UNIVERSITY OF St.Thomas
College of Arts and Sciences

MILES

Call for Grant Applications

Collaborative Challenges

AY 2026-27

The Center for Multicultural and Interdisciplinary Learning Experiences for Students (MILES) is pleased to announce a *Collaborative Challenges* grant opportunity designed to expand student access to high-impact, distinctive educational experiences that align with the CAS strategic plan initiative to elevate interdisciplinary and intercultural programming and to promote transformative experiential education.

This grant aims to support collaborative, high-impact learning experiences for CAS students that foster teamwork, leadership, innovation, and real-world problem-solving. Proposals that facilitate student participation in St. Thomas-based, regional, national, and international challenges, bowls, and similar experiences are encouraged.

Examples include (but are not limited to) Model United Nations, Global Health Case Competitions, Ethics Bowl, Social Innovation Challenges, Hackathons, and similar team-based academic and social innovation challenges.

Components of a Successful Proposal

A strong proposal should include:

- A description of the academic competition, bowl, event, or challenge in which students will participate.
- The learning objectives, expected outcomes, and educational value of the experience for students' academic, personal, and/or professional development.
- A description of how the experience supports interdisciplinary and/or intercultural engagement.
- A summary of the student mentoring plan.
- The anticipated number of student participants.
- Plans for sharing outcomes, lessons learned, or accomplishments with the broader university community. If possible, dissemination activities should be student-led and may include presentations, workshops, panel discussions, or other forms of campus engagement.

Budget and Eligibility Guidelines

Last updated November 3, 2026

Eligibility

- Activities must support student participation in academic bowls, social innovation challenges, simulations or comparable high-impact learning experiences.
- Activities should facilitate collaborative and team-based experiences.
- Experiences must be mentored and/or led by faculty. Lead applicant must hold a full-time faculty appointment in the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS).
- Proposals should demonstrate strong value for CAS students and their educational experience. Students from other colleges may participate and benefit, but preference will be given to programs with a primary focus on CAS students.
- Proposed experience should be delivered by June 30, 2027.

Eligible Expenses

Budgets must comply with university spending policies, including fees, supplies, equipment, rentals, and/or travel. Funding may be requested for expenses directly related to participation, including:

- Travel expenses
- Registration or participation fees for external events
- Lodging and food expenses
- Instructional supplies and materials
- Honoraria for leaders, judges, facilitators, or mentors

All expenses associated with the grant must be incurred by June 30, 2027.

Submission Information

Deadlines: Dec 1, 2026 or Feb 1, 2027. Both dates apply to AY 2026-2027 activities.

Materials to be submitted:

1. **Applicant Information** (Names, Job Titles and Dept/Program & College affiliations)
2. **Proposal Narrative** (1,200 words max) - Please provide a brief statement describing how the activity will support interdisciplinary and/or intercultural programming and how it will promote high-impact educational experience. Please be sure to address each of the components of a successful proposal outlined in this announcement. The narrative must include a proposed timeline for the activity and the anticipated number of student participants.

3. **Itemized Budget**

Submission Process:

1. Submit by emailing the above documents (PDFs) to the Center for MILES: milescenter@stthomas.edu
2. Please include the following text in the subject line: *Collaborative Challenges*

Evaluation and Funding Process

Proposals will be evaluated based on:

- Quality and educational value of the experience
- Evidence of intercultural and/or interdisciplinary engagement
- Potential to foster student collaboration, leadership development, and professional and personal growth.

The final decision will be based on merit and the financial resources available. We aim to fund as many high-quality proposals as financially viable. The anticipated funding range is $3,000–$5,000 per proposal.

All proposals will be reviewed by an *ad hoc* panel composed of members of the Center for MILES Advisory Board. The panel will assess the proposals and make recommendations for finalists to the Dean of CAS and the Director of the Center for MILES. Awardees will be notified by January 15, 2027 (Dec 2026 applicants) or February 21, 2027 (Feb 2027 applicants).

Questions?

For questions about proposal development Director of the Center for MILES please reach out to Dalma Martinović-Weigelt: mart6831@stthomas.edu