

Abby Milne
Miller Arts Scholars Minigrant Proposal
Spring 2025

Graphic Design Tools and Software for Arts Administration and Marketing

Project Summary

Since the fall of my second year, I have designed social media graphics and promotional posters for five student theatre productions: *9 to 5: The Musical* for First Year Players and *Fun Home, Alice by Heart, The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, and, most recently, *The Wolves* for Spectrum Theatre. I have exclusively used Canva for these design projects, briefly investing in Canva Pro with personal funds, which gave me access to a broader set of tools and enabled me to design graphics that more closely fit the show aesthetic.

I was recently hired to join the Virginia Theatre Festival's Arts Admin Cohort this summer, a role that will further my professional goal of becoming an arts administrator in the Mid-Atlantic region. As a member of the cohort, I will "receive cross training in box office, front of house, and marketing roles in order to support a wide range of administrative needs during the summer season." VTF Artistic Director Jenny Wales and I are scheduled to meet after spring break about my professional goals for the summer, and I want to use my time with VTF to strengthen technical skills like graphic design that will serve me in my career.

To expand my design options as I take on my first professional arts admin role, I am applying for funding for three professional graphic design softwares: Adobe Creative Cloud, Canva Pro, and Procreate. Adobe offers a discounted student rate for its cloud app package. Procreate would level up my digital drawing and design skills. To my knowledge, UVA does not offer undergraduate graphic design courses, so I also want to enroll in Adobe's Design Fundamentals and Graphic Design courses on Coursera to guide my learning. (Note: I had a difficult time determining the exact price of these courses, but they appear to be about \$49 each to earn a certificate of completion.)

Having access to professional design softwares will help me contribute to visual graphic design and video editing to help promote VTF productions this summer. After the summer, I hope to continue to use my design skills to promote other student-run productions and, eventually, professional arts programming. I will also be pursuing a Marketing & Management concentration for my one-year Master of Science in Commerce program next year, and a graphic design background will support my studies in promotions, PR, advertising, and other marketing-adjacent fields.

Proposed Budget

Item	Cost	Notes
Adobe Creative Cloud All Apps (Student Rate, one year)	\$19.99 per month x 12 months = \$239.88	Would learn how to use their products through Coursera (supplemented by YouTube as necessary)
Canva Pro (one year)	\$120	Graphic design technology; I am very familiar with the platform
Procreate	\$12.99	iPad app for drawing and design
Coursera Adobe Design Fundamentals Course	\$49	Comes with certificate of completion
Coursera Adobe Graphic Design Course	\$49	Comes with certificate of completion

Total cost: \$470.87

Timeline

If my grant is approved, I will take the Coursera courses over the late spring to gain familiarity with the Adobe software before VTF begins in late May. I already know how to use Canva, but I would continue to make graphics for *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* and *The Wolves* as soon as grant funding is distributed. I have several theatre sticker design ideas for which I would use Procreate over the next month or so.

Examples of my past graphic design work (Canva free and Sketchbook):



*photography by Mix Rudolph