

2019 PROVOST'S LEARNING INNOVATIONS GRANTS CALL FOR PROPOSALS

The **Provost's Learning Innovations Grants** (PLIG) program was developed to broaden and enrich the learning experience of RIT students by funding faculty-initiated projects that enhance student learning. Managed by the Innovative Learning Institute (ILI), this program has been designed to:

- Better support dissemination of individual faculty learning to the wider faculty population
- Integrate funding with Institute priorities
- Support the scholarship of teaching and learning

I. ELIGIBILITY

All full-time RIT faculty (tenured, tenure-track, visiting, lecturers, etc.) are eligible to apply.

II. GRANT TYPES

There are two types of grants—Exploration and Focus—for PLIG 2019. Full details are available on the [Grants Types](#) page of the PLIG website (www.rit.edu/plig).

III. USE OF GRANT FUNDS

Provost's Learning Innovations Grants for 2019 may range from \$1,000-\$5,000.

Examples of the use of PLIG funds include:

- Course release (reasonable, actual replacement costs for faculty members removed from teaching)
- Development of new technology-based learning tools and/or environments
- Technologies or equipment required that are not normally provided by the department/college
- Resources for research design and consultation, data collection and aggregation, instrument development and/or purchase, secure data storage, data analysis, and report generation
- Travel to support research activity and/or meet with potential funding sources

IV. PLIG TIMELINE AND TASKS

The grant timeline assumes that most recipients will use the Spring 2019 and/or Summer 2019 term(s) to plan and develop their PLIG-funded project for delivery or implementation during the Fall 2019, Spring 2020, and/or Summer 2020 term(s). The full [timeline](#), including grantee tasks, is available on the PLIG website.

V. SELECTION COMMITTEE AND EVALUATION CRITERIA

Applications for PLIG funds are evaluated by the [PLIG selection committee](#) according to the following criteria:

- *Utility* (solves a defined problem; has potential to benefit many courses/faculty)
- *Creativity* (is a novel approach or application; represents a new paradigm)
- *Efficacy* (uses an evidence-based approach; impact to student learning and/or the student experience can be demonstrated)

The criteria are further defined, illustrated, and explained in the [Proposal Evaluation](#) section of the PLIG website.

VI. QUESTIONS

Please email plig@rit.edu with any questions about the PLIG process.

(Examples of previously funded projects are available in the [Previous Awards](#) section of the PLIG website).

2019 PROVOST'S LEARNING INNOVATIONS GRANTS

APPLICATION

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Complete this Application Form and save as "Lastname_Firstname_APP" (*using your name*).
2. Ask your Department Head to complete the Department Head Certification, scan and save as, "Lastname_Firstname_SIG" (*using your name*).
3. Email all documents to plig@rit.edu, **no later than 11:59pm ET, January 21, 2019**.

If you have any questions about completing this application, please contact Michael Starenko at 585-475-5035 or mssetc@rit.edu.

APPLICANT INFORMATION

This application is for a (please select *one* type of grant):

Exploration Grant

Focus Grant – Active Learning Across All Course Modes

Principal Applicant Name: mari jaye blanchard

Faculty Title: Assistant Professor Email: mjbpph@rit.edu Phone (585) 475-5303
(Full-time only)

College: College of Art & Design Department: School of Film and Animation

Department Head Name: Adrienne Carageorge Email: axcp@rit.edu

Others involved in the project (if any): Lecturer Kevin Bauer

Project Name: SOFA Slow-Mo: Engaging in Movement Research Through Active Learning

Total Funds Requested (*as calculated on the budget worksheet on the next page*): \$1665.00
(requests of \$1,000 to \$5,000 will be considered)

BUDGET

Complete the table below to calculate your budget

- The total shown on this worksheet must match the “Total funds requested” in the Applicant Information section on page 1 of this application form.
- If awarded, additional funds will be provided to cover any benefits and ITS expenses associated with the salary budget requested.
- Note that any equipment or other materials purchased with grant funds are the property of your department and revert to the department after your project is completed

Personnel	Purpose/Justification	Amount
Full-time Faculty/Staff		
Adjuncts, Part-time Faculty/Staff, Summer Salary		
Student Workers, Graduate Assistants		
Student Archivist \$11.10/hr, 5 hrs. week, 15 weeks (Fall Semester 2019)	Edit and Archive Slow-Motion Footage	\$832.5
Student Archivist \$11.10/hr, 5 hrs. week, 15 weeks (Spring Semester 2020)	Edit and Archive Slow-Motion Footage	\$832.5
Personnel Total		\$ 0.00
Equipment	Purpose/Justification	Amount
Equipment Total		\$ 0.00
Travel	Purpose/Justification	Amount
Travel Total		\$ 0.00
Other (Specify)	Purpose/Justification	Amount
Other Total		\$ 0.00
Total Award Requested		\$1665.00

STATEMENT OF UTILITY (two pages maximum)

Using the evaluation criteria outlined in the [Proposal Evaluation](#) section of the PLIG website, please provide an overview of the project you are proposing, including:

- Project objectives
- An explanation of the teaching/learning problem(s) it is designed to address
- An explanation of the significance of the project to student outcomes and/or the student experience.
- A brief description of how the project integrates with activity already underway at RIT in a priority area and/or how this approach has been successfully used at RIT already.

