



**Announcement of Faculty Grants
for *Visions and Voices* 2008–2009
of the Provost’s Arts & Humanities Initiative**

Request for Preliminary Proposals

Office of the Provost

Focus:

During his installation in Fall 2005, Provost Nikias identified as a key priority the need to “affirm what is most essential and most enduring within the human spirit.” The provost also noted that “there is a difference between knowledge transfer and an academic community. Knowledge transfer you can get anywhere. But we are interested in creating the best possible environment and culture for education, for transformation.” He also called upon “all USC students to develop an appreciation of the arts and humanities—regardless of discipline.” Subsequently, in announcing the Provost’s Arts & Humanities Initiative, he observed that “these disciplines fully capture the values of the university and provide students with an outstanding opportunity to examine their own relationship to these values on a truly personal level. The arts and humanities bring these values to life, illuminating their complexities and nuances.”

During 2006–2007, the Provost’s Arts & Humanities Initiative presented the inaugural year of *Visions & Voices*, an exciting and diverse series of over 100 events funded by the Provost’s Office. The series continues in 2007–2008, and each year has included many programs proposed and developed by faculty. *We are now requesting preliminary proposals from USC faculty for the 2008–2009 event series.* The series will continue to broaden the engagement of USC students with the arts and humanities and confirm the university’s commitment to the central role these disciplines play in public life.

Events can span a broad array of formats, including performances, lectures, screenings, workshops, and panel conversations, and each event should facilitate discussion of USC’s core values through a meaningful encounter with the arts and/or humanities. We encourage well-defined individual events but will also consider series of two to three events across the year. Performance events will need to incorporate a formal discussion or reflexive component. All events should address a broad audience with a primary focus on USC students and also enhance USC’s profile as a leader in the arts and humanities. The Provost’s Office will provide substantial funding for several faculty-initiated, high-profile events during the 2008–2009 academic year. Support will be arranged for major services for the series, and Managing Director Daria Yudacufski will work closely with grant recipients to promote each event. However, substantial responsibility for event planning and execution will reside with the grant recipient.

Preliminary Proposals:

Faculty or teams of faculty who are interested in applying for these funds should send a preliminary proposal (500 words), a 100-word abstract that clearly describes the event and its relationship to the initiative's goals, and a one-page bio for each team member by September 21, 2007, to the contact person below. Events that include student organizations, individual students, or staff as team members are particularly encouraged as are events that dovetail with curricular initiatives. In the proposal, please describe the event, why it would be of interest to students, how it will contribute to their exploration of core values, and how it facilitates meaningful faculty-student interaction. Following an initial review of the preliminary proposals, the faculty advisory committee will provide applicants with information about the full application and review process.

Deadlines:

September 21, 2007, 5:00 PM: Preliminary proposals due
Early November 2007: Request for full applications sent out
Early January 2008: Full proposals due
February or March 2008: Successful applicants notified

Assessment Criteria:

Primary Assessment Criteria:

1. How will the event be of high quality and how will it be perceived as such?
2. How does the event relate to USC's Core Values and how will it incorporate discussion and reflection on these values?
3. How will the event attract broad student interest? How have students been involved in conceptualizing the event?
4. Is the event feasible (i.e., can it be successfully produced and completed in the estimated time)?

Secondary Assessment Criteria:

5. How will the event promote faculty-student interaction?
6. How does the event connect to broader curricular goals?
7. How will the event enhance USC's reputation as a leader in the arts and humanities?

Contact Person:

Contact Tara McPherson, Faculty Committee Chair, at tmcphers@usc.edu or (213) 740-3330 with questions. Preliminary proposals should be emailed as a Word document to her by 5:00 PM on September 21, 2007.

USC's Core Values

Four sets of core values are particularly critical in this context. First is free inquiry, an institutional commitment to the search for truth that must be defended against any external or internal threats.

The second set of core values is usually described as the values of the Trojan Family, standards which have long defined USC's interactions with its stakeholders and which will continue to guide us in the future. These standards include: caring and respect for one another as individuals; appreciation of diversity; team spirit; strong alumni networks; and a commitment to service.

The third set of core values involves a commitment to informed risk-taking within a culture of targeted experimentation that can help USC prepare for an uncertain future. By crafting experiments related to our vision and strategic capabilities, we will learn what works in a changing world. Such experiments will be most beneficial if we can learn to appreciate the fact that not all attempts at innovation will succeed, and that much can be learned from so-called "useful failures."

The fourth and final set of core values comprises our commitment to ethical conduct as spelled out in our recently adopted Code of Ethics.

These values define our community, sustain a sense of cohesiveness, and connect us to our past and to our future. They will guide us in making difficult and sometimes risky decisions, and will help us make choices that preserve USC's integrity, community, and quality.

—from USC's Plan for Increasing Academic Excellence:
Building Strategic Capabilities for the University of the 21st Century