Current Strategic Initiative: Staff Professional Development Grant Program
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1. How we got to where we are (brief history)

The Staff Professional Development Grant Program (SPDG) was proposed and created by Staff Advisory Council out of a desire to empower staff members to pursue professional development opportunities. Several members of Staff Advisory Council shared and continue to share stories of how attending one conference or experiencing one success related to professional development has been a catalyst for further growth.

The SPDG was intended to allow all OSUL staff an equal opportunity to participate in professional development regardless of their division or classification.

Grants of up to $1000 are awarded to individuals or groups. Professional development opportunities may relate to an applicant's current position or positions applicants aspire to. The grant is intended to complement existing administrative funding and is not meant to be a replacement for direct job training.

Examples of professional development opportunities include conferences, workshops, tuition, professional organization membership fees, certifications, materials for courses, and group training opportunities.

Applications are scored on a rubric that is available for applicants to review prior to submission. Applications are scored by multiple reviewers and the final score for applications is the average of all of the scores assigned by the reviewers. The review board is comprised of faculty and staff volunteers. These reviewers score applications according to the rubric and provide feedback to applicants. Feedback is returned to applicants without any attribution as to who the reviewers are.

All applications must meet a required score of 65 out of 100 points to gain approval. Applications are approved starting with the highest scores until funds are exhausted.

2. Where we are now

These are the statistics for the three application calls:

Spring 2018	Fall 2018	Spring 2019
Total applications: 19	Total applications: 11	Total applications: 10
A&P applicants: 14 (74%)	A&P applicants: 10 (91%)	A&P applicants: 9 (90%)
CCS applicants: 5 (26%)	CCS applicants: 1 (9%)	CCS applicants: 1 (10%)
Total applications funded: 15	Total applications funded: 8	Total applications funded: 10
Total funds awarded: $10,000	Total funds awarded: $6,308	Total funds awarded: $6,363

After the initial call, SAC decided to separate future cycles into two application calls to allow more flexibility for applications to align with opportunities throughout the year.

The initial application and rubric processes were paper based. Now applications and rubrics are collected via Qualtrics. Administration of the program has also moved outside of SAC to Christine OConnell.

For the initial call, applications required supervisor signatures but now supervisors receive copies of their direct reports' applications automatically when applications are submitted by Qualtircs.

Originally, eligibility required applicants be employed by OSUL for one year to apply for the grants but that was modified to six months to be more inclusive of term and temporary employees.

Feedback continues to be collected by applicants and reviewers to inform improvements to the process.

3. Is the project/initiative succeeding in meeting its intended objectives? How is success being measured against strategic priorities (measures of success)?

Yes, the program is meeting its intended objectives by providing staff an opportunity to pursue professional development opportunities related to their career aspirations or their current positions. Staff have the opportunity to learn new skills for their current positions, develop knowledge and skills to adapt to the changing demands of their positions, and to pursue career aspirations.

The program also allows staff to become familiar with the grant process and gives applicants tangible feedback for ways to improve future applications, not only in this program but in other grant or scholarship applications.

Additionally, this program helps build the positive culture the Libraries is striving for. Staff feel valued and have opportunities to grow.

The Libraries is living its strategic direction of Invest in People by supporting workforce development and organizational learning. The program has funded 33 applications so far. Feedback from applicants has been positive and staff have shared ways the program has been beneficial to their positions and careers.

4. Were the resources allocated for the project/initiative adequate? If not, why?

At this point in time, the resources are adequate. SAC is grateful for the support of staff and faculty who take the time to review applications.

In the future we hope interest in the program grows and we can offer more opportunities for staff to pursue professional development.

5. Are there successes/highlights to share?

The biggest success to share is the Libraries has funded 33 applications! Some examples of funded activities include professional organization memberships (ALA and RUSA), graduate course tuition for Master of Library and Information Science programs, Library Juice Academy courses, conferences (Society of Ohio Archivists Annual Meeting, ACRL, ALA Midwinter, out of state,

international), and certifications (HR, Microsoft Technology Associate, Society of Ohio Archivists Digital Archives Specialist).

Some feedback from applicants:
- "I am able to take a class I would otherwise not be able to afford to take on my own."
- "The critique of my application was very helpful."
- "…with larger departments where funding for professional development is limited this funding would allow individuals and teams to have a better chance of pursuing professional development that can really impact their work and enhance the value they create for their department and organization."
- "I am really glad this is offered, I think it is a great opportunity to not only help employees, but it also shows that they are valued and supported."

6. Is the project/initiative encountering any barriers to success? If so, what?

SAC would love to see more applications from staff. As noted in the figures above, there has been a low response rate from CCS staff members. SAC has recently started trying to determine what kind of barriers there are, either perceived or real, for this population. We hope to see increased participation from CCS staff members in the future.

It would also be helpful to have more supervisor engagement with the program. Supervisors can do this by starting conversations with staff about training opportunities for their current roles or future aspirations; sharing professional development opportunities with staff; encouraging staff to apply for the grant; referring staff to SAC for any questions with the process.

As Management Committee has recently discussed staff engagement, and as a new a performance management process will soon be implemented, this is an ideal time to promote the Staff Professional Development Grant.

7. Is the project/initiative on time? Have you had to alter timelines? If so, why?

This program is ongoing. Since going from one application call to two, SAC has discussed moving to standing application calls in October and March so staff have a known application period and can plan when to submit applications during the year.

8. Should the Libraries continue investments in this project/initiative? Why or why not?

Absolutely! This initiative directly supports the Libraries' strategic direction of Invest in People by developing the full potential of staff members. Support of this initiative is a way for the Libraries to demonstrate its commitment to further growth of the Libraries' greatest resource which is its personnel. By providing funding opportunities for staff, the Libraries ensures staff have the chance to develop skills for their current positions, cultivate knowledge and skills for the changing demands of their positions, and pursue personal career goals. Further, this initiative is in line with Libraries' values, specifically discovery (we embrace curiosity, experimentation, and learning) and stewardship (we leverage the resources entrusted to us for maximum impact).