The objectives of this SOFA Slow-Mo PLIG project are to expand upon the student-led collection of slow-motion reference video footage that was started in the Fall of 2018 (2181) and to establish an archival process that insures accessibility to this archive across the school, and potentially beyond.

Teaching/Learning Problems SOFA Slow-Mo is Designed to Address:

Within the School of Film & Animation, the study of movement is fundamental. Animation students' first two years at RIT (and arguably, the rest of their careers) are focused on establishing a working knowledge of weight, balance, form, anticipation, materiality and momentum, all concepts that contribute to the successful transformation of static images to moving ones.

"An animator... should have a profound understanding of the connections between thoughts and movement, emotion and movement, [and] how movement impacts the audience..."¹ It would almost seem implausible not to implement active learning when teaching learners about action. As described by Cynthia J. Brame, "approaches that promote active learning focus more on developing students' skills than on transmitting information and require that students do something—read, discuss, write—that requires higher-order thinking. They also tend to place some emphasis on students' explorations of their own attitudes and values." With SOFA Slow-Mo, we are proposing a project with two active learning outcomes: The (group) participatory event where students of all physical proportions and abilities gather to perform movements, and the resulting slow-motion video sequences which will then be used as a resource for anyone studying movement, including the students in the School of Film & Animation. This project thus becomes a two-fold application of "students' efforts to actively construct their knowledge." (AUSSE)

Significance of SOFA Slow-Mo to Student Experience

A recent review of the last three senior classes of SOFA animation (92 students) showed that, on average, a graduating student takes 2.01 "physical activity" classes in their four years at RIT. This number comes from a total of 232 Wellness classes, of which only 185 require physical activity. That means 80% of the wellness classes they take are physical and the other 20% do not directly address movement. 32 of our 92 students took more than two "wellness" classes at RIT, meaning only 35% of our students take more wellness classes than required. Of those 32 students that took more than two "wellness" classes, only 20 took more than two "physical activity" classes. That means in a 4-year program, only 22% of SOFA students are taking more than two "physical activity" classes before graduation.

¹ (Ed Hooks *Acting for Animators*)

While this does not mean students aren't engaged in extracurricular activities, it does mean that a large percentage of their classroom studies are not dedicated to *experiencing* movement, even while a much larger percentage of their focus is presumably to *create* movement.

“Until students have an opportunity to live out what they have learned, the learning is not completely cemented in the brain. Any direction for application and action must be authentic and genuine but the relevant information must have been deemed valuable and important to be remembered when the appropriate time comes for action.”²

By asking them to engage in the very movements they seek to study, or to observe and be inspired to move by their peers in previously recorded actions, we aim to supplement SOFA class curriculum and allow students to take ownership of their learning through student-created reference footage.

Project Integration with RIT Activity

It is a requirement of many animation courses in the School of Film & Animation as well as 3D Digital Design to shoot reference footage for an action that will be animated, although single-student productions can often be lacking in true resource potential. With the recent launch of MAGIC Spell Studio encouraging even more collaboration between the College of Art & Design (CAD) and the School of Interactive Games & Media (IGM), the SOFA Slow-Mo archive could become an integral resource for students across many schools exploring different types of movements in a variety of scenarios, as well as inspire higher quality performances and footage for reference being filmed. The semester's end film shoot will be open to any willing participants, and it could be an ever-expanding resource that centralizes reference footage for students, by students.



(from L) WIP Still from Marina Bacino's Film "Rails", Still from SOFA Slow-Mo (front), Still from SOFA Slow-Mo (side)

As this project would build upon one that we have already begun, we are seeking within this proposal funding for a student archivist, who will edit and organize the already existing footage from the December 2018 film shoot. This will be the first series of videos available as reference, shot simultaneously from two different angles for clarity. Given student interest, the archive can branch out to include slow motion studies of particles and dynamics as well as more extreme poses filmed in the RIT pool (for softer landings.)

² Holly J. Inglis "Tips for Sticky Learning (2014)"

STATEMENT OF CREATIVITY (three paragraphs maximum)

Provide a brief description of how this is a novel approach, or a new application of an existing mode or model of teaching and learning, and/or research about how teaching and learning represents a new paradigm.

Some of the core principles of animation, including anticipation, “squash & stretch”, and materiality are difficult to perceive in real-time footage, as much of it happens faster than the eye can see. When slowed down, the intricacies of an action are revealed, and animation students, who work frame by frame to create the illusion of movement, stand to benefit greatly from exposure to this kind of research.

YouTube channels like “Slow-Mo Guys” and “50 Ways (to Walk)” are being referenced in animation classrooms because of their in-depth approach to analyzing movements of all kinds. And while these resources can be insightful, from a pedagogical perspective we feel it can be even more beneficial if students are engaged in the actions they seek to study.

STATEMENT OF EFFICACY (two pages maximum)

Provide a brief description of the experiment/research design, methodology, and methods of data collection and analysis you will use to gauge efficacy.

