absence students. If you pay student fees you may also apply.
- ❖ Applicant(s) must be in good academic standing.
- ❖ The project must be completed before the applicant(s) graduates.
- ❖ The project must be academic in nature.
- ❖ Applications should have few, if any, typographical or grammatical errors.

Questions you should ask yourself

It may help you to ask certain questions about an application as you are reading it. Here are just some samples issues you might consider:

- ❖ Does this person have a clearly-defined goal for their project?
- ❖ How much will this project benefit the LC community (even if it doesn't reach a lot of people)?
- ❖ Since we are funding this with student fees, do I feel that this project deserves the support of the entire student body?
- ❖ Does the person appear passionate/excited/invested in what s/he is doing?
- ❖ Does this project coherently fit with academic goals (either the applicant's or the campus's)?
- ❖ Does their letter of recommendation communicate academic and personal respect for the applicant?
- ❖ Has this person obviously worked to find the best prices available?

Are there issues specific to each grant type?

Yes! Given that SAAB has four different types of grants, we of course need to consider different factors when funding them. Here are a few of these.

Program & Conference

Since Program & Conference grants are funded on a rolling basis, it is important to hold these applications to SAAB's high standard. Just because we only have one application during a certain week doesn't mean we should fund it. This allows us to ensure fairness for both present and future applicants by judging them by the same standards. Other issues specific to Program & Conference applications include how they intend to bring back their experiences to LC, what they will be doing at the program or conference, and how much benefit s/he will get by participating.

Arts Expression

This grant category is difficult since SAAB is not and should not be in the business of art critique. Instead, we must examine the goals of the applicant and the benefit to the campus community. By nature, these projects are a huge benefit to LC, and given this, there are a few questions you should ask. Does the applicant have a clear idea of why s/he is presenting this art? Is s/he taking his/her performance or display above and beyond the regular final project?

Research

Our largest grant category can also prove to be our most difficult. We regularly get twice to three times requested of what we can actually fund. Therefore, we particularly pour over these applications. Ask yourself whether the person has a clearly-defined research question. Will the applicant's proposed methodology answer that question? Is the timeline sufficient to complete the project? Has s/he done enough preliminary research on the region/subject s/he is addressing? If you are conducting research on a human subjects, has your work been approved by the Human Subjects Research Committee (<http://www.lclark.edu/org/irb/>)?

Visiting Scholar

Since they are funded on a rolling basis, one often might be compelled to fund a Visiting Scholar grants simply because it's in front of us. Again, however, we need to ensure that all applicants are judged by similar standards. Like Arts Expression grants, VS grants also benefit LC by their very nature. However, issues to consider are what group the application is targeting, what the goals are of bringing this person to campus, whether the person has an itinerary that maximizes their contact with students, and the interest this person would generate.

This simple set of suggestions pales in comparison to experience. As SAAB members become more familiar with the application process, these decisions become easier. SAAB members do a great service to Lewis & Clark by making these difficult decisions.