We have amazing students. They’re filled with ideas for innovative projects that may not get off the ground without a bit of cash. That’s where the VCUarts Undergraduate Research Grants come in.

Students submit their collaborative proposals and, boom, many are selected for funding. This booklet includes some of the interesting projects that students have taken on since we began the program in 2006. To date, we’ve supported students to the tune of $100,000 through these grants.

To read about more student projects, visit vcu.edu/arts/ugrg
Technologically Charged Modern Dance Event

Amy Kaeberle, Alyssa Gregory, Amanda Patterson, Nathan Altice

The Yellow House

Kay Milne, Gary Peters, Warren A. Hamilton II, Dennis Williams, Rebecca Rudolph, Brian Glass, Emily Rosko

Kinetic Reactions to Sounds of Public Spaces

John Dombrowski, Joshua Bennett

Project Persephone

Mary Cox, Savannah Berry, Jennifer Anne Ducharme

Multimedia Art Advocacy

Kevin Estes, Peter Sorka, Brittany Shade, John Labra

New Zealand Bound: World of Wearable Art

Grace Johnston and Melanie Hearn

Kakuma Kenya

Awer Bul and Gabriel Williams

The Abaya: Inspiration for Fashion Design

Natalie Hakim, Kelli Green, Nicole Osborne, Re’Heon Jang, Audrey Leen, Shanna Shin, Shelby Day, Jessica Goodspeed, Carey Stewart, Lindsay French, Amy Galles, Holly Sullivan, Kendra Palin, Cara Hodges, Kathleen Gary, Darryl Schneider, Brittany Montrait

Untangling the Arabesque

Leila Praerentwantaya

Other Information and List of Our Majors

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www.vcu.edu/arts/ugrg
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PROPOSAL: Technologically Charged Modern Dance Event

Four students will create a full evening-length multimedia modern dance event to be held at the newly renovated Dogtown Dance Theatre. The theme for the piece is the study of the human subconscious. The starting point will be the investigation from Quadrifrons, a complete collaborative dance work based on hypnosis and the human subconscious.

Recipients: Amy Kaeberle, Interdisciplinary Studies (Dance and Choreography and Kinetic Imaging); Alyssa Gregory, Dance and Choreography; Amanda Patterson, Kinetic Imaging; Nathan Altice, Media, Art + Text

Award: $3,000
PROPOSAL: Kinetic Reactions to Sounds of Public Spaces

In an ongoing Kinetic Imaging and Sculpture + Extended Media collaboration, two students will create a kinetic sculpture, which visually reacts to the sonic landscapes of public spaces in Richmond. Using audio-sensitive technology, programming, and robotics, parts of the sculpture will react to city noises. The piece will have a form suggestive of organic life and its sensitivity to our environment. Through this reaction, the project will increase awareness of the prevalence of sound and the importance of silence.

Recipients: John Dombroski, Kinetic Imaging; Joshua Bennett, Sculpture + Extended Media

Award: $2,400

PROPOSAL: The Yellow House

Students from various disciplines will create an art educational television program called The Yellow House. Puppets will play a major role in the development of this program designed to teach audiences of all ages about artists and their inspiration. Vincent van Gogh will be one of the recurring characters. The Yellow House references the van Gogh house in the south of France that became a sanctuary for artists.

Recipients: Kay Milne, Art Education; Gerry Perez, Art Education; Warren A. Hamilton II, Kinetic Imaging; Dennis Williams, Theatre and Art History; Rebecca Rudolph, Theatre (Scene Design); Brian Glass, Kinetic Imaging and Computer Science; Emily Rosko, Theatre (Stage Management)

Award: $2,500
Multimedia Art Advocacy

Recipients: Kevin Estes, Music Performance; Peter Soroka, Music Performance; Brittany Shade, Sculpture + Extended Media; John Labra, Graphic Design

Award: $2,500

THE PROPOSAL

Students will generate one multifunctional percussion instrument that will take on the role of a sculpture. The graphic artist will work on computerized abstracts, musicians will play the sculpture as a percussion instrument and visual artists will present it as a sculpture. Each student will participate in each phase of development including design, sculpting, and musical composition.

THE OUTCOME

Initial performances of the instrument AMUSEment featured four Tyvek-clad percussionists who played improvisational music composed by Jones, at several VCU venues. The artists’ goal is for the sculpture to continue reaching out to the community after they graduate.

PROPOSAL: Project Persephone

Students from Cinema, Music and Theatre will create Pomegranate, VCU’s first musical film based on the Greek myth of Hades and Persephone. Students will compose a visual and musical work exploring sacrifices made for love.

Recipients: Mary Cox, Cinema; Savannah Berry, Music (Vocal Performance); Jennifer Anne Ducharme, Theatre (Costume Design)

Award: $2,400

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New Zealand Bound: World of Wearable Art

**Recipients:** Grace D. Johnston, Sculpture + Extended Media; Melanie J. Hearn, Fashion Design

**Award:** $3,000

**THE PROPOSAL**

This team will create a spectacular garment that will incorporate their specific mediums: fashion and sculpture. Together they will design, sketch, create and submit their design to the “World of Wearable Art,” the world’s largest wearable art fashion show held annually in New Zealand. If accepted, they will travel to New Zealand to participate in the two opening nights of the show.