SOFA Slow-Mo held its pilot film shoot in the Student Life Center Mini-Gym in December 2018 (2181), with 15 students participating. Over the course of four hours, students jumped, fell, climbed, walked, ran and rolled across exercise mats and walls in an exhaustive exploration of physical activity. While there was no explicit feedback collection for this inaugural event, some students reflected upon it in their SmartEval written comments, and others expressed great interest in seeing the results of the shoot, the archiving of which will occur in this upcoming semester (2185).

As it moves forward, the efficacy of this project will be evaluated in the following ways:

In regards to the slow-motion film shoot currently scheduled as an end-of-semester project for the *Performance Resources* (SOFA 225) class, pre- and post-participation surveys will be administered posing questions related to students' understanding of fundamental animation principles like anticipation, weight, balance and follow-through. A film shoot will also be scheduled for IMAGINE RIT, where students will invite members of the visiting public to engage in an action and see themselves in Slow-Motion. The efficacy of this particular shoot would be assessed differently as it would be unnecessary to gauge the public's knowledge of animation principles, but the diversity of participants (age, gender, weight) and actions collected from this event will be an indicator of successful creation of resource footage.

The long-term goal for the archived footage of the SOFA Slow-Mo project is that it be continually updated each year in *Performance Resources* with new students and new movements as students see fit. In the future, efficacy of this portion of the project can be gauged by how many students interact with the archived material (download counts are not available on the current host Server, but we are researching Digital Asset Management options for later iterations of this project.) Until a proper DAM is available, end-of-semester surveys for *Principles of Animation* (SOFA 107), the most probable course to utilize the footage, will be administered. Written feedback from students and project-specific questions in SmartEvals will also aid in gauging how students felt about its efficacy, as well as students' expressed desire to be part of upcoming Slow-Mo shoots.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Please address these questions, if needed.

Will your project require assistance for extensive or unusual media, multimedia, simulation, and/or software development? If so, please explain?

Currently, no, although we are talking with CAD ITS to see if a DAM system with searchable metadata capabilities can be implemented in the future.

All courses offered by RIT must be accessible to students with disabilities, according to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (rit.edu/studentaffairs/disabilityservices/info). Is your proposed teaching approach accessible to all students, with reasonable accommodation? If not, please explain.

Yes! We welcome ALL kinds of movement. And our database is certainly open to all.

RIT abides by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), which prohibits instructors from making students' identities, course work, and educational records public without their consent (rit.edu/xVzNE). Will any data gathering or sharing for your project raise any FERPA issues? If so, please explain.

Students will sign a film waiver acknowledging that their image will be used in the reference library. No other information about the specific students, including their names or educational records, will be made public.

DISSEMINATION AGREEMENT

By completing this grant application, I agree to provide the materials and services described here, in support of disseminating what is learned from this project to the RIT community.

I also agree to return all/a portion of the funds that I receive for this project to RIT if I fail to complete or provide the materials described here:

- Full Project Plan (*including roles and responsibilities, milestone dates, and pertinent project details*)
- Preliminary Findings report (*may include experiment/study design, lessons learned, initial data collection, and/or literature review summary*)
- Participation in an ILI/TLS Preliminary Findings Roundtable dissemination event (*share and discuss your preliminary findings with your PLIG cohort*)
- Final Summary of Findings (*including data collection, lessons learned, implications for further study, and which may be in the form of an article abstract, conference presentation outline, or short report*)
- Final budget accounting (*reconciliation of budget provided with your application and the actual project expenses*)
- Participation in an ILI/TLS PLIG Showcase dissemination event (*present a poster or other display at the annual Showcase*)

By submitting this application, I accept this agreement. mjb (*applicant, please initial here*)

TIMELINE AND TASKS

Please indicate any variances to the planned PLIG 2019 schedule as described in the above Dissemination Agreement and the reasons for this variance. *If you do not intend to deviate from the schedule, you may leave this section blank.*

Task	Date	Proposed Variance and Reason
Full Project Plan submitted to TLS	August 16, 2019	
Preliminary Findings report submitted to TLS	January 10, 2020	
Participation in an ILI/TLS Preliminary Findings Roundtable dissemination event	February, 2020	
Summary of Final Findings report submitted to TLS	August 21, 2020	
Final Budget Accounting report submitted to TLS	August 21, 2020	
Participation in an ILI/TLS PLIG Showcase dissemination event	November 2020	

DISSEMINATION PLAN (*optional*)

Provide details about the journals, conferences, shows, or other external vehicles with strong potential for dissemination of your results (in addition to the ILI/TLS Preliminary Findings Roundtable and PLIG Showcase dissemination events). Include supporting documentation, such as preliminary interest or acceptance, with your application, if available. *(Please note that special consideration will be given to proposals that have a defined opportunity for external dissemination, such as an academic journal or professional conference.)*

mari jaye blanchard is currently working on a workshop proposal for Digifest Educators Forum 2019 at George Brown College in the School of Design regarding her research of “line of action” as physical action in drawing. SOFA Slow-Mo would be another component of that research in regards to how physical activity shapes our perception of the line of action, and it could potentially be added to a workshop proposal in 2020.