WiSSC Funding Grant Report
Spring 2019

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Introduction:
With funding from the UA Office of the Provost, the Women in STEM Student Council (WiSSC) oversaw two funding competitions during the spring of 2019 aimed at supporting the entry, persistence, and success of women in STEM fields. The first was a travel grant program which covered funds for student travel for academic or professional development from January 1 - June 30, 2019. The grant covered reimbursable travel expenses up to $500 for individual University of Arizona students, such as airfare, hotel/lodging, local transportation, and event registration fees. The award was dispensed to the student as a stipend through the University of Arizona. The second was a program grant which funded initiatives and events related to the Council’s mission of fostering the entry, retention, and success of women in STEM fields. These included, but were not necessarily limited to activities, academic seminars, conferences, meetings with industry representatives, etc. WiSSC would fund up to $500 to cover expenses for programming by a University of Arizona student organization from April 1 - June 1, 2019.

Application process:
Due to time constraints (we had to build the grant cycle from scratch in less than 2 months) we used google forms as our application portal. We sent out the call for applications and opened the forms on February 28 and closed them March 22. The applications were reviewed on March 24, and notifications were sent out on March 25.

Travel Grants
The application consisted of the cover sheet, impact statement, budget, and CV. We had the students list the contact information for a faculty recommender in case we needed to request a letter, but did not see the need in this grant round to actual request any letters.

The cover sheet contained the basic information about the student and the event they were requesting. The cover letter can be seen in the appendix. The impact statement had a 500 word limit, and was requested to be:

The impact statement should be a clear and concise non-technical description of the student’s reason for travel. A successful statement should include a brief description of the event and a description of how attending the event will contribute to or impact the applicant’s own knowledge, professional development, or career.
We did not have a specific budget form, instead we requested that students list all expenses related to the proposed travel and specify the amount (up to $500) requested from WiSSC. We indicated that the requested items may only include airfare, lodging, car and/or local transportation during event, and event registration or membership fees. The students were also requested to have a brief paragraph justifying the amount of funding requested from WiSSC and a description of other attempts to obtain funding. Finally we requested a CV or resume be uploaded with the application in pdf format. We asked for the CV to be a maximum of three pages both to make it easier to review and to have a more comparable to a resume.

Program Grants

The application consisted of a cover sheet, short proposal, a budget, and a statement of support. The cover sheet contained the basic information about the student and the event they were requesting. The cover letter can be seen in the appendix. The proposal (maximum 1000 words) was requested to include a brief description of the initiative, event, or activity, as well as a description of how this initiative, event, or activity will contribute to the mission of the Women in STEM Student Council. A successful proposal was supposed to identify the intended audience of the initiative, event, or programming, as well as how the event would directly benefit that group. The budget was requested to include all expenses related to the proposed initiative, event or activity, as well as the amount (up to $500) requested from WiSSC. The items requested had to be spent in accordance with University of Arizona and Arizona Board of Regents (ABOR) policy. The budget also was to include a brief justification of the items requested in your budget and a description of other attempts to obtain funding. The final component was a short (one-page) statement of support from a UA faculty or staff member. The statement could be from the club advisor or another member the faculty or staff that was familiar with the initiative.

Review Method:

The applications were reviewed in a two-step process by three members of the executive board. All applications were initially reviewed anonymously based on their Impact statement, budget, and budget justification. The applications were reviewed in random order in groups of six to prevent fatigue. The applications were blinded by the VP of Funding to ensure that no personal information was present, most importantly their name and gender identification. An example of a blind application can be seen in the appendix.

All applications were ranked individually by the three reviewers out of 10 (5 total points for impact statement, 3 for budget, and 2 for budget justification). The scoring rubric can be seen in the appendix. The scores from all judges were averaged, and the top candidates 13 candidates (~1/3 of applications) were reviewed unblinded in a holistic manner by the group at large. In choosing the top 13 candidates, we picked the top 10 graduate students and the top 13 undergraduate students. This was done to ensure we maintained a representative sample of grad and undergrad winners (based on the total number of applications we received).
In the final evaluation we looked at their CVs, their cover page, and took into consideration how we were distributing the awards across different departments/colleges and professional development/research needs.

