

Annual Report 2024-2025

Prepared for: Executive Committee, Weber State University

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Meetings were held over Zoom on Sept 4 (fall travel round) and Oct. 14 (fall full round), and Jan. 14 (spring travel round) and Feb. 18 (spring full round), and March 5 (summer travel round). This year the chair, Dr. Aaron Atkins, worked with committee members and administrators to promote pilot RSPG grant information sessions for each college in both Fall and Spring semesters. The chair put out campus-wide announcements to this effect, and committee members were tasked with promoting the sessions in their respective colleges. The majority of the sessions held were attended by a small number of people who then submitted proposals. After the sessions were held we arrived at the conclusion that while having a session for each college may not be necessary, holding one or two university-wide sessions - in person or over Zoom - before each main grant round is useful. The plan moving forward is to schedule campus-wide information sessions in the weeks prior to upcoming deadlines.

Goals and Objectives:

Each year, the Research, Scholarship, and Professional Growth Committee reviews proposals in several categories. To date we have given the following funds:

- **Fall Term**

- Travel Stipends (Fall travel round, from RSPG funds) - \$10,000.00
- Hemingway Faculty Vitality - \$10,000.00
- Hemingway Adjunct Faculty - \$1,667.15
- Presidential Innovative Teaching Grants - \$7,975.00
- George and Beth Lowe Innovative Teaching Grants - \$0
- Community Engaged Learning - \$3,000.00

- **Spring Term**

- Travel Stipends (spring travel round, from RSPG funds) - \$10,000.00
- Hemingway Faculty Vitality - \$15,000
- Presidential Innovative Teaching Grants - \$25,250.00
- George and Beth Lowe Innovative Teaching Grants - \$14,637.80
- Hemingway Collaborative and Excellence Awards - \$89,158.67
- Hemingway New Faculty - \$20,000
- Community Engaged Learning - \$6,992.00
- Hemingway Adjunct Faculty - \$2,000.00

- **Summer Term**

- Travel Stipends (From RSPG funds) - \$10,000

During the 2024-2025 academic year, we received funding requests for **\$228,797.72** and awarded funding of **\$195,690.62**. Departments, colleges, community partners, and more pledged matching funds of **\$163,326.00**. This has allowed us to leverage a total of **\$359,016.62** to promote research, faculty growth, and professional development this academic year.

We continue to see a high number of grant proposals for research, conferences, creative works, art installations and music performances, international experiences benefiting students, and more. We continue to get reports from applicants that travel funding or professional development funding at the department/college level is increasingly less available, although whether this is an accurate assessment of available department/college funds availability and support is unclear.

In Fall 2024 we received requests for just over double the amount of funds available to support faculty travel. In spring 2025, we received just shy of triple; In summer 2025, requests outweighed available funds by 61 percent. Per RSPG guidelines, the committee prioritized applicants who had not received RSPG travel funds in the past two years when allocating funds, and where appropriate prioritized tenure-track applicants consistent with last year's vote to approve this directive. It may be worth a meeting with Dean's Council in early fall 2025 to discuss the continued increase in requests, increased competitiveness in the proposals, and recommendations as inflation and cost of travel continue to increase.

Unlike the 2023-24 academic year, no funds were left over in the Hemingway New Faculty, Vitality, Innovative Teaching, and Collaborative funds, so there was no need to reopen the Hemingway grants for the Summer 2025 round.

Additional Notes

This year, the committee chair (Aaron Atkins) worked with committee members to create, promote, and staff RSPG and Hemingway grant information sessions across all colleges at the university. The goal was to offer information and support to faculty in the weeks prior to each primary RSPG deadline in order to help them better understand the different grant categories and purposes, expenditure rules and guidelines, and offer guidance on how to strengthen their proposals. In Fall 2024, the chair scheduled and staffed two in-person sessions as proof of concept (Sept. 23, 27, 2024) and had 4-6 participants attend each. In the spring, during the Jan. 13, 2025 travel grant review meeting committee members were tasked with scheduling, promoting, and holding one session per college two weeks prior to the Spring submission deadline. The members who followed through reported similar

results. The consensus from the committee was that the initiative had value but was limited to those who were on campus and free. The recommendation was to schedule future iterations with in-person and virtual options, and instead of each college holding their own the chair and members collectively hold one session per grant round. We will be implementing this Fall 2025.

