

MATHER CENTER DISSERTATION AWARD

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS AND TIPS

Please fully review the [Mather Center grant website](#) in addition to these instructions.

Eligibility:

Any graduate student who has reached candidacy by the time the funds would be used is eligible to apply. **Your application should specifically address how your proposal meets at least one of the following goals, as well as [the mission and values of the Center](#) more generally.**

1. Supporting the research of women/gender minorities who are under-represented in their fields, **OR**
2. Supporting research on feminism and gender equity, defined as any research which has a goal of improving social inequality based on gender.

It is incumbent upon the applicant to demonstrate how their project or they themselves meet one ~~or both~~ of these criteria.

Application Materials:

1. Description of project or research, including how it aligns with the Center's mission to empower women and advance gender equity. (No more than 2 pages single-spaced.)
2. Appropriately detailed budget – fully itemized, clearly marked what you are asking the Center to fund if part of a larger budget/project.
3. Letter of Recommendation from the dissertation chair

You will also agree to the grant policies, including acknowledging the funding in publications or presentations and providing evidence of impact to the Center upon request. Finally, you will be asked a few demographic questions, which are optional and will not be shared with grant evaluators.

Grant applications will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- **Clarity of purpose and plan:** Applicant has a clearly defined goal for the research project and lays out a specific plan for how they will accomplish that goal. The budget is detailed and is clear how funds will be used.
- **Feasibility:** The plan the applicant proposes will achieve their expressed goal. They specify whether they have access to the necessary facilities, materials, and resources to complete the project, as well as the skills and training to complete it. If a student, it is evident that they have support and training from dissertation chair.

- **Social/Intellectual Merit:** The applicant clearly specifies the social and/or intellectual benefit of the project.
- **Relationship to Center Goals and Eligibility Criteria:** Applicant specifically identifies the connection between the opportunity and/or their professional goals and the mission of the center. They demonstrate how they meet one or both eligibility criteria.
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Note: If IRB approval is required based on the nature of your work, your study will need to have IRB approval prior to grant funds being released; it is strongly suggested that you have approval prior to applying to ensure we can disperse the funds in a timely manner. If you are unsure whether approval is required, you should seek assistance from your mentor or supervisor. [The CWRU IRB has information on their website.](#)

Some additional advice:

- If you are applying for a research grant, consider the following questions as you describe how you will complete the project: Do you have the materials and support you need (other than what the grant would be paying for)? Do you have a clear plan and timeline in place? The study should seem feasible, and it should be clear how the grant will benefit you accomplishing your goals.
- Regardless of the type of grant you are applying for, avoid jargon or overly technical explanations. While we try to have reviewers who are familiar in general topics, your application is unlikely to be reviewed by someone who is an expert in your specific area of study or academic discipline. Therefore, your application should be comprehensible to someone with no familiarity with your topic. In short, your grant application should be distinct from (and not necessarily include) a complete abstract of the project. The connection to the center's goals and how you will benefit should be the bulk of your application statement.

Tips to share with recommendation letter writers.

STUDENTS: Letters MUST come from CWRU faculty, even if project has components outside of CWRU. Your dissertation chair should speak to your ability and skill to complete this specific project. Be sure to provide them with any necessary information to speak about the particular opportunity for which you are applying. We recommend you share the following information with your letter writers to help them understand our process.

- Similar to grants such as the NSF, we are funding the applicant more so than the specific project. To that end, please be clear and specific about how the **student** will benefit from receiving the grant and why they are deserving.
- Letters should indicate faculty support and student preparation for undertaking the project – how you have been and will be involved in ensuring they achieve their goals and demonstrate how they will be able to successfully do so based on their past experiences or training.

- Submit letters to MatherCenter@case.edu by the application due date.

If you or your chair have questions, please contact the Mather Center.

Note for those proposing a project involving international travel: All Case Western Reserve **students participating in individualized academic travel must register through the Office of Education Abroad** in accordance with its deadlines in order to ensure that risk management procedures are followed. This does include conference attendance and international research. Completing this registration allows students to travel abroad using Case Western Reserve resources, including the free **International Travel Insurance**.