Summary of Grant Results:

Travel Grants
The first cycle of grant applications was very successful for the travel grants. We had 33 complete applications from students in 18 different departments across the colleges of Animal and Life Sciences, Engineering, Science, Social and Behavioral Science, and the Graduate Interdisciplinary program. The specific education level, gender, and department data can be seen below. 90% of applicants were requesting funds to travel to a conference or workshop and 10% were requesting funds to travel as part of their research. The average amount of funds indicated as being needed for travel was $1164 ($934 average for domestic travel and $2084 average for international travel). Two-thirds of applicants had indicated that they also applied for outside funding, of which GPSC Travel Grants and departmental travel grants were the most common other sources of funding students were seeking.

We awarded a total of $3,854 to seven applicant. Five (71%) of the applicants were graduate students and two (29%) were undergraduates. They represent seven distinct majors from the College of Science (3), College of Social and Behavioral Science (2), College of Engineering (1), and the Graduate Interdisciplinary Program (1). Six of the students were traveling to attend conferences while one was traveling to conduct research. Two awardees were traveling internationally and five were attending events domestically.

After the grant was awarded one of the awardees reached out to us to say she could no longer attend the event because she was not awarded any other funding. WiSSC had extra funds available and we offered to cover the additional $345 needed for her to attend the event. In future we may consider establishing a formal process for granting additional funds on a need basis.

Program Grants
We had no applications this cycle for the Programming Grant. One person reached out via email interested in applying but never submitted an application. One reason that this maybe was that the application cycle was relatively short this round and the student groups did not have enough time to apply. The window for putting on the events was also very narrow for this cycle, and at the end of the semester which can be a busy time for students. In future we may need to reconsider how we will run program grant applications. One method maybe to make it a rolling application and consider proposed programs on a case by case basis. Another method maybe partnering more closely with WISE, ASUA, and GPSC. Since those programs have more connections to student groups and have standard grants that are well established, we could ask them to nominate applications for our program when they receive pertinent applications.
Statistics:

Number of Applicants
33 complete applications
Graduate: 27 (81.8%)
Undergraduate: 6 (18.2%)
Average Year in Program: 2.5 years

Gender Breakdown
Female-identifying: 30 (90.9%)
Male-Identifying: 2 (6.1%)
Did Not Specify: 1 (3%)

Department and College
Number of Departments represented: 18
College of Animal and Life Sciences: 2 (6.1%)
  Ag Ed & SNRE (1)
  Animal Science (1)
College of Engineering: 9 (27.3%)
  Chemical and Environmental Engineering (4)
  Electrical and Computer Engineering (1)
  Mining Engineering (4)
College of Science: 14 (42.4%)
  Chemistry and Biochemistry (2)
  Ecology and Evolutionary Biology (1)
  Geoscience (1)
  Hydrology and Atmospheric Science (1)
  Neuroscience (4)
  Planetary Science (1)
  Psychology (4)
Graduate Interdisciplinary Program: 3 (9.1%)
  Applied Math (1)
  Cancer Biology (1)
  Physiological Sciences (1)
Social and Behavioral Sciences: 4 (12.1%)
  Anthropology (3)
  Geography (1)

Reason for Travel
Conference or Workshop: 30 (90.9%)
Research: 3 (9.1%)
International Travel: 6 (18.2%)
National Travel: 27 (81.8%)
Total Amount of Funds Requested: $15,249.32
Average Amount Requested by applicant\(^1\): $476.54
Total Amount of Funds Granted\(^2\): $3,854.32
Total Amount of Funds Indicated as Needed by Students\(^3\): $34,926.92
Average Total Budget Indicated by the applicants: $1164.2
  Average International Total Budget: $2084.52
  Average National Total Budget: $934.16

Indicated that they Applied for Outside Funding: 22 (66.7%)
  GPSC Travel Grants: 13
  Department/college grants: 11
  Conference Funding: 9
  Club Funding: 3

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\(^1\) The funding cap was set at $500
\(^2\) $2,750 were originally budgeted for grant, but the amount of money was increased after final review of applications given the budget surplus
\(^3\) This is the sum of the amount of money indicated by students as their total budget. There were a couple of applicants who did not indicate this amount