

Project Overview Narrative

Project Title: Grant to Fund a Solo Choreographed by a Guest Choreographer

Brief Overview: I am requesting funding to bring in a guest choreographer to create a solo for me during my fourth year of study. This solo will serve as a culmination of my training at UVA and will be performed in the UVA Department of Dance's Spring Concert.

In Depth Proposal: My project involves commissioning a guest choreographer to create a solo for me during my fourth year of study. This project will enhance my artistic development both as a dancer and as a choreographer, and to serve as a cumulation showcasing what I have learned during my time at UVA. This experience will offer me the opportunity to engage in a professional choreographic process, gain exposure to new movement methodologies, and expand my choreographic knowledge by observing and collaborating with an experienced professional. Specifically, I aim to develop a nuanced approach to working with music, including rhythm, phrasing, and interpretation. Observing and engaging in the choreographer's creative process will give me tools for my own future choreography. I am particularly interested in how choreographers structure solos and generate material. Additionally, I hope to discover more ways of moving through dynamic floor work as this has been something I have been working on throughout my time in school and would like to continue working on. I plan on performing the solo at the Spring Dance Concert in the Spring of 2026 in the Culbreth Theater. Additionally, depending on the desires of the choreographer and how the project progresses I have considered presenting the solo at the ACDA Informal Concert to allow for another performance opportunity.

Choreographer Selection: I plan to work with either Betty Skeen, Angela Sigley Grossman, or Joy Davis, each of whom would bring a distinct perspective to my artistic growth.

- Betty Skeen: Currently choreographing a piece which I am a performer in for the Spring Dance Concert. Throughout the process I have been particularly inspired by her approach to sound and movement. Working with her on a solo would allow me to develop a more nuanced understanding of how music and choreography interact, a key area of growth for me as both a dancer and choreographer.
- Angela Sigley Grossman: Her work with Oblique Strategies, a tool designed to overcome creative blocks, recently inspired me when I took her class at ACDA last month. In this class she spoke on how she had recently spent time studying and creating work based on Oblique strategy cards, which were created by musician Brian Eno and artist Peter Schmidt to promote creativity and get through artistic blocks. I have already experimented with her methods in my current piece I am working on for the dance concert and believe that continuing this exploration would significantly benefit my choreographic practice.
- Joy Davis: A specialist in CounterTechnique which is a style of contemporary dance that I have not previously explored but am eager to learn more about. Many of her recent choreographic works emphasize humor and playfulness, which would push me to approach movement with a fresh perspective.

Academic and Artistic Foundations: My proposed project is deeply rooted in my prior coursework and performance experiences. I am a declared dance minor, and have taken a variety of classes such as Dance Composition, Dance Improvisation, Somatic Research and Practice which have strengthened my choreographic and movement research skills. I have also taken movement practice classes like Ballet, Jazz, and Modern which have strengthened my physical performance skills. Additionally, I have performed in five of the dance department’s semesterly concerts and am choreographing a piece this semester. My project would require performance time in the spring dance concert, as well as rehearsal space, lighting design, costuming, and potential music depending on the choreography.

Faculty Mentor: My faculty mentor is Kathryn Schetlick, Assistant Professor of Dance. Professor Schetlick will be a valuable resource to me due to her choreographic experience, and deep knowledge of the dance field. She has helped me refine my list of potential choreographers, as well as provided guidance in my creation of a timeline for my project and guided my budget for my proposal.

Outcome Presentation: For the outcome presentation, I will share my work through a live performance if space allows or a recorded video, followed by a discussion on my creative process and key learnings from working with a professional choreographer

Timeline:

May 2025: Receive notification of funding

June-August 2025: Finalize choreographer, draft rehearsal schedule, create agreement between choreographer and dancer

November 2025: Begin rehearsals for solo

January-April 2026: Continue rehearsals and practice independently

March 2026: Possible informal performance at ACDA Conference

April 2026: Perform in Spring Dance Concert in Culbreth Theater

Budget:

Miller Arts Scholars Budget

**Budget Item
Category**

creation of solo Payment to Choreographer	and 6 rehearsal sessions	\$2250
Costuming		\$50
Music Rights		\$350

Travel	To account for gas for choreographer to travel	\$350
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Budget Income, Funding

Income item:	MAS Fourth Year Award	\$3000
Total		

Participation in the Arts

During my past three years at the University of Virginia I have gotten deeply involved with dance. I am a declared dance minor, and have taken a variety of classes such as Dance Composition, Dance Improvisation, Somatic Research and Practice as well as movement practice classes like Ballet, Jazz, and Modern, all of which will be relevant in the creation of solo which I am requesting money to fund. I have also participated in the Dance Department's semesterly concert every semester since spring of my first year, five concerts total. This current semester I am choreographing a piece for the concert and am enrolled in an independent study with Kim Brooks Mata, to support this project. Additionally, I am Vice President of the Virginia Dance Committee, which serves as the student branch of the Dance Department. In my current role I work closely with the President of the committee and the head of the Dance Department, to increase student engagement in the dance department through events like dance workshops and social events. I previously held the role of marketing chair during my second year. With the Virginia Dance Committee I teach weekly volunteer dance classes to students at the local Boys and Girls Club. I recently attended the American College Dance Association conference at University of Maryland, College Park with other dance students from UVA and other Universities. In preparation for the conference I represented UVA on the Student Engagement Program committee and served as a Spokesman for the committee. Our work included creating affinity groups to connect dancers from different universities and setting up a panel discussion to hear from professors about their transition from the education space to the professional space. I am involved with the Drama and Dance Department Mentorship Program and currently am mentoring three first years involved in the dance program. I am currently serving on the UVA Center for the Arts Student Advisory Committee to provide student insight into what is desired in the new performing arts space that is in the works. Additionally, I have performed in and choreographed for the University Dance Club's semesterly show and in their performances at Lighting of the Lawn. Through the Arts Scholars Program I have taken Cass 1010 and plan on taking Cass 1011 next spring.