

## **HES New Initiatives Grant Application**

**Project Director:**

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## PROJECT AND OBJECTIVES

I am applying for a grant of \$5000 to establish an undergraduate research journal in the history of economic thought. Consistent with the aims of the HES, the project seeks to promote interest in and to disseminate knowledge of the history of economic thought (HET) to a wider audience. A way to do this is by engaging undergraduate students in research in and promotion of HET and experience in the journal publication process.

The reasons for starting an undergraduate HET research journal are manifold, but the main reason is to develop and invest in the next generation of professional scholars in HET. Research by Sharon Weiner and Charles Watkinson (2014), among many others, has shown that involvement in both publishing a student research journal and preparing research for an undergraduate research journal positively influenced students' career decisions to pursue in scholarly research and publication in the future.<sup>1</sup> In addition to the gains in knowledge and research skills from writing papers in HET, the experience students can gain from learning the publishing process as undergraduates is also highly beneficial to their future professional lives both inside and outside academia.

The project's Faculty Steering Committee members, all scholars and professors in HET, have found that our students write outstanding papers in our HET and related courses but do not have a platform to share their research beyond student panels at conferences. While there are a number of undergraduate research journals in economics, they tend to be of widely varying quality. The proposed journal seeks to establish a professional-quality, open access website and review process. Although some of Economics student journals, like the *Berkeley Economic Review*, have a professional presence, they are very wide-ranging. Thus like the majority of professional academic journals in Economics, they may overlook and underpublish submissions in HET. The proposed journal creates a unique opportunity to showcasing undergraduate HET research in its own journal.

The goals of the journal, to promote undergraduate research in HET and interest in the HET by students and others, are aligned with the objectives of the HES to communicate scholarship in the history of economic ideas. Here students will have a platform to communicate with each other and other readers. Research and publishing experience could aid both a student's application to and success in graduate school. Because the it would be indexed in GoogleScholar and other academic databases, the journal could also help professional scholars to identify potential graduate program applicants and research collaborators. The journal will also be discoverable in web searches, thus communicating research in the history of ideas to a broader audience.

To be as accessible to students and others as possible, the journal will be fully online and open access rather than subscription-based. In order to remain independent from any one institution, the project seeks funding for startup costs for planning, hosting website development, and student training for publication of the first issue by September

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<sup>1</sup> Weiner, S.A. and C. Watkinson, What Do Students Learn from Participation in an Undergraduate Research Journal? Results of an Assessment, *Journal of Librarianship and Scholarly Communication*, 2(2), p.eP1125.

2021. Because it will be open access and the journal should not charge article submission or processing fees in order to remain open to all students, funding is necessary to maintain hosting and licensing fees for an initial period of three years, which is a sufficient period for attaining additional funds elsewhere. Additional longer-term funding will be sought by the Faculty Steering Committee, from the NEH and Mellon Foundation's digital publishing grant initiatives, and the project director's home institution.

All funds from the HES grant will go towards the purchase of open access software and licensing for the journal's website, stipends for student workers to assist with website development, marketing, and developing guidelines for student editors and reviewers, partial release time for the project director to work with students and the steering committee, and honorariums for the steering committee's time to engage in training on electronic publishing and editing, and collaboration with the student team. Allocation of the grant to specific persons and activities is detailed in the attached budget.

The proposed dates of the project funding are from July 20, 2020- September 30, 2021. Specific activities and costs necessary to establish the journal and publish its first issue in September 2021 are outlined fully in the section Timeframe and Evaluation.

