COMMON GRANT APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Every year the Dean Rusk International Studies Program, the Abernethy Research Awards, and the Kemp Scholars Program provide grants to support research, service, and experiential learning abroad. You may use this form to apply for any of these grants, but each program has its own grant-making committee. Remember that each program has its own specific mission and may evaluate proposals differently from the others.

- **The George L. Abernethy Endowment** supports independent student research in the humanities or social sciences, either in the United States or abroad AND cross-cultural study opportunities for students during the academic year or the summer. Grant awards average about $2000.00
  - Applications should:
    - clearly define the research or study plan,
    - discuss how the plan builds on previous work in the field, and
    - describe the methods and analysis to be used when carrying out the plan.
  - Contact Nicole Snyder, Assistant Dean for Research and Creative Works with questions.

- **The Dean Rusk International Studies Program** supports study, research, service and experiential learning abroad. Grant amounts vary considerably, ranging from $100 to $5,000.
  - **SPECIAL GUIDELINES FOR DEAN RUSK FALL APPLICATIONS**
    - Applications for Dean Rusk Grants in the fall cycle will only be accepted from the following:
      - Seniors who have not been abroad during their Davidson careers.
      - Seniors who need to travel over winter break or during the spring semester for research related to a senior thesis, a capstone project, or some other paper or project that is required for their major.
      - Students who plan to participate in a summer study abroad program that has arranged to apply as part the fall cycle instead of the spring.
      - If your project involves research (archival/library research and/or interviews) in a language other than English, your application must contain a completed evaluation from a faculty member who can attest to your proficiency. If possible, you should contact a faculty member from whom you have taken at least one 200-level class. Failure to provide this evaluation will result in your application’s disqualification.
    - Contact Jane Zimmerman, Director of Dean Rusk International Studies Program with questions.

- **The Bank of America/Kemp Scholars Program** supports independent study, travel and research. This grant provides $2,000 in reimbursable expenses to support independent study, travel, and research, plus an award of $1,000.
  - Students must be completing their first, sophomore, or junior year.
  - Applicants agree to participate in the Bank of America/Kemp Scholars seminar during the calendar year of their award. This carries no academic credit. Applicants also agree to participate in the annual Social Sciences Poster Fair or Natural Sciences Poster Fair (whichever is most relevant to the topic), held each spring semester
  - Contact Professor Mark Foley (mafoley@davidson.edu) with questions.

The Dean Rusk and Abernethy committees make grants twice each year, and Kemp committee once a year in the spring. In the fall, the committees review proposals for projects that will take place over winter break or during the spring semester. In the spring, the committees evaluate proposals for projects that will take place in the following summer, fall, or full-year.

This document provides general guidelines that will help you prepare stronger proposals for each of these grant programs. But they are guidelines, not hard and fast rules. As noted above, remember that the Abernethy, Dean Rusk, and Kemp committees might not emphasize all factors in the same way or to the same
degree when they evaluate proposals. If you have questions about your proposal, please contact the individual program directors.

1) START EARLY

The earlier you begin working on your proposal and the more thought you give it, the more likely you are to have an impressive project planned by the application deadline.

If you’re not exactly sure about what you want to do or how to get started, make an appointment to talk with the director of the program to which you’re applying. Communicating with the program staff as you develop your proposal will help you to write a better proposal. It also means that the staff will be well-acquainted with your proposal when the committee considers it. You may also want to look through past applications to get a better idea of the criteria that the faculty committee uses in selecting grant recipients.

Although all of the plans or logistical arrangements of your proposal may not be finalized by the grant deadline (i.e. you’ve applied to a program but haven’t heard if you have been accepted or you have set up a project but haven’t heard from all your contacts), your proposal must be complete when you turn it in. If some of your plans remain tentative, the committee may make a grant that is contingent on you receiving additional information that confirms your plans. You are on your honor to use grant money for your approved project; if your plans change, you must clear them with the granting program before transferring your grant; if your plans fall through you must return all grant money.

