



KWANTLEN POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY
Faculty of Arts

Application for Arts Special Purpose Funds

October 15, 2013

Interdisciplinary Expressive Arts (IDEA)

1 Applicant Information

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2 Department or Program Affiliation(s)

Faculty of Arts, Interdisciplinary Expressive Arts (IDEA)

The IDEA program also collaborates with the Faculty of Design (the Amazon Field School), the Faculty of Science (the Ecology course), the Department of English (the Performance and Theatre course), and with Student Life (the Aboriginal IDEA 100 course). IDEA affiliations span many areas at KPU.

2.1 Who are we?

2.1.1 Ross Laird, KPU Faculty, IDEA Program and Creative Writing

Ross Laird is the founder and lead developer of IDEA. The scope of his participation in this project will be to liaise with KPU colleagues and students, to work with internal and external partners, and to help guide the overall development of IDEA.

2.1.2 Robert (Bob) Walker - IDEA Work/Study Student and KPU Anthropology Major

Bob returned to Kwantlen after many years in the workforce. He attended his first IDEA course through the Amazon Field School in summer 2013 and immediately realized the benefits IDEA learning had on himself as a person and his academic pursuits. Bob was hired in September 2013 as a single semester work/study student to assist Ross Laird in developing the IDEA program and credentials at KPU and to embark on a research study documenting first year students experience in IDEA courses.

3 Funding Categories

3.1 D. Program Innovation and Expansion, IDEA Program and Credential Development

We seek funding to assist the development of a Minor and a Post-baccalaureate Certificate in Mentorship and Community Engagement. Coupled with this initiative is the proposed development of an IDEA Centre or Institute at KPU. Research and program development are required to further this initiative, as the IDEA program currently receives no developmental or coordination funding and does not operate within a departmental budget. Funds such as the ASPF are imperative to help IDEA do the necessary work to provide and improve the program offerings and research opportunities for IDEA learners at KPU.

3.1.1 Budget for Category D

\$2000.00

These funds will be allocated toward an extensive set of internal and external consultations. Internal consultations will include faculty members, staff, administrators and students. External consultations will include visits to the four post-secondary institutions in the Pacific Northwest that offer programming most similar to IDEA: Antioch University in Seattle, Evergreen State College in Olympia, Royal Roads University in Victoria, and Quest University in Squamish.

These visits will be accomplished as day trips (with the possible exception of the Seattle and Olympia trips, which would best be combined as one trip over two days), by road, with a maximum of two or three IDEA faculty members and/or steering committee members. The purpose of the visits is to learn, from peers and colleagues who have successfully implemented programming similar to IDEA, how it was done and how it is sustained. These visits will also help to build local relationships between IDEA and other, similar programs.

3.2 B. Student Research and Scholarship, Experiences and Perspectives on the IDEA Learning Model

As a complimentary and co-occurring project to the proposal laid out above, this section consists of a research study conducted by Bob Walker, IDEA Work/Study Student. The

methodology will consist of 20 hours of interviews with IDEA learners which will serve to assess and document their personal perspectives during and after their experiences with the IDEA model of learning. The data collected will be used to assist Ross Laird and the IDEA steering committee to continue to develop IDEA courses and credentials at KPU.

The work/study will conduct the interviews, compile data, and compose a written report of the findings from the study. As this research falls within the category of internal quality evaluation, REB approval will not be required.

3.2.1 Budget for Category B

\$500.00

This budget provides for approximately 49 hours at a rate of \$10.25 per hour, with a maximum of 15 hours per week (as laid out in the work/study student guidelines). These funds will enable an IDEA work/study student to continue beyond the currently-funded period which ends in December 2013. Ongoing engagement and support are required to assist in program development and research.

3.3 Total Budget Requested from Arts SPF

This application requests the maximum allowable amount of \$2,500.00 for a single department or program.

This application encompasses the IDEA program initiatives as outlined below; however the IDEA program collaborates with other KPU Faculties (such as the Faculties of Design and of Science) and therefore the IDEA program and course offerings are able to benefit KPU learners from many faculties and programs. The use of these funds will directly benefit learners in the IDEA courses, but as IDEA learners come from all KPU faculties and programs, the benefits are holistic to KPU.

These funds will be used for the development of IDEA initiatives throughout the coming year.

3.4 Total Budget from other sources

No other funding for further or new IDEA program development has been received or applied for as of the date of this application.

3.5 Dates of the initiative

As the IDEA program at KPU is growing, and building on the success of the first Amazon Field School in the Summer semester of 2013, the funding provided from this proposal will be used to further initiatives in program development in the following year commencing on the fund award date. A full report as to the allocation of funds and project successes will be provided after one year.

