2018 Chapter Seed Grant Application Packet

SOPHIA
SOCIETY OF PHILOSOPHERS IN AMERICA

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

I. SUMMARY & HOW TO APPLY

The Society of Philosophers in America (SOPHIA) is accepting applications to receive seed grants which sponsor the creation/growth of local or online SOPHIA chapters. These chapters are communities of philosophical conversation pursuing SOPHIA's mission, embodying our values, and following the general guidelines outlined here. Our seed grants may provide up to $600 of support for plans to be implemented over the course of a year from the time of the award. Seed grants are not required for groups who wish to create a chapter. Seed grant applications will be accepted via electronic submission on a rolling basis, but priority will be given to applications submitted by **November 15th, 2018**. To apply, submit the application form (see its start on page 4) via email to: philosophersinamerica@gmail.com. If you can, submitting in Adobe PDF format is preferred, but not required. You may attach additional pages as needed to the file, such as with any letters of support or commitment from relevant organizations.

II. GRANT INFORMATION & QUALIFICATIONS

We are accepting applications for seed grants that request between $200 - $600. These funds should be used for starting or growing a SOPHIA chapter.[1] To be considered, applicants must complete the application form and return it by email to: philosophersinamerica@gmail.com.

To qualify for such a grant, **applicants must be willing and able to meet the chapter expectations outlined in the next section of this packet and meet the following criteria:**

1) Applications must be submitted by groups of at least three individuals who are seeking to create or grow a SOPHIA chapter.
2) At least one of the applicants must be a member in good standing of SOPHIA. This requires the proper payment of dues. [Note: part of the seed grant can be used to pay for the initial membership of other members as outlined in the Chapter expectations section below, to address constraints on financial accessibility.]
3) At least one of the three applicants must be trained in or show evidence of competency in philosophical studies. This could be a well-read individual, a professional philosopher, or something equivalent. [Note: the person who meets requirement 2 and 3 could be the same individual].

Chapters are *not required* to be housed in the university or college environment. Nor are chapters limited to the United States or to the Americas, despite the words "in America" in SOPHIA's name. With respect to environments, we are seeking applications from groups with access to public spaces that include, but are not limited to: public libraries, high schools, local book clubs, athletics clubs, coffee shops, sports clubs, & so on.

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[1] Groups needing further support or for opportunities beyond chapter growth can write to the Executive Director and learn more about possibilities for small ad hoc grants beyond our seed grants.

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III. CHAPTER EXPECTATIONS

Chapters have the authority to determine most organizational practices and customs. However, Chapters should adhere to the following guidelines if they wish to access the resources of the national organization:

1. Chapters should share SOPHIA's mission and values.
2. Each chapter should have a President, a Membership officer, and an Operations Officer. These positions may be customized to meet local needs and additional offices may be created at the discretion of chapter membership.
   a) The **President** should organize regular meetings and provide leadership to the chapter and its members. This person will create and maintain partnerships with local organizations and groups and hold regular meetings with other officers.
   b) The **Membership Officer** should focus on inviting potential chapter members to regular meetings and recruit dues-paying members into SOPHIA. This person will coordinate social events with chapter members and members of the larger community. This person will also monitor the dues-paying status of chapter members to ensure that at least three people per chapter are dues-paying members of SOPHIA.
   c) The **Operations Officer** should focus on communication and fiscal operations. This includes the promotion of chapter meetings and SOPHIA events, management of the SOPHIA chapter's Facebook page and email list, regular updates sent to the national organization of the chapter's upcoming activities, and management of fiscal operations.
3. **At least three members** must maintain their status as dues-paying members of SOPHIA.
4. Chapters should hold **at least 4 meetings per year**, including basic, philosophical conversations, organizational meetings, social and informational gatherings to introduce people to the chapter, as well as planning meetings for conversational SOPHIA events. Chapters are welcome to meet more often as desired.
5. Chapters should take attendance at each event, with names and contact information (a sign-in sheet). This can be valuable for future grant-writing.
6. Create a SOPHIA Chapter Facebook group & link it to the national organization's page (have the group "like" and "follow" the national organization's FB page: fb.me/PhilosophersInAmerica – and spread the word about our Twitter page as well: @SOPHIAchirp), and encourage each member to join the "SOPHIA Members" FB group (https://www.facebook.com/groups/sophiamembers/).
7. Take photos from time to time at your chapter's gatherings and share them with SOPHIA, to help build community.
8. Inform the national organization of challenges, needs, and potential for development of chapters and of SOPHIA, as insights arise through our initial experiments creating chapters.