The updated website from the 2023-24 academic year proved more user friendly, however in some cases faculty and committee members pointed out remnants of the old website and submission system in instructional language, and the website was updated each time this was discovered. Some faculty members, particularly during the travel round, continue to request more than the maximum, and in some cases request funding for travel that does not meet the grant criteria as listed in multiple locations on the site. To help address this, the site will continue to be streamlined to more effectively communicate submission instructions before submissions open for Fall 25.

The Google Forms submission platform continues to be effective, however some committee members struggled with the budget forms throwing multiple errors when utilizing Adobe SecureSign to send them out to department chairs, deans, and where applicable project directors and IRB reviewers for signatures. A solution was found - manually copying over all number values in each budget doc one at a time, which at times proved frustrating. Committee member Daniel Clark offered the suggestion to test Google Docs' signature collection platform as an alternative if the issue persists, and put together guidance on workflow. The chair intends to test it over the summer to see if it is a workable alternative in the event the Adobe issue persists.

Committee members continue to email their respective colleges and put out announcements across campus prior to each deadline. One of the directives was to promote New Faculty and Adjunct grants, with the ongoing hope that the increased awareness will connect more faculty who qualify with funding. The effort was successful - we had at least one adjunct apply each semester, and in the spring we had more New Faculty grant proposals than available funds, so our efforts appear to be effective. During the Spring semester review session, the committee discussed how to handle New Faculty grants if they continue to exceed available funding in the future. One suggestion was to take into consideration that if a faculty member received funding in their first year and applied for funding again in their second year, priority might go to new faculty in their second year who did not apply or did not receive funding in their first year. This discussion is ongoing and no action was taken.

Meetings and Awards:

- Five RSPG meetings were held via Zoom: Sept. 4, Oct. 14, Jan. 13, Feb. 18, May 5.
- The Gwen Williams Award was determined via two sets of single-choice votes. As in last year's vote, the first vote resulted in a tie between two completed projects, and a tiebreaker vote determined the winners of the Gwen Williams Prize.

Travel Fall 2024			
PI	Total Trip	Requested	Awarded
Esther Ahn	\$885.00	\$750.00	\$665.00
James Almeida	\$1,732.93	\$750.00	\$665.00
Aaron Atkins	\$2,844.00	\$750.00	\$665.00
Jace Brown	\$2,500.00	\$750.00	\$750.00
Kerri Clement	\$928.00	\$750.00	\$750.00
Mylynn Felt	\$1,263.95	\$670.00	\$665.00
Ryan Frazier	\$750.00	\$750.00	\$750.00
Ashley Morford	\$938.00	\$688.00	\$688.00
Russell Burrows	\$650.00	\$650.00	\$650.00
Eric Ewert	\$2,598.00	\$750.00	\$750.00
Alexander Lancaster	\$1,791.78	\$750.00	\$750.00
Justin Rhees	\$1,848.96	\$750.00	\$750.00
James Zagrodnik	\$3,750.00	\$750.00	\$750.00
Ryan Zimmerman	\$3,750.00	\$750.00	\$750.00

Fall 2024 Awards					
PI	Type	Awarded	Request	Matching	Total
Bharath Babu Nunna	RSPG/Vitality	\$1,281.04	\$1,281.04	\$1,310.00	
Yu-Jung Chu	RSPG/Vitality	\$2,200.00	\$3,000.00	\$2,000.00	
Sarah Grunnah	RSPG/Vitality	\$1,745.00	\$1,745.00	\$953.50	
Joseph Mulligan	RSPG/Vitality	\$1,449.65	\$1,734.51	\$400.00	
Leigh Shaw	RSPG/Vitality	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$1,500.00	
Robyn Thompson	RSPG/Vitality	\$324.31	\$324.31	\$100.00	
Collette Wilfong	Lowe/Pres Teaching	\$4,975.00	\$4,975.00	\$14,000.00	
Joseph Blake	Lowe/Pres Teaching	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$10,764.00	
Kellie St. Pierre	Adjunct	\$1,677.15	\$1,677.15	\$640.40	
Sarah Grunnah	CCEL	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$13,235.00	

