

Microgrants: Fostering Entrepreneurship at the University of Houston Libraries

The UH Libraries' microgrant program was the brainchild of the 2006 – 2010 Strategic Directions Implementation Committee.

What is a “microgrant?”

- Less than \$2000
- Completed within the year (or sooner)
- Furthers a goal of the UH Libraries' Strategic Directions Implementation Committee
- Cannot be used to pay for staff

How does it work?

- Corresponds with the library's fiscal year (academic school year)
 - Applications taken in summer
 - Funds allocated for fall
 - Reports completed by May
- Funds allocated as a lump – number of projects approved depends on funding requested for each
- Can request extension/modification for projects

2007 – 2008: “the beginning”

- Trying to feel out the process
- Not all projects completed
- Proposals come only from newly-formed Marketing Committee, branches, and special collections
- Examples given:
 - Daily Cougar Trivia Contest and Ad Campaign
 - Library Video Commercials

2008 – 2009: “practice makes perfect”

- Now that there were examples, applications increased
- Somewhat broader involvement from library departments
- But Marketing Committee still leads the way
- Examples given:
 - Finals Mania
 - Prototyping Mobile Services

2009 – 2010: “once more, with feeling”

- Number of proposals remains steady
- Involvement still expanding to others who had not applied previously
- Examples given:
 - eReaders
 - Web 2.0 Showcase