Instructions to Grant Readers

Interpretation of Applications
As you read through the applications, keep an open mind. If you recognize someone’s research and feel you cannot be impartial, contact me, and I will make arrangements for the application in question. Please note that grant applicants in the spring cycle may request funding for the current spring and summer semesters, reimbursement for monies spent during the past fall semester, or forward one semester for events that occur early in the fall prior to the next grant cycle due date (typically late September).

How to read your grants
The recommended method for reading grants is to skim all of the grants once without worrying about scoring them. After you do this, then go back through and carefully read and score them by section. That means you would go through all of the grants reading and scoring only the abstract. Then you would go through them again reading and scoring only the budget, and then the budget explanation. You will find that this results in faster and more consistent scoring.

Consistency in Scoring
Each packet includes a suggested scoring sheet based on the criteria outlined in the application, and space is provided for comments. You may award all or only partial points for many categories as you deem appropriate, and it is essential that you are consistent with your awards and penalties in scoring.

In scoring applicants, focus on the quality of the statement rather than presence or absence of a statement. There is also a 1-2-3 ranking that you can use to compare applications overall to each other. Some readers felt that the end scores didn’t exactly match who they thought were the best applicants so this can help you remember which applications really struck you as strong.

The scoring process is driven by the rubric. If you find yourself scoring grants as either a 90 or 100, that means you are probably not reading the grants closely enough and your scores will, ultimately, be uninformative to the review process. Your grading scale should be from 80-100 but a scale from 60-100 should not feel “too harsh”. If you are having trouble with this, please contact the grants officer for guidance.

The purpose of the grant program is to help students get used to the rigor of applying for grants so when evaluating areas that call for the applicant to follow specific directions please take this into consideration. Previous GSG funding should not appear in the file being reviewed.

Giving Feedback
The entire application packet will be made available to applicants so feel free to write in appropriate questions and corrections. Record the score for each section of the rubric provided for each grant. Please take a moment to include constructive comments about the application, remember that the grant process is a learning experience for the applicant. Your comments will provide guidance for improvement in future applications. Include the whys and whats, speak strongly and forcefully if you feel the need but please be constructive, not cruel, with your comments – we do want them to try again after all.

Anonymity of Readers and Applicants
Do not discuss specific grants with anyone, including other readers. Readers’ identity will not be disclosed to any applicants to ensure anonymity. It is important that each applicant receives individual evaluations. If you are concerned someone may recognize your handwriting and are uncomfortable with this, you may type your comments and attach them to the appropriate application, or an editable scoring sheet is available on the GSG Grants webpage.

Group Discussion
It is best to record scores in pencil. Keep the applications in the order you receive them, as we will discuss them in this sequence. (If they become disarrayed you can follow the proposal numbers to order them again.) Grant readers in each category will meet as a group to discuss scores in about a week or two. Bring your grant packages and score sheets. We will review each application as a group and discuss any concerns. You will have the opportunity to compare your criteria with others in your reading group and may adjust scores as necessary.

Alert the Grants Officer of any concerns and they will spread the information to other readers.