

## Mini-grant Project Description and Budget Form

Student Name(s): SAMPLE MINI-GRANT Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please BRIEFLY answer the following questions regarding the proposed project (can be completed by mentor or student). No more than 1 page.

Brief description of mentor's area of expertise or research area (keywords acceptable)

Second Language Acquisition Theory; Russian Language in Interdisciplinary Context; Language and Identity

Research question/statement or general area of interest to be pursued

I intend to research the effectiveness of pre-departure orientation to study abroad. Edward Hall proposed the idea that intercultural communication involves learning the unspoken rules that govern the speech and actions of another culture. Complementary to Hall's proposal is John Hooker's concept of the cultural iceberg. The tip of the iceberg is formed of easily recognizable elements of culture, such as those a tourist would set out to experience, which may be appreciated without truly understanding the culture itself. In order to have effective intercultural communication, however, one must penetrate beyond the tip of the iceberg to discover the foundations of thought and feeling that gave birth to the customs that make cultures unique.

Short project description and timeline (max 300 words)

I will serve as a research assistant for the course instructor in Russian 298, a pre-departure orientation course. As part of the course, my research, based on knowledge gained from books about intercultural communication, will apply these concepts to study abroad in general and more specifically to the study of Russian culture and second-language acquisition, with the goals of increasing students' interest in and openness towards Russian culture and providing a foundation for their successful immersion in the Russian language.

The ten students in Russian 298 will be administered pre- and post-training measurements of intercultural awareness in the form of a survey. After the students have completed the survey, I will lead and record a brief group discussion concerning the students' reactions to the survey itself. My observations regarding the progress students make during the pre-departure orientation process in terms of laying the foundation for intercultural communication during study abroad will be written in an undergraduate research paper.

Considering today's global society, college students are wise to take advantage of study abroad programs that will afford them the opportunities to participate in intercultural communications. However, if they enter into a study abroad program without understanding the culture they will be living in, many of those opportunities will be lost. Supporting this project and, by extension, USC's program in Taganrog and the collaborating partners from the Taganrog Institute of Technology, has the potential effect of enhancing the quality of departmental study abroad programs by reminding them of the power of intercultural knowledge and training, thus offering a better learning experience for students who will soon become a transformative force in our global society.

How project is connected to student's goals (academic, personal, or professional) (max 200 words)

As a 2007 alumna of both pre-departure orientation and USC's study abroad program in Taganrog, Russia, researching the effectiveness of pre-departure orientation is a further extension of my interest and value in the study abroad experience. I was able to maximize my study abroad experience using pre-departure training and intercultural communication strategies. I am interested in sharing that knowledge with other students in order to ensure they also make the most of their experience abroad by being engaged not only during the trip, but before they leave.

Impact statement (why is this project important, how can the research be used, etc) (max 200 words)

This project will have a direct impact on the students in Russian 298, as the survey and follow-up discussions will be considered part of the course work. The project will also impact the future of the Taganrog program by providing feedback on the value of the pre-departure orientation course that can be used to develop plans for next year's program. The project has the potential to influence other departmental study abroad programs, who may wish to create or enhance pre-departure orientation programs with the same kind of intercultural training that my research is concerned with.

If your project involves research outside the US, please complete page 2. If not, skip to page 3 (Budget form)

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The mini-grant program was created to off-set expenses related to undergraduate research, not to fund **STUDY** abroad trips. However, projects conducted while studying abroad are accepted and encouraged to apply for funding. Closer scrutiny is given to these projects and how the money is being used. It is recommended that funds be requested to off-set local transportation or supplies directly required to complete your project rather than plane tickets, etc., although partial reimbursement for tickets is possible. To assist in the review of your Research Abroad project, please answer the following questions. You may also wish to speak with the Office of Undergraduate Research prior to applying.

1. Will you be participating in a Study Abroad program during your research trip?

Yes  No, this trip is ONLY for the research project.

If no, skip to Q3: Language Issues.

If yes, complete Q2 & Q3:

2. How will your research fit into your academic schedule?

Examples: 1) classes are 4 days a week giving one day + weekends for research – this is only appropriate if your research could be conducted on weekends, 2) I will be staying an extra week after classes to conduct the research – only appropriate if time is sufficient for project completion

3. Language issues:

Is English the primary language  Yes  No

If yes, STOP, you do not need to complete the rest of this form.

If no, please answer the following:

1) Have you taken courses in the language (please list course numbers):

2) What is your competency: beginner intermediate advanced

3) Will your project require communication skills beyond your competency? Yes No

If yes, who will help you and how will you obtain their services/assistance?

Continue to page 3 (Budget form)

## Mini-grant Project Description and Budget Form

Student Name(s): SAMPLE MINI-GRANT Date: \_\_\_\_\_

List all materials, supplies, travel expenses including registration, lodging, local transportation with estimates

Item	Cost
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### Books (Materials/Supplies)

- |   |          |
|---|----------|
| ▪ <i>Acquisition in Interlanguage Pragmatics: Learning how to do things with words in a study abroad context</i> , Barron | \$169.00 |
| ▪ <i>Intercultural Communication Training in Cultural Self-Awareness for Study Abroad</i>                                 |          |
| ▪ <i>International Education</i> , Bennett  | \$91.00  |
| ▪ <i>Maximizing Study Abroad</i> , Paige, Cohen, Kappler, Chi, Lassegard  | \$9.99   |
| ▪ <i>Oral Communication: Speaking Across Cultures</i> , Samovar   | \$55.95  |
| ▪ Additional shipping costs   | \$25.00  |

### Budget Justification

These books are unavailable from the USC library system

Grand Total

\$350.94