IV. GRANT REPORTING EXPECTATIONS

If awarded a grant, recipients are expected to submit the following report documenting their progress.

End-of-Year Report. This report should be submitted about **12 months** after receiving the grant. The exact date will be included in your award letter. This report should include:

1) **Fiscal Records:** A final record of your expenses.
2) **Attendance Records:** A final attendance report including total numbers for events/meetings and some evidence to support those numbers (i.e. pictures, sign-in sheets, or something equivalent).
3) **Progress Report:**
   a. A reflective summary (up to 500 words) of your past year's efforts to grow your chapter. This should include, with original documentation where applicable (i.e. surveys and so on), a summary of your attempts to evaluate your progress and a written analysis of your progress which highlights those things that seem to work well and those things that did not work well.
4) **Improvement Plan:** A short description (up to 250 words) of how you plan on adapting your process, methods and practices to improve your chapter and a statement about how you plan to continue your efforts to further your chapter in the future.

NOTE: Chapters that have received a previous seed grant should ensure that end-of-year reports are submitted to SOPHIA before applying or along with their follow-up seed grant applications.

VI. IDEAS FOR USE OF FUNDING

Funds are first and foremost meant to support the creation of chapters & development of community. Among other options, proposals might seek support to fund memberships, awareness raising & advertising initiatives (including ads on social media & printed materials), an internship position to support chapter operations, gas cards for people who need assistance to get to meetings, food for gatherings, photocopies, name labels, or small honoraria for a sponsored guest.

It is worth noting that SOPHIA Chapters' emerging findings have shown great success in building local followings by means of certain online tools, especially MeetUp.com. That service comes with a cost just under $200 per year. As a platform, however, it is special because it is made for people who are interested in meeting up together. As such, chapters are encouraged to use tools like MeetUp and are welcome to include cover its cost in grant proposals. For example, the Lexington SOPHIA Chapter launched in March 2018 and as of October has over 120 chapter members. The Seattle Analytic Philosophy Club, which launched a SOPHIA chapter and has a longer history on MeetUp, has nearly 3,000 chapter members.

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APPLICATION

I. APPLICANTS

<u>Primary Applicant</u>

Name:

Email:

Phone:

Professional/Institutional Affiliations (if applicable):

<u>Second Applicant</u>

Name:

Email:

Phone:

Professional/Institutional Affiliations (if applicable):

<u>Third Applicant</u>

Name:

Email:

Phone:

Professional/Institutional Affiliations (if applicable):

Proposed name for the chapter: _____

Please note which of your applicants meet the following qualifications bellow:

- Member(s) in good standing of SOPHIA: _____

- Has some background in Philosophy: _____

    Details about this background: _____

Fiscal agent: _____

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II. APPLICATION QUESTIONS

1. Your Interest and Experience with SOPHIA: Please briefly tell us how you came to hear of SOPHIA. Why is it that you are applying for this grant? What interest do you have in SOPHIA, public philosophy, and why do you wish to start/grow a chapter?

2. Assessment of Need and Community: Briefly tell us why you believe your community could benefit from a SOPHIA chapter or from growth of your existing chapter. Describe your community in such a way that we can understand the relationships, members, values, and happenings therein. What is it about your community, about its groups, that motivates you to create/grow a SOPHIA chapter?

3. Your Action Plan: If awarded this grant, what is your plan to create or grow a SOPHIA chapter in your local community? What specific, concrete, and achievable plans of action do you hope to take and how will this grant help you accomplish those tasks? What timetable do you expect is reasonable to achieve those plans? How will you structure your meetings? How will you involve your community in determining themes or topics for your meetings? How will you evaluate your plan and adapt to the information you gain from those evaluations? What roles will the leadership team (i.e. the chapter officers) play in this plan?

4. Amount Requested and Why: How much is your request? What do you expect the grant to be used for, given your action plan?

5. Outreach and Communication Strategies: Who will attend your meetings? How will you reach members of your community not already involved in your chapter? What communication and outreach strategies will you use to involve people who might not typically have access to philosophical discussions? With whom and with what organizations might you partner for outreach and communication?

6. SOPHIA's National Leadership: How can SOPHIA's national leadership continue to support and aid your group to create a strong chapter? How can we help you strengthen your leadership team and help you overcome potential disadvantages and challenges?

7. Long Term Goals: What are your long-term goals for your Chapter? Where would you like your chapter to be in two years in terms of membership, meetings, and larger event plans?

(Optional) **8. If there's anything else you'd like to add, you may attach pages to your application, such as for letters of support or any other useful documentation.**