📌 Sample Application – Shaw Innovation Mini-Fellowship (Exemplar)

Disclaimer:

*This sample application is provided as an **example only**. It is not a real student submission and does not represent an actual award decision. Its purpose is to help applicants understand how to structure strong responses and preview the type of information requested in the application process.*

Applicants must submit their own original work, tailored to their unique research, goals, and circumstances. Meeting the examples shown here does not guarantee funding.

Please note: questions prior to Q.16 are individual demographic questions and are not included in this example.

Q16. Please provide the title of your project
 Weaving Wellness: A Community-Based Art and Storytelling Project for Older Adults in Southern Maine

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Q17. Provide a brief description of your project (no more than 750 words)…
 This project explores how creative storytelling and visual arts can promote wellness, resilience, and social connection among older adults in Southern Maine. The primary objective is to design and implement a series of community-based workshops where participants co-create visual art pieces and share personal stories that reflect their lived experiences.

My research question is: *How can community-centered art practices enhance well-being, reduce social isolation, and foster intergenerational learning among older adults?*

The significance of this research lies in addressing two pressing issues in Maine: (1) the state's rapidly aging population, and (2) the need for innovative, culturally responsive programming that reduces isolation and supports mental health. By combining creative expression with structured storytelling, this project seeks to provide older adults with meaningful opportunities for connection while also generating qualitative data about program effectiveness.

The method of inquiry includes participant observation, pre- and post-workshop surveys, and qualitative analysis of shared narratives. Workshops will be designed with accessibility and inclusivity in mind and hosted in collaboration with a local senior center and library.

As the project lead, I will be responsible for designing curriculum, facilitating workshops, collecting and analyzing data, and disseminating results through presentations and community showcases. This work builds on my graduate studies in social work and gerontology and is guided by mentorship from Dr. [Faculty Mentor's Name].

Q18. What are the expected products of your research project or creativity activity?

- A small community art exhibit at the local library featuring visual works and selected narratives created by participants.

- A short, co-authored zine or booklet capturing stories and artwork (distributed to participants and local organizations).

- An academic presentation at USM's *Thinking Matters* conference.

- A manuscript for submission to the *Journal of Gerontological Social Work* highlighting findings on creative engagement and wellness outcomes.

Q19. What are the real world outcomes or implications of your project?
This project will provide immediate benefits to older adult participants by reducing isolation, fostering social connection, and enhancing self-expression. In the longer term, findings could inform the design of arts-based wellness programming across senior centers in Maine. By producing a replicable model, the project may influence policy conversations around non-clinical, community-based interventions that support healthy aging.

Q20. How does participating in this project align with your academic and career goals?
As a graduate student in social work with a concentration in aging, I plan to pursue a career in program design and evaluation for community-based elder services. This project provides direct experience in developing, implementing, and assessing an innovative intervention for older adults. The mentorship, community partnerships, and dissemination of findings will prepare me for doctoral-level research and future roles in nonprofit leadership or applied policy work.

Q21. Will this research involve human subjects?
Yes

Q22. Do you have IRB approval?
In Process

Q24. Please provide a detailed budget.

- **Art Supplies** (paper, paint, brushes, markers, glue, etc.) – **$200**
  Necessary for conducting 4 community workshops; ensures accessible materials for participants.

- **Printing & Design Costs for Participant Booklet/Zine** – **$150**
  Covers printing 50 copies of a compiled booklet of participant stories/artwork for community distribution.

- **Participant Refreshments for Workshops** – **$100**
  Supports accessibility by providing light snacks and beverages during multi-hour sessions.

- **Local Travel Reimbursements** (mileage to/from community workshop sites) – **$50**

Total Request: $500

Q25. What is the total amount of funding you are requesting?
500

Q26. Have you received any other funding for this project?
No

Q28–29. Faculty Supervisor Endorsement
(To be obtained from faculty mentor prior application for uploading. Example excerpt below for illustration only.)

> "I enthusiastically endorse [Student's Name]'s Shaw Innovation Mini-Fellowship application. This project is well-conceived, addresses a pressing community need, and provides valuable training for the applicant as a social work scholar. I will

provide mentorship throughout, particularly around IRB approval, data collection, and dissemination strategies." – Dr. Research Is Fun