

INSTITUTE ON THE
ENVIRONMENT

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Driven to DiscoverSM

MINI GRANT PROJECT SUMMARY

Please complete the project summary and return the completed form to April Snyder, Associate Administrator for the Institute on the Environment at aprilsnyder@umn.edu. Paper copies will not be accepted. Please also attach any photos, publications, brochures, event agendas or other materials that were a result of the mini grant summary.

Date of Report Submission:	10/5/2015
Project PI & Dept/School	Aparna Katre, Foreign Languages and Literatures, College of Liberal Arts, UMD
Project Title:	CUE&A: A Dialogue with the community
Grant Amount \$:	\$ 2280

Project Context & Purpose: Cultural Entrepreneurship students at UMD engage in three different semester long team projects to conceptualize and develop business solutions to cultural issues. While students are encouraged to look at issues from around the world many teams chose to work on cultural issues local to Duluth. The course work requires students to present their cultural enterprise ideas to the community of Duluth and engage in a dialogue through a community event, "CUE&A: A Dialogue with the community." The inaugural CUE&A event held in December 2013 was successful benefitting both the students and the community. The CUE&A event is now envisioned as twice a year event with 8-10 teams presenting their work. It is my goal for CUE&A to be self-funded. This proposal requests seed funding to design a self-funded model and experiment with it for the Spring 2014 CUE&A event. I plan to collaborate with all those who supported December 2013 CUE&A event – Tony Cuneo, Executive Director of Zeppa Foundation, Eric Faust, Founder of Duluth Coffee Company, Tami LaPole, Founder of Art in the Alley, Scott Graden, Founder of New Scenic Café, Prof. Raymond Jones, Entrepreneurship faculty at the Labovitz School of Business, and Elaine Hanson, Director of the Center for Economic Development. In addition, it is my goal to leverage these relationships and the Cultural Entrepreneurship student club for systematic outreach to businesses, nonprofits, schools and the city of Duluth.

Please include the original project purpose statement and revise for any changes that occurred in the project after the start date with a short explanation of the changes.

Work Completed: We were able to execute the project as planned. A cultural entrepreneurship student was hired for the following tasks:

1. To create a template for the CUE&A event planning and management
2. To create a database of contacts and templates for outreach to local businesses
3. Creating reusable marketing materials – flyers, website updates, media outreach and email announcements
4. Research revenue models
5. Establish contact with partners to sign-up and support the event

Tasks 1 to 4 above were completed as planned. A google drive consisting of templates and marketing materials has been developed. As a result the Fall and future CUE&A events can now be planned and executed with more than 75% efficiency as compared with previous events. Also, a list of all media contacts and outreach messages will ensure critical communications are sent on time.

Task 5, business support for the Spring CUE&A event was also secured. However, we were able to only secure verbal long-term commitment (for future CUE&A events). It is to be seen how this works for the Fall 2016 event.

We were able to recruit 23 mentors who were local entrepreneurs and nonprofit leaders and implement speed mentoring for the 23 student business ideas during the event. The total attendance for the event was about 150 participants. The event was covered by press and a short video documentary was also created.

Please provide a summary of the work that was completed for the mini grant project.

Partnerships & Collaborations: We have now established formal collaborations with the following groups:

1. Entrepreneurs as mentors (over 25)
2. Media – Perfect Duluth Day, Duluth News tribune, WDIO, Fox21, Statesman, KUMD
3. Local nonprofits – LISC, HDAC

Some entrepreneurs came in for the first time while others had known about or were involved in the cultural entrepreneurship program at varying levels. Media relationships were formalized during this project and as a result we now have holistic coverage of the event – before and after. Finally, the nonprofits were able to witness the projects coming to fruition during the event. This allowed solidifying the partnership of cultural entrepreneurship program and LISC. We now have a project with them in our upper division class wherein a grocery delivery service for the Food Desert in Lincoln Park is under development.

Please provide a summary of the project personnel, partnerships and collaborations that worked directly on the project or were started as a direct result of the mini grant project.

Project Outcomes & Impacts: Following project outcomes were achieved:

1. The student supporting the planning and execution had direct entrepreneurial experience around the topic of event planning and management which should help in the student's career prospects.
2. Twenty three student projects were pitched to the community members and mentor entrepreneurs. Students were required to write a reflection. The feedback on speed mentoring was extremely positive. Many students cited that how their confidence increased significantly after facing the critique, receiving positive feedback and answering questions from real-world stakeholders.
3. As mentioned above we now have a stronger relationship with the local businesses and nonprofits. In fact six local aspiring entrepreneurs have stepped forward to collaborate with the program through Fall 2015 and Spring 2016 semesters to develop their business ideas. Even if a handful of these come to reality then students, aspiring entrepreneurs and the community will benefit.
4. As mentioned above we haven't yet figured out a sustainable revenue model for the event itself. However, development of templates and reusable materials has increased productivity and hence reduced cost of operating each event in the future.

Please provide a summary of the outcomes and /or impacts of the mini grant project including future plans for the project.