

GRADUATE RESEARCH GRANT PROPOSAL

Contender // Becky Chen - Social Design Program





GRANT PROPOSAL

Contender: Becky Chen

My current internship at International Rescue Committee (IRC) has given me the opportunity to apply my skills as a social designer to aid the refugee community within Baltimore. My current projects at IRC include, creating and implementing an exit orientation program to aid refugees towards self-sufficiency. Another component of my internship includes designing and developing a standardized orientation guide for all caseworkers to use easily and functionally with their refugee clients.

A large part of my thesis for MASD includes the research and development of the two projects at IRC. This opportunity gives me the chance to exercise the tools I have been provided by the social design program to holistically think about the process in which refugees are aided in this country, and to find an area for design intervention to take place.

I have been passionate about the issue of relief for refugees before coming to MASD, and I believe this is an amazing opportunity for me to prove that designers are more than just decorators. As a social designer, I hope to contribute to the notion that designers are innovators, thinkers, and change makers. The tasks ahead are challenging and time extensive, however, my hope is that it will push me to be a better thinker and problem solver in the world of social design.

Currently, the Graduate Research Development Grant is my primary funding opportunity for these projects. I plan to heavily use the majority of the proposed amount of \$350 for aiding my research and development for the community of refugees in Baltimore, which may include: transportation, conference attendance and materials and supplies for project development. Continued is a detailed budget of potential needs.

PROPOSED BUDGET COSTS

JUSTICE CONFERENCE

The purpose of attending this conference is to gain incite on how other humanitarian organizations are approaching their issues of conflict. The conference will also provide a plethora of networking opportunities with organizations like World Relief who works similarly like IRC. This conference will also give me an opportunity to speak with leading activists in human rights and justice issues, and potentially advise and review my thesis materials. Details available here: <http://thejusticeconference.com/index.html>

RESEARCH

This component of my project is arguably the most important, and I plan to use all resources that are available to me to help support the development process. I plan to conduct interviews within the staff at IRC as well as refugees that live outside of Baltimore perimeters. Transportation to and from meetings will be constant, and brainstorming sessions to ideate with coworkers and refugees will be held. Supplies in support of these sessions and transportation funds are crucial.

DEVELOPMENT

The form in which my projects will take are still unknown at this point, however the use of visual aids in posters, print-outs, and booklets will be used to present the outcome. Printing mock-ups and examples will be an important component of this process and funds will be needed to expedite results.

Expenses	Description	Quantity	Cost
Justice Conference			
Event	Two-day event that promotes dialogue about justice issues while gathering human rights groups and organizations for networking purposes	1 ticket	\$139
Transportation (for conference)	Round-trip Train ride to Philadelphia	2 tickets	\$50/ticket = \$100
Research			
Transportation	Zip-car rentals / Public transportation passes	n/a	\$20
Supplies	Notepads, binders, markers, posters, post-it-notes...etc.	n/a	\$25
Journal/Article Subscriptions	Refugee related case studies that may aid research	2-3	\$20
Development			
Printing	Posters (5-10), booklet (1), color copies	n/a	\$45

Total	\$349
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PROJECT DETAILS

The **Cultural Orientation Program** provides supplemental trainings to newly arrived refugees and asylees to foster a better understanding of their new environment and services in the Baltimore Area

My job as an intern is to develop an exit orientation program for refugees to facilitate the transition from dependency to self-sufficiency as they continue to live in Baltimore.

