FWI Funding Statement

Name: Kalaichelvi Saravanamuttu, Juliet Daniel, Karen Bird, Ayse Turak, Christina Vietinghoff
Faculty/Area: Science (KS, JD), Social Science (KB, CV) and Engineering (AT)
Project title: The McMaster Academic Women’s Summit for Mentorship and Leadership (AWSM Leadership)

Please summarize how the FWI funds have been spent:
A summary by broad category is sufficient, line by line accounting of individual expenditures is not required unless specifically requested.
Alternatively, please provide a copy of your FAS for the accounts that have been used for the FWI funds.
Salaries and benefits: $5,000 (please see attached report, which includes expenses of FWI funds received by K. Bird)
Equipment:
Event Costs:
Travel:
Other (please specify):

Balance remaining:
Please indicate how the balance will be spent and when you anticipate that the funds will be exhausted.

Please submit separately a maximum 2-page summary of the results of the project with particular attention to:
1. How the activity enhanced the competence and effectiveness of this individual (or others) with respect to teaching, research, service and/or leadership;
2. How the activity contributed to the goals of a course/program/department/Faculty;
3. The results of your evaluation of the quality of the expected development and its potential impact;
4. How you have (or plan to) communicate and disseminate the insights gained with peers and broader McMaster communities.
5. How the outcomes of the project will be sustained or expanded.
6. Please outline any barriers or challenges that may have prevented you from achieving some of your project goals.

The financial and project reports can be submitted to fwi@mcmaster.ca.
A. Academic Women’s Success and Mentorship (AWSM) initiative

FWI funds were used to establish the AWSM initiative, which is a grass roots, ad-hoc and interdisciplinary collaboration founded in Spring 2014. The group consists of McMaster women with richly diverse experiences, academic and personal trajectories, and career-stages ranging from undergraduates, graduate students, post-doctoral fellows to faculty members. The initiative grew spontaneously from our collective recognition that the alliance between women in different and traditionally disparate disciplines would not only highlight the commonalities of experiences but also provide unprecedented opportunities for collaboration, networking, and fertile ground for mentorship and leadership. Monies from two FWI grants (led by K. Saravanamuttu and K. Bird, respectively), the McWork programme and contributions from six Faculties and the School of Graduate Studies were combined to fund AWSM activities primarily for the hiring of undergraduate summer research students (see attached report).

B. Background, motivation and leadership roles

The AWSM initiative is strongly aligned with discussions initiated on campus regarding the recruitment, retention and success of female faculty members, especially in the STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics) disciplines. The AWSM initiative originated from a McMaster delegation comprising 15 women at the undergraduate, graduate, post-doctoral and faculty levels, which attended the Womensphere 5th Annual Emerging Leaders Global Summit held in New York City from 14-16 January 2014. The Summit included some 300 emerging female leaders, whether self-selected or officially selected from academic institutions, companies and non-profit organizations. In addition, there were approximately 50 female leaders and professionals – including all faculty members of the McMaster delegation – who were designated as ‘mentors. Spearheaded by the Dean of Science and supported by the Deans of Engineering and Humanities, the McMaster delegation to the Summit was charged with seeking information, ideas and methods to address gender equity at McMaster. Key themes of the Summit included the importance of networking, individual empowerment, leadership and self-advocacy, social justice and advocacy, gender diversity and innovation. The overarching message was the crucial importance of all genders in leadership positions to actively assume mentorship roles to ensure the success of young women and to view mentoring as an integral component of their work ethic.

AWSM activities are based in large part on a report based on extensive discussions between members of the delegation both at the Summit venue and submitted by AWSM faculty members to the Deans of Science, Engineering and Social Sciences. The report summarized lessons learned at the Summit and made recommendations for new initiatives at McMaster, including the subject of this proposal, the Academic Women’s Summit for Mentorship and Leadership. The delegation identified a culture of mentorship as being crucial in empowering, attracting and retaining young women in academia and facilitating their success, specifically by bringing successful leaders onto campus and opening networking/mentorship opportunities to the McMaster community.

C. AWSM activities and impact on and response of the McMaster community

The AWSM initiative has, since its inception, launched an extremely successful speaker series, which has included Susan Cunningham (SVP, Noble Energy)\textsuperscript{iv,v}, Olivia Chow (Canadian politician, a former New Democratic Party Member of Parliament (2006–2014), and former city
councillor (1991–2005) in Toronto\textsuperscript{vi,vii} and in collaboration with Café-X, Dr. Raffaella De Vita (Associate Professor, Biomedical Engineering and Mechanics, Virginia Tech., NSF CAREER awardee)\textsuperscript{viii} and with Bryan Prince Bookseller, Ms. Kirsten Stewart (VP, Media, Twitter Inc.)\textsuperscript{ix} and the AWSM/Redman lecture held in March 2016, which was delivered by Dr. Anne-Christine Davis (Professor, Applied Mathematics and Theoretical Physics; University Gender Equality Champion for STEM subjects, Cambridge University).\textsuperscript{x}

The intense interest, cross-campus participation, consistently full-house attendance, feedback from attendees, media interest,\textsuperscript{vi,vii} partnerships with campus groups/local business and potential collaborations (including with the McMaster Student Union), public discussions of the AWSM initiative\textsuperscript{x} and equally importantly, the controversy elicited by the inaugural Cunningham lecture\textsuperscript{v} inform us of the appetite/need within campus and the community for continued, open discourse on an interdisciplinary, inclusive approach to gender equity issues.

D. Sustaining AWSM and future activities

Over the past 1.5 years, the AWSM initiative has established a strong track record by sustaining a highly successful, stimulating, free and full-house speaker series. This initiative has provided tangible networking/mentorship opportunities to our student and faculty members. AWSM is populated primarily by volunteer faculty members and students with available funds being employed to hire undergraduate researchers in the summer term and cover the minimal organizational costs associated with events.

Building on our success, experience and momentum we intend to continue fundraising and partnering with initiatives on and off campus to sustain our speaker series. In addition, we plan to further widen the scope of our initiative through the AWSM Conference, which will be offered to women in, or aspiring to, leadership positions from undergraduate student to senior administrators in all disciplines the opportunity to learn from one another, and develop best practices for leadership and achieving transformational change. The principal goal of the AWSM Conference is to stimulate dialogue on ways to integrate and sustain a culture of leadership, mentorship, inclusivity and success amongst women across different disciplines, fields and career stages.

References

\begin{enumerate}
\item \url{http://www.mcmasteraws.com}; \url{https://www.facebook.com/McMasterAWSM}; \url{https://mobile.twitter.com/McMasterAWSM}
\item See for example reports on Gender pay equity analysis and Gender equity at \url{http://www.mcmaster.ca/vpacademic/index.html}
\item \url{http://dailynews.mcmaster.ca/article/mcmaster-delegation-attends-emerging-leaders-global-summit/}
\item \url{http://www.thesil.ca/mac-alumna-susan-cunningham-returns-to-give-lecture;}
\item \url{http://www.thespec.com/news-story/4963927-video-protesters-disrupt-oil-exec-s-speech-at-mcmaster/}
\item \url{http://dailynews.mcmaster.ca/article/olivia-chow-to-speak-at-mcmaster-feb-5/}
\item \url{http://www.thespec.com/news-story/5298991-olivia-chow-to-speak-at-mcmaster/}
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\item \url{https://www.facebook.com/McMasterAWSM/photos/a.662620970520189.1073741828.618208091628144/855875054528112/?type=3&theater}
\item \url{http://www.damtp.cam.ac.uk/people/a.c.davis/}
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