

URBAN BEING PROGRAM 2007-2008

Overview:

Trinity College requests the establishment of a grant program in partnership with Figure Foundation, to fund community-based projects and independent projects which benefit the Hartford community, to be implemented by students individually or in teams. Student proposals will be presented to Figure Foundation, which will make funding decisions. Student projects will be proposed and selected during Fall 2007, and implemented and completed by May 2008. Students may receive academic credits as independent studies or internships for their project work, when appropriate and agreed upon between students and faculty advisors.

The core concept is the achievement of maximum good for a minimal outlay. Figure Foundation especially seeks innovative proposals coupled with efficient, economical, and effective plans for their implementation. The funding process will be competitive, to encourage the best efforts on the part of all submitting teams and to nurture outstanding results from the program. Proposals will be treated with a necessary bias, favoring these outcomes.

Goals of this program:

The project aims include:

- To give students a first-hand knowledge of non-profit and community-based organizations.
- To give students opportunities to learn every aspect of project development and implementation in a community setting.
- To help the Hartford community, through the implementation of projects supported by the Urban Being program.
- To advance the larger goal of Trinity College to foster community partnerships in Hartford and the region.
- To provide students a first-hand experience of non-profit grant development and administration, learning from success and failure.
- To offer students a first-hand experience with the ongoing work of philanthropists and philanthropies, a different reality.

Specific aspects of the Urban Being program:

1. Students will propose their projects via email to Mr. Harry Solomon, President of Figure Foundation (founded@gmail.com). The core of the proposal is a brief description of the proposed project, and a rationale for it. The proposal should also provide a rationale for the funds requested, including a budget item list. The proposal need not be long or overly formal, but should be as concrete and specific as possible. In outlining the goals of your project, you might consider questions like these: Who will benefit from your project? How will the project be organized and implemented? How will you assess its effectiveness both during and after the project? Who will work with you on the project? Although your communication with Figure Foundation will usually be via email, you should provide full contact information for your team and for community partners or faculty advisors, if any. **PROPOSAL DEADLINE: WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 10.** Funding decisions will be announced by December 1, at the latest.
2. Funds for approved projects will be held by Trinity in an account set up for exclusive use in this project. Funds may not be used to offset other expenses normally covered by any part of the

Trinity College budget. The fund will be set up at Trinity as a special reimbursement account for project expenses.

3. Proposals are invited from sophomores, juniors, and seniors. [FY students: recruit a team member from '08-'10] If a project is funded, students will have an option to incorporate their implementation plans into a credit-bearing project in the spring term. For example, a project could implicate more than ten hours a week in a community placement, in which case it could be supervised as an internship for credit. Alternatively, a project may involve many hours of independent work (e.g., on a video documentary about Hartford), in which case it could be an independent study. Faculty may supervise these projects – students are responsible for making these arrangements.
4. If a project is funded, the students proposing it will be responsible for its implementation beginning as early as possible during Fall 2007 and concluding in May 2008. The challenge is to see how much can be done with the least amount of dollars and the maximum amount of constructive input.
5. Funds for student projects will support or enhance the Hartford community through development of new programs or activities involving community partners, or creating something of use to the community (e.g. public art, community history, etc.). Projects of the latter sort might not have specific community partners. Project funds will not be used for capital equipment on campus, salaries, or indirect costs to Trinity College. It is understood that participants shall not benefit financially.
6. Faculty may serve in an advisory capacity only. Faculty may not write or edit proposals. Faculty may meet with students, and help students conceive and refine both their project proposals and the projects themselves, to the extent needed and requested by students.
7. Trinity will use all available channels including the student newspaper, the daily email bulletin, and posters to inform all sopohmores, juniors, and seniors of the existence of the Urban Being program. Similarly, faculty will be invited to participate as described above through as many channels as possible.
8. At the end of the Spring semester, the faculty advisors will oversee the collation of a report on the project, all of the specific proposals and budgets, an account of expenses for each project, reflections on their learning by the students, and an overview assessment of the project by the faculty. The report will be used to evaluate future funding. Success will be judged by the quality of the projects.

Conclusion:

Urban Being is intended as a presence and open door for non-profit foundations to fund student proposals. As such, there is the hope that other foundations may sign on in the future to be exposed to the student proposals. The advantage for foundations is the student proposals are a very inexpensive format for innovation. The advantage for the College is that Urban Being serves as a painless venue for foundations on campus. Suddenly there is a simple solution to a long-standing problem: student access to foundations.