2) MAKE SURE YOUR PROPOSAL IS SPECIFIC, CLEAR, AND FEASIBLE

The application asks for a detailed description of your project. This is your opportunity to tell the committee why it should fund your project. Clearly describe the specific question you hope to answer, or the particular issue you propose to explore. Tell the committee why this project is important. Describe the methods you will use to explore your topic. Describe how you hope to benefit from your project, and discuss how you will share your project with the Davidson community when you return. Remember that a grant proposal is not the place to build a dramatic narrative or to show off your rhetorical flair. Clarity and concision are the keys. Tell your reader quickly what you plan to do and where you plan to do it. Then you can talk about why the project is important and how you plan to execute it.

You must show a workable plan to accomplish your project. This entails making sure that your project is feasible and appropriate not only for the money you are requesting but also the time frame you are proposing. Provide details showing that you have worked out a proposal that you can realistically accomplish. Thus if you are proposing to work with an organization, can you provide communication between yourself and the organization? If you plan to study at a library, can you verify that you actually will have access to resources when you arrive in your country of study?

Grants are not a way of paying for your vacation. Your project ought to be fun, but it should also have merit (and the committee can usually see through attempts to fake the latter). Do research, find out what you can reasonably expect to accomplish and how much you should expect it to cost (if you’re going to India, estimating $30/day as living expenses is excessive; if you’re going to Sweden, it may be entirely realistic) and then make your budget as specific as possible. If you are unsure of how well your proposal answers these questions or whether it is sufficiently detailed, ask for suggestions.

Remember that your proposal is your chance to show the committee that you are serious about your project and able to complete it. Use this chance wisely!
3) REQUEST A REASONABLE AMOUNT OF MONEY AND LOOK FOR OUTSIDE FUNDING

Although committees do take financial need into account, grants are not primarily financial aid. They are merit-based, so the better your proposal the better your chances of receiving a grant. Grant requests always exceed available funds, so remember that it is highly unlikely that we will fund the entire cost of your project. Look for alternative sources of money. You can talk to someone at the program or a professor who helped you design your proposal for ideas. Try your local Rotary Club or church, get a job, and do whatever you need to do to indicate to the committee that you are committed to your project (as opposed to having a “sure, if it’s free I’ll go” attitude). If you make a sincere effort to help pay for it, we will take your proposal more seriously.

4) EDIT, EDIT, EDIT

Read and re-read your application before you hand it in. Make sure that your document is understandable, that your commas are in the right place, and that spell-check didn’t miss anything. Please follow the formatting guidelines indicated on the application. Make a good impression; it shows that your project is important to you.

5) SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION ON TIME

The application deadline is non-negotiable and late proposals will not be accepted for any reason.

6) SUBMISSION FORMAT

When submitting your application, delete these instructional pages. Include all remaining portions of the application in one MS Word document and save the file with the label “Last name, First name”. Language evaluation forms may be submitted separately.

7) REQUIREMENTS

If you accept a grant, you will be required to sign an acceptance form in which you will make the following agreements:

a) To use the funds for the proposed project, abide by any additional requirements mandated by the Dean Rusk Faculty Advisory Committee (FAC), the Student, Study and Research Committee (SS&R) or Bank of America/Kemp Scholars Committee stated in the grant notification letter, and to contact the program for approval of any changes to the trip before they occur.

b) To collect receipts totaling the amount of the grant or greater. If you receive funds through multiple grants on campus you must present different receipts for each of the funds used, and a full-budget ledger accounting for all funds granted and used. Students must repay the difference between the grant sum and the total of receipts submitted.

c) To share your experiences with other students through talks, participation in panels, visits to schools, etc. at the request of granting program, and agree to any additional reporting conditions mandated by the committee as communicated to you by the program.

d) You may be required to repay a portion of your grant if you choose to terminate the proposed trip early. The program staff retains the authority to determine the sum of such a reimbursement. This does not apply to cases in which early termination results from developments beyond your control.