

CGS Social Impact Research Fund (SIRF)

Number of SIRF projects funded each year: 2

Eligibility: CGS sophomores, juniors, or seniors who have successfully completed a CGS URE or equivalent (e.g. CGS Directed Study, CGS sponsored internship, or prior SIRF award).

Format: SIRF applications should follow the below template with all instructions deleted; applications should be saved in Microsoft Word (.docx) or as PDF and titled as follows: “[Student’s Last Name]_2024-2025 SIRF Application”.

Submissions: Completed SIRF applications should be saved and titled as noted above and emailed as an attachment; all emailed applications should be accompanied by a brief cover letter noting the project title, proposed faculty mentor, and eligibility.

Deadlines: Completed SIRF applications and two (2) required letters of recommendations (emailed separately by each referee) must be emailed to citl@bu.edu by **September 15, 2024, at 11:59pm**. Late submissions will not be considered.

SIRF Award Information

Alumnus [Gary Kraut](#) (CGS '64, COM '66) created the Social Impact Research Fund (SIRF) to empower CGS students to identify a local, national, or international problem, propose innovative and research-based solutions, and work to implement those solutions. Recognizing the importance of faculty mentorship for student success, Kraut created the SIRF to support both students and their faculty mentors.

SIRF student awardees receive \$6,000 over two semesters (Oct-May), processed in weekly payments, in addition to up to \$500 in supplies and other costs related to the project. SIRF faculty mentors receive \$4500 (plus fringe) over two semesters (Oct.-May).

All SIRF student awardees and their faculty mentors agree to attend:

- Two (2) CITL-sponsored SIRF lunch gatherings, the first in early November and the second in late January; the goal of these meetings is to build community, encourage collaboration, and address any SIRF-related challenges that might arise.
- One (1) SIRF Symposium Prep Meeting to be held 1-2 weeks before the SIRF Symposium
- One (1) SIRF Symposium, typically scheduled in the last week of April, in which SIRF students give a 7-10-minute oral presentation of their year-long work and participate in a robust Q&A session with SIRF founder and sponsor Gary Kraut, as well as other symposium attendees.

All SIRF student awardees agree to submit a **Final SIRF Report** for distribution to CITL, the CGS Dean, the CGS Director of Development, and Mr. Kraut. SIRF Reports should include a Project Overview/Retrospective, a Methods Section, a Results Section, and a Conclusions and Next Steps Section.

SIRF Application (Please create a Microsoft Word document (.docx), title it “[Student’s Last Name]_2024-2025 SIRF Application”, and use the following template deleting instructions)

I. Background Information

Student’s Name:

Student’s CGS and BU graduation years:

Student’s Major:

Student’s Minor (if applicable):

Proposed SIRF Faculty Mentor’s Name:

II. Experience and Eligibility (Please list projects separately, beginning with the most recent, and add more entries as needed)

CGS Mentor:

Project Type (URE, Directed Study, SIE, SIRF):

Semester and Year:

Project Title:

Project Outcome/Deliverable (i.e. annotated bibliography, research paper, etc.):

II. Project Proposal

1. Title and Subtitle (**title** should assert the topic and specific problem/question; **subtitle** should *concisely* assert the proposed method for studying/solving it; ex. “Cell Phones Undermining Learning in U.S. College Students: A Randomized Controlled Trial Comparing BU Students’ Performance in Psychology 101 with and without Cell Phones”)
2. Clear and concise description of the social problem you have identified (150 words)
3. Clear and concise explanation of why addressing/solving this problem matters and to whom (250 words)
4. Limited literature review in which you name and briefly discuss at least 3 recent and well-received scholarly books and/or articles that offer relevant background on your topic (MLA or Chicago citation style; 300-500 words)
5. Clear and concise discussion of your methodology (i.e. What will you do and how will you do it? For example, how will you collect information? How will you analyze that information? What challenges do you anticipate? Are there any ethical considerations that you will need to consider?) (300-500 words)
6. Bibliography (list of sources that includes the titles discussed in the limited literature review and adds other titles that will support your understanding of the topic, problem, and past research) (1-page max)
7. Timeline including monthly, mid-semester, and mid-year benchmarks for each stage of the project including final “deliverable” (1-page max)
8. Budget (itemized list of what materials you will need for the project, including source/vendor, cost, quantity, up to \$500) (1-page max)

III. Letters of Recommendation

All SIRF applications must be accompanied by **two letters of recommendation**, one from the proposed CGS faculty mentor commenting specifically on (1) the nature and viability of the proposed project; (2) past experience(s) working with this student; (3) any concerns about serving as a 2024-2025 SIRF faculty mentor for this project; the second from a CGS or other BU faculty member who can comment specifically on the student’s academic skills and interests, readiness to take on a year-long research project, and maturity/responsibility.

Recommendations should be sent by the referee directly to citl@bu.edu using the following subject heading: “[Student’s Last Name]_SIRF LOR_[Referee’s Last Name]” by **September 15, 2024**.