Travel Spring 2025			
PI	Total Trip	Requested	Awarded
Andrea Baltazar	\$1,650.00	\$765.00	\$750.00
Kellie Bornhoft	\$2,547.18	\$750.00	\$750.00
Shirley Dawson	\$1,797.00	\$750.00	\$750.00
Mary Foss	\$4,500.00	\$750.00	\$750.00
Carie Frantz	\$1,704.00	\$750.00	\$750.00
Sara Gailey	\$2,866.00	\$750.00	\$530.00
Maria del Mar Gonzalez	\$3,000.00	\$750.00	\$750.00
Justin Kani	\$2,330.97	\$750.00	\$750.00
Abigail Mack	\$750.00	\$750.00	\$750.00
Jessie Nixon	\$2,435.00	\$750.00	\$750.00
Katarina Pantic	\$3,397.00	\$440.00	\$750.00
Ran Qi	\$2,119.00	\$1,119.00	\$750.00
Paul Schvaneveldt	\$2,550.00	\$750.00	\$750.00
Amanda Sowerby	\$1,215.00	\$470.00	\$470.00

Spring 2025 Awards					
PI	Type	Request	Award	Matching	Total
Julian Chan	RSPG/Vitality	\$199.00	\$199.00	\$200.00	
Matthew Choberka	RSPG/Vitality	\$2,935.00	\$2,091.00	\$1,750.00	
Tracy Covey	RSPG/Vitality	\$2,939.00	\$2,939.00	\$1,250.00	
Joscha Klueppel	RSPG/Vitality	\$242.00	\$242.00	\$450.00	
Colleen Packer	RSPG/Vitality	\$4,521.21	\$3,000.00	\$3,269.32	
Richard Price	RSPG/Vitality	\$2,567.00	\$2,567.00	\$2,200.00	
Andrew Rice	RSPG/Vitality	\$1,782.80	\$946.00	\$992.00	
Sheryl Rushton	RSPG/Vitality	\$1,262.00	\$1,262.00	\$2,767.00	
K Stevenson	RSPG/Vitality	\$700.00	\$700.00	\$2,550.00	
Laura Stott	RSPG/Vitality	\$1,054.00	\$1,054.00	\$50.00	
Kellie Bornhoft	New Faculty	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$9,708.63	
Katherine Bowman	New Faculty	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	
Stephanie Kimmey	New Faculty	\$2,200.00	\$2,200.00	\$4,263.00	
Joseph Mulligan	New Faculty	\$2,994.00	\$2,994.00	\$1,142.00	
Olof Nilsson	New Faculty	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$646.00	

Gennie Parkman	New Faculty	\$2,486.00	\$2,486.00	\$600.00	
Robyn Thompson	New Faculty	\$1,747.00	\$1,747.00	\$600.00	
Fan Zhang	New Faculty	\$1,800.00	\$1,573.00	\$1,650.00	
Melina Alexander	Lowe/Pres Teaching	\$14,274.00	\$14,274.00	\$0.00	
Chloe Cai	Lowe/Pres Teaching	\$18,300.00	\$15,000.00	\$1,220.00	
Electra Fielding	Lowe/Pres Teaching	\$2,350.00	\$2,350.00	\$1,500.00	
Jim Hutchins	Lowe/Pres Teaching	\$4,900.00	\$4,900.00	\$4,740.00	
Li Chen	Lowe/Pres Teaching	\$363.80	\$363.80	\$360.00	
James McAllister	Lowe/Pres Teaching	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$400.00	
Aaron Atkins	Hemingway Collab	\$17,849.28	\$17,849.28	\$41,999.72	
Jo Blake	Hemingway Collab	\$6,000.00	\$6,000.00	\$10,339.45	
Francisco Galvez	Hemingway Collab	\$13,750.00	\$13,750.00	\$1,100.00	
Colleen Packer	Hemingway Collab	\$20,494.83	\$20,494.83	\$8,191.28	
Vanessa Watts	Hemingway Collab	\$11,705.00	\$11,705.00	\$3,500.00	
Adam Johnston	Hemingway Excellen	\$3,700.00	\$3,700.00	\$9,520.00	
Ben Kruger-Robbins	Hemingway Excellen	\$1,269.06	\$1,269.06	\$400.00	
James Almeida	Hemingway Excellen	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$468.60	
Stephanie Wolfe	Hemingway Excellen	\$11,390.50	\$11,390.50	\$11,158.00	
Nicolas Mugavero	Adjunct	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$612.00	
Alexander Lancaster	CCEL	\$4,992.00	\$4,992.00	\$4,992.00	
Mary Beth Willard	CCEL	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	