4 Project Description

IDEA is founded on the basic idea that post-secondary learning can be both holistic and integrative — that learners can build their self-awareness, empathy, and character at the same time that they construct their disciplinary knowledge.

Since its inception in 2008, IDEA offerings at KPU have thrived as a result of high learner demand and enrolment (typically 100%) and the good testimony of returning learners. With this encouragement it has become apparent that the IDEA model of learning and personal development is viewed as important and useful to learners at KPU. In turn, this has sparked the need to embark upon the development of IDEA in a more robust and formalized way within the Faculty of Arts and to provide learners with the opportunity to be conferred a credential within this framework. These are the primary goals of this funding application: to develop a pathway for developing a set of credentials as a viable path for learners wishing to continue their studies in Interdisciplinary Expressive Arts, and to work toward IDEA becoming a recognized unit at KPU. A Minor and a Post-baccalaureate Certificate program in Mentorship and Community Engagement (the latter offered on a cost-recovery basis), sponsored by a Centre of Institute, will provide an integrative and self-directed learning environment for learners to develop personal and professional mentorship and creativity skills they can use in the workplace, in their communities, and in their families. These programs are intended to be structured as learning communities in which individual learners will build their own pathways based on how much they already know, how they want to apply their skills, and how intensive they wish their programs to be.

However, there is no current framework at KPU (beyond the normal process for developing a Minor) to support and facilitate many of the kinds of things we wish to do in IDEA (for example, moving toward credential-based transcripts, moving toward a learning community model without set class times, and developing learner-centered credentials that do not prescribe set pathways but rather offer gap analyses and personalized programming). IDEA currently works within the traditional framework at KPU: grades, set classes, semester-based courses. We believe that learning innovations are required to move beyond some, or perhaps all, of these structures. Such innovations are currently sweeping across educational institutions in the United States and are now finding their way into Canadian universities (for example, the block system and learning community model at Quest). There is nothing other than an absence of precedent preventing us from exploring similar kinds of innovations at KPU, and IDEA is well-poised to take the steps required to make new precedents. We have already done so in several areas (for example, IDEA developed the first cross-faculty course at KPU). But we'd like to see how much farther we can go, what we can accomplish, and what these innovations will entail in terms of our credential offerings. We do not wish to offer traditional credentials. We believe that the greatest strength of IDEA is its unique character, and the credentials we offer should reflect the fact that IDEA is unique and different. And we believe that KPU has made a firm commitment (reflected in documents such as the Strategic and Academic Plans) to precisely the kinds of innovations we wish to undertake.

For example, IDEA focuses on specific modalities such as inquiry-based curriculum, reflective scholarship, intensive interaction, and interdisciplinarity. These approaches

are all listed in the KPU Academic Plan as being foundational priorities. Additionally, the Academic Plan highlights the importance of values such as global citizenship, inspiration, compassion, imagination, and personal growth. These values are core elements of the IDEA philosophy in general and are articulated specifically in the IDEA core values list. The Academic Plan further emphasizes skills such as effective communication, openness to diversity and inclusion, and creative and critical thinking. Again, these are all integral to the IDEA process and are specifically articulated as core goals in our program philosophy documentation.

We find similar correlations when we examine the KPU Strategic Plan, which describes the importance of distinctive programming, innovative teaching and learning, experiential learning, enriched student experience, and purposeful community engagement. Each of these core goals for KPU matches a core value for IDEA.

The Arts Academic Plan is aligned with the KPU Academic and Strategic Plans, and we therefore see similar correlations in values, approaches, and goals. For example, the Arts Academic Plan specifically emphasizes goals such as the enhancement of experiential learning, the wider adoption of interdisciplinary approaches, the importance of preparing learners for global citizenship, and the crucial role of mentorship. All of these broad goals are specifically articulated in IDEA philosophies and practices.

There is a high degree of symmetry between the stated goals of KPU, on many levels, and the articulated goals of IDEA. We believe that IDEA embodies, in a very fundamental way, the kind of institution that KPU has said it wants to be. But we don't see a clear pathway forward. We don't have answers to some of our basic questions about what kind of structure IDEA can be, what types of innovations we can reasonably expect to achieve, and what parts of our vision are possible at KPU. In order to find answers to these pressing questions we will need to consult extensively with internal partners (on questions about structure and innovation) and with external partners (on questions about vision, growth, and sustainability).

We believe strongly that KPU and IDEA are well-matched, and we'd like to help KPU achieve its goals. We just need a bit of help getting started.