

Western Program's Gerber Inquiry Award Student Developed Inquiry Projects

Gerber Inquiry Award Information Packet

Important Information:

- Application due by April 15 by 5pm
- Applicants will be notified for their award status no later than May 1
- For any questions contact western@miamioh.edu

The Gerber Inquiry Award is named in honor of Catharine A. "Cate" Gerber who believed in the importance of electronic media as a tool to connect people and ideas. The purpose of the award is to facilitate students to pursue their own inquiries and creative explorations. Typical awards will range from \$200-\$500; proposals with exceptional merit may be funded up to \$1,000.

ELIGIBILITY & REQUIREMENTS:

Full-time undergraduate students in all disciplines on all Miami campuses are eligible to apply. A student may receive one award only from this program per academic year. Electronic progress reports will be due by email on October 15 and February 15. Applicants must be available to present the outcome of their inquiry at the Inquiry Conference in April and submit their work for consideration for publication in the undergraduate journal *MI CUP of TEA*. This journal is an online publication, edited and managed by students, that acknowledges the creative endeavors of Miami undergraduate students. The submission guidelines for the journal are provided on the website listed below. Although projects must be initiated and developed by student applicants, each project must have a faculty/staff mentor. Awards are not restricted to projects in any particular discipline, and interdisciplinary projects will receive priority. Applications may be made for support of a research project that is also being conducted for academic credit.

SUBMISSION DEADLINES:

April 15 by 5pm deadline for students to apply and receive an award to conduct a project for the following academic school year. Students will be notified of the award decisions by *May 1*. Digital submissions can be sent to western@miamioh.edu or hard copies can be delivered to Western Program, 113 Peabody Hall.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION:

The online application should be submitted by following this link:

<http://tinyurl.com/gerberapp>. In addition to the online submission, a Cover page, Narrative, Budget Justification, and Reference pages should be submitted as a word document to: western@miamioh.edu. Application forms and instructions can be found at: <http://tinyurl.com/gerberaward>

Proposals will be evaluated for funding by a committee of student editors from *MI CUP of TEA*, Western Program faculty and staff, as well as Western Program affiliates. The proposal should be written in a form that is understandable to educated readers beyond specialists in the field of inquiry. Points will be deducted from the ratings of proposals that rely heavily on technical jargon.

Criteria for each application are shown below. Each application must have all of the following sections, including sub-sections, listed below. The main section of the application should be a written explanation of the details of the proposed research or other creative endeavor. This narrative part of the application should be typed, single-spaced and 3-5 pages in length with one-inch margins. Please number the pages, use 12 point font.

APPLICATION FORMAT: The following format and sub-sections must be used.

Online Application: The online Google form must be completed and submitted with all requested information.

To be e-mailed to <mailto:western@miamioh.edu> or hard copies delivered to 113 Peabody Hall

I. Cover Page (1 page maximum), including: Name/e-mail of investigator, project title
Abstract: In 200 words or less give an executive summary of the project. This should include purpose, expected outcomes, and significance of the project. The significance of the project should not be limited to the specific field of study and/or to society, but consider its value in your own educational development and personal interests.

II. Narrative (5 pages maximum), including:

Introduction:

You are writing for a general, but educated audience. **DO NOT** assume that the audience is familiar with technical jargon. Be certain that you discuss the following questions: What work has been done by others in this field?__ For example, cite the relevant journal articles or books, or the relevant exhibitions or performances. Be sure to clearly explain why these earlier works are important precursors to yours. What, if any, preliminary work have you done that will affect the outcome of the project?

Statement of Goals for the Project:

Here you lay out the questions you plan to address. Clearly state what you intend to accomplish by working on your project. You should include a statement of hypothesis or of the creative question that drives the planned work. What is the underlying motivation for this project?

Creative Processes or Methodology:

This is the most important section of your proposal. This section must briefly outline the materials you will utilize, the manner in which you will approach your project, and the major

steps necessary to complete your work. Explain how the creative techniques or research methods you intend to use are appropriate for accomplishing your stated goals. Describe the important steps and materials in a way that the logic of your approach is clearly understandable.

Expected Accomplishments or Results:

This section provides a discussion of the analysis and interpretation of results and manner of presentation of creative work. Discuss how you will analyze your results and interpret them or how you will present and critique your final product. Explain the significance of the intended achievements or results to the original project goals.

III. Budget and Justification (1 page maximum)

Present an itemized statement of your best estimate of the costs of doing your project. You may request up to \$1,000, although typical awards range between \$200 and \$500. Be certain that you justify all items listed and that you: Explain why you require any unusual or particularly costly items listed in your budget. Indicate why any items needed that are generally available from your department or the University at no cost to students cannot be obtained from that source.

Examples include books, journals, and routine lab equipment.

As you prepare your budget keep in mind that: The Committee cannot give you funds you do not ask for and justify adequately. The Committee cannot give you additional funds during the grant period after you have received your award.

Where applicable, mileage estimates and other travel costs should be specified. Awarding funds for travel requires that the travel be essential to the success of the project. Awards that are made for travel will be carefully scrutinized for costs.

IV. Literature Cited (as many pages as needed).

Give references (complete with titles) for all literature cited in the proposal.

EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS:

Members of the Committee represent a wide range of disciplines; each proposal should be written so that it is understandable to an educated person who is not a specialist in your field of interest. Proposals are required to follow the format described in these application guidelines and should be readable by a non-specialist; they should be free of technical jargon and undefined abbreviations.

The members of the Gerber Inquiry Award Committee will employ the following criteria in evaluating the proposals:

Readability: Is the proposal easily understood and free of technical jargon?

Format: Does the application follow the format in the guidelines?

Quality: Is the research problem or creative activity clearly articulated?

Significance: Is the problem worth solving? Why is the work important?

Feasibility: Is the problem solvable within the time available and with facilities available to the researcher?

Educational Value: Are the skills to be learned of high academic quality and significance?

Researcher Preparation: Does the researcher have adequate training and experience to undertake and complete the project?

Budget: Is the budget reasonable, specific, and accurate?

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Before submitting the application to the Western Program, use this check sheet to assemble the items in the correct order and to be certain the application has all the required sections and attachments.

Cover Page (1 page maximum), with Project Title Name/E-mail of Investigator Abstract

Narrative (5 pages maximum, 1" margins), with Introduction Goals Methodology Expected Accomplishments or Results

Budget and Justification (1 page maximum)

Literature Cited (no page limit)

Applicants may be required to come in for an interview if the committee has questions.

Research Compliance Requirements

Federal and State Regulations and university policies require that Miami assure the safe and ethical practice of research and scholarly activities. Members of the Miami community must be familiar with the requirements before starting any research or teaching projects that involve humans, animals, radiation, and some biological manipulations. This involves local training and often review and approval of proposed activities by relevant university-wide committees.

If your project involves humans, animals, radiation, and/or biological manipulations, go to the Research Compliance website at <http://www.miamioh.edu/compliance> for details regarding training and submitting an application. If you think any of these compliance issues are relevant to your research, please check with your advisor for guidance and to find out if any of your activities are addressed in existing protocols.

If you have any questions regarding training and/or submitting an application, please contact [Jennifer Sutton](#).