## **PERSONNEL**

**Project Director:** Aida Ramos  
Associate Professor of Economics, University of Dallas,  
[aramos1@udallas.edu](mailto:aramos1@udallas.edu)

### **Faculty Steering Committee:**

Aida Ramos, UD  
Edward Nik-Khah, Professor of Economics, Roanoke College,  
[nikkhah@roanoke.edu](mailto:nikkhah@roanoke.edu)  
Daniel Saros, Associate Professor of Economics, Valparaiso  
University, [dan.saros@valpo.edu](mailto:dan.saros@valpo.edu)

### **Student Steering Committee:**

MaryCatherine Bridges [mcbridges@udallas.edu](mailto:mcbridges@udallas.edu)  
(senior Economics major, Univ. of Dallas),  
Emilio Montalvo [emontalvo@udallas.edu](mailto:emontalvo@udallas.edu)  
(senior Economics major, Univ. of Dallas),  
Quinn O'Grady [qograd@udallas.edu](mailto:qograd@udallas.edu)  
(May 2020 Economics graduate, Univ. of Dallas)

**Student Editorial & Marketing Board:** MaryCatherine Bridges, Emilio Montalvo,

The director and Faculty Steering Committee members each have over twelve years' experience in teaching and research in the history of economic thought and methodology. Besides commitment to their own research, they are also committed to engaging their students in the world of ideas and fostering their professional development. Each has experience in publishing their work in academic journals and books. The project director has previous experience with the editorial process from her

work as an assistant editor for a peer-reviewed academic journal, and in student-run journals, having advised provided two Economics majors who were successive editors of an undergraduate research journal at UD. All members also have experience in working with student groups. The Student Steering Committee is comprised of two Economics majors who have just completed their junior year and one soon-to-be graduate, who are all recent HET students. The two current juniors will also make up the Student Editorial and Marketing Board. Each has some experience in working with student publications as well as research in HET. (The Student Advisory Board will exist only until the journal is established. Students from other institutions will be added to the editorial board in late summer 2020.)

#### **TIMEFRAME AND EVALUATION:**

The successful publication of the first issue by September 2021 will be the general metric of evaluation of the project's success. However, more detailed assessment of the project will measure the success of participants in fulfilling the items in the following timeline, using each item in the assigned month(s) as a benchmark. Whether each stage was accomplished, how challenges were met, and improvements that can be made in preparation of future issues will be provided in the report to the HES at the end of the funding period.

#### **July 2020-August 2020**

- Open bank account for the journal
- Purchase software and build website
- Approve written aims and submission guidelines for the journal
- Establish, draft, and approve guidelines and process for peer review
- Committee meetings online for training in journal editing & software
- Identify programs with HET or related courses for direct contact and marketing
- Select additional student editors from home institutions

#### **September 2020**

- Finalize & launch website
- Editorial board finalized
- Establish social media presence on multiple platforms
- Engage in outreach to Econ programs & Econ & related disciplines' societies

#### **October 2020**

- Open for rolling submissions October 1st
- Request inclusion in various lists of undergraduate research journals

#### **October-December 2020**

- Maintain website and media accounts
- Track submissions
- Identify potential candidates for acceptance
- Begin peer review and revision process

#### **Jan-May 2021:**

Select submissions for acceptance  
Copyediting, peer review, and revisions process

**May-August 2021:**

prepare and finalize volume 1

**September 2021:** Publish volume 1

**September 2022:** Publish volume 2

**September 2023:** Publish volume 3

## **PROPOSED BUDGET**

**(Payments to individuals are for the startup year only)**

**Website hosting, software, and licensing fees, OpenJournalSystems.com**

\$460 per year X 3 yrs = \$1380

**Partial release time from Summer II teaching for Project Director** to coordinate project and participants, draft final materials, draft final aims and guidelines, & set up site:

\$1000

**Stipends for Student Editorial and Marketing Board** for research, writing, marketing, training time:

\$810 x 2 = \$1620

**Honorarium for steering committee (excluding director)** for planning, meeting, & marketing:

\$500 X 2 = \$1000

**TOTAL: \$5000**

All payments to individuals will be made after receipt of the funds from HES in July 2020. An initial payment of \$460 will be made in July 2020 to OJS for hosting and software and renewed annually for the next two years. Any remaining funds from the startup year will be left in the journal's account for future years' hosting fees.

The amounts listed are based on Open Journal System's pricing schedule, which can be found here <https://openjournalsystems.com/open-journal-systems-hosting/>, and correspondence the project director had with them regarding hosting and software fees; a partial payment for a typical summer session course at UD; typical undergrad research assistance stipends that have been granted at UD; and typical UD honoraria that have been offered to speakers and collaborators for short term events and projects.