**THE OUTCOME**

Grace and Melanie created this amazing dragon garment based on a dream that Melanie had. They won Richmond’s tenth annual Wearable Art fashion show and opened the SEAMLESS: Computational Couture fashion show in Boston, Massachusetts. The costume was also submitted to the World of Wearable Art competition in New Zealand and made it to the final round. The team was there in New Zealand to experience the once-in-a-lifetime event.
“Our ultimate goal of this research project is to help rebuild an individual and community identity for African refugees worldwide, and also generate awareness of the catastrophic crisis that is taking place in Sudan today.”

Kakuma Kenya: African Refugee Art Club

Recipients: Awer Bul, Kinetic Imaging and Painting & Printmaking; Gabriel Williams, Kinetic Imaging

Award $5,000

THE PROPOSAL

Produce a video documentary about the African Refugee Art Club at a refugee camp in Kenya. The Art Club was founded by artists from Sudan, including Awer Bul, who fled the country seeking safety. It provides an artistic outlet for the Lost Boys of Sudan. The intent is to build an identity for Sudanese refugees worldwide. The award funds travel to Kenya, lodging and video supplies.

THE OUTCOME

Gabriel and Awer traveled to the Kakuma Refugee Camp in Kenya where they documented refugees facing abject conditions such as extreme poverty, hunger, disease, rebel violence, and socio-economic and political corruption. The team collectively filmed over 17 hours of digital video footage; took over 700 photos; delivered two suitcases full of art supplies to the refugee artists in the camp; and held an art workshop that yielded a series of powerful paintings that illustrate the life of a refugee. More important, it provided an outlet and opportunity for disenfranchised African refugees to speak out about the poor conditions in their sweltering refugee camp in Kakuma, Kenya.
The Abaya: Inspiration for Fashion Design

Fashion Design students from Richmond:
Natalie Hakim, Kelli Green, Nicole Osborne, Ra-Yeon Jang, Audrey Laseon, Shauna Shin, Shelby Day, Jessica Goodspeed, Coree Stewart, Lindsay French, Amy Galles, Holly Sullivan, Kendra Palin, Cara Hodge, Kathleen Gary, Darryl Schneider, Brittany Monteith

Award $2,000

Many students in Kim Guthrie’s fashion class didn’t really know what an abaya is or why it is worn. Using this traditional garment worn by many women in Persian Gulf countries as the focus for a design studio project not only allowed the students to experiment with redesigning a very basic garment, but also opened their eyes to another culture.

Guthrie, an assistant professor in the VCUarts Department of Fashion Design & Merchandising, came up with a unique assignment in her Give Me Shelter Class, in which students discussed the idea of clothing as shelter and how different cultures address the concept of clothing.

Twenty students on the Richmond campus were charged with designing and embellishing abayas. They sent their sketches to students at the VCUarts sister campus in Doha, Qatar for “user” feedback, and the back-and-forth continued until students on both campuses were pleased with the results.

The ten stunning designs were unveiled in fashion shows on both campuses, and more than 100 media outlets featured the collaboration, just one of many between VCU students and faculty in Virginia and Qatar.
Untangling the Arabesque

Recipient: Leila Prasertwaitaya, Art History
Award: $1,200

THE PROPOSAL
Leila will examine the purely Islamic architectural elements within Richmond’s Monroe Park District. The result will be a two-part catalogue to be housed in Special Collections at VCU’s Cabell Library. The $1,200 award will fund travel to DC to visit libraries and galleries, selected books, cost of images, supplies, stationery and printing.

THE OUTCOME
The book Untangling the Arabesque: Islamic Design Elements in the Monroe Park Campus was published and requested by The Fine Arts Library of Harvard University for their Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture collection.

VCUarts Richmond Undergraduate Majors
Art Education – BFA
Art History – BA
Cinema – BA
Communication Arts – BFA
Illustration, drawing, visual studies
Craft/Material Studies – BFA
Clay, fiber, glass, metal, wood
Dance & Choreography – BFA
Fashion Design – BFA
Fashion Merchandising – BA
Graphic Design – BFA
Interior Design – BFA
Kinetic Imaging – BFA
Music – BA, BM
Painting & Printmaking – BFA
Photography & Film – BFA
Sculpture + Extended Media – BFA
Theatre – BFA, BA

VCUarts Undergraduate Research Grants
We are continually amazed at our students’ incredible ideas and level of thinking and curiosity. And in this regard, VCUarts puts its money where its mouth is, with grants totaling $25,000 to $35,000 annually for undergraduate research.

All VCUarts students are eligible.
You may apply every year.

The projects in this booklet are just a sampling of the innovative projects put forth by our students. The full list, and instructions for submitting a grant proposal, can be found at:

www.vcu.edu/arts/ugrg

VCU Qatar Undergraduate Majors
Fashion Design – BFA
Graphic Design – BFA
Interior Design – BFA
Painting & Printmaking – BFA

www.qatar.vcu.edu