Travel Summer 2024

PI	Total Trip	Requested	Awarded
Stephanie Wolfe	\$2,047.86	\$515.86	\$516
Lisa Witbank	\$1,150	\$750	\$750
Jonathan West	\$2,945	\$750	\$750
Deborah Vaughan	\$2,220	\$750	\$750
Victor Uzur	\$5,050	\$750	\$750
Daniel Pyle	\$3,000	\$750	\$484
Kacy Peckenpaugh	\$3,000	\$750	\$750
Marek Matyjasik	\$1,985	\$750	\$750
Andressa Bertolazzo	\$1,250	\$750	\$750
Jonathan Cornell	\$1,936.50	\$750	\$750

Gina Cook	\$2,025	\$750	\$750
Barbara Ariel Blair	\$1,626.37	\$750	\$750
Anna Gabur	\$2,448.33	\$750	\$750
Hannah Stedge	\$2,052.13	\$750	\$750

Objectives for Next Year:

Special charges for the committee next year should include the development and potential addition of an RSPG travel grant criteria and hierarchy rubric for committee member use in order to maintain consistency between iterations. A rubric already exists for RSPG and Hemingway grants. The addition of a criteria rubric for travel grants will clarify already established criteria (such as completing a budget form and not exceeding limits in a request) and hierarchy (such as the inclusion of faculty rank as voted upon during the 2023-24 academic year).

The committee has discussed several ways to do this, and the consensus is to draft a rubric over the summer for review prior to the Fall 2025 travel round deadline. If adopted, it will be made available to faculty to offer guidance when submitting grants. This is in line with the information session initiative to give faculty opportunities to learn about grant criteria and better prepare their proposals. It will also provide guidance for new committee members who will begin reviewing proposals within the first two weeks of the fall semester. In addition, with steeper competition for travel funds and in line with last year's initiative to establish a hierarchy the committee will continue to discuss ways of ensuring equitable distribution of its limited travel funds. This includes building on last year's discussions on prioritizing pre-tenure faculty on the tenure track and distributing the remainder among qualified applications (tenured and non-tenure track instructors). Additional discussion must occur on how to prioritize non-tenure track instructors.

In line with the outgoing chair's (Sarah Herrmann) suggestion, committee member meeting attendance and responsibility fulfillment was tracked this year. Unfortunately, issues with RSPG committee members not always working with applicants, not attending meetings, and not reviewing proposals or offering any feedback persist. This directive will continue into next year in order to encourage members to fulfill their responsibilities. In addition, it has become difficult to get committee members to send out funded proposals for signatures in a timely fashion. In some cases the chair had to prod members to follow through with fall signatures well into the spring semester. While the chair hopes this is anomalous, strategies for ensuring responsibilities are being held up will be developed and implemented in Fall 25, such as adding a signature line on each form for the RSPG chair in order to track each document's progress, and using read receipts on emails to verify committee members are reading them.

Finally, the chair commends committee members Cynthia Jones, Keith Osai, and Bob Fudge, as well as Fall 24 substitute Ben Kruger-Robbins - they were each highly engaged in committee work, met or exceeded their review deadlines, and were communicative with the chair and faculty in their college throughout the year.