

Consortium on Law and Values in Health, Environment & the Life Sciences

Faculty Proposal Cover Page

Applicant Name: Jan Estep Date: 1/15/08

Project Title: Group Artist Book, Issue: The Environment

Department: Art College: College of Liberal Arts

Dept. Head's name: Clarence Morgan Dept Head's email: morga005@umn.edu

Dean's name James Parente Dean's email: paren001@umn.edu

How did you hear about this funding opportunity? RFP email announcement to faculty

Funding

Amount of funding requested: \$9,400

Funds are primarily requested to cover costs for producing a group artist book themed around the environment. The artist book will be widely circulated within the art world and at a campus release event on Earth Day 2009. The project will comprise a collection of artistic mediations using photography, drawing, painting, and text, exploring current environmental issues. Examples of proposed artist contributions include British artist Darren Almond's series of black-and-white photographs titled *Night & Fog* that picture the dead forests surrounding the nickel-mining towns of Norilsk and Monchegorsk in Siberia. My art department colleague Christine Beaumler's paintings of endangered species in the Galapagos Islands. New York artist Joe Scanlan's creation of recycled compost. And Chicago-based artist Dan Peterman's sculptural installations concerning offset carbon gases. Such artists use traditional conceptual approaches in art, to shed light on ongoing natural dilemmas. In art's ability to create new perspectives on familiar phenomena, it encourages viewers to reconsider what they might otherwise overlook. By working artistically the various contributors also demonstrate creative approaches to real-world practical issues, thereby reinforcing imaginative problem solving as an important part of the solution. The mobility and ease with which an artist book can be circulated ensures broad audiences. Additional funds are requested for mailing, promotional material, and release-event expenses.

Approvals

Check all appropriate approvals required for your proposal. Approvals must be obtained prior to receipt of funding. If you have applied for approval but have not yet received it, indicate that below.

<input type="checkbox"/> IRB	Date submitted:	<u>N/A</u>	Number:	<u> </u>
<input type="checkbox"/> IACUC	Date submitted:	<u>N/A</u>	Number:	<u> </u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	Explain:	<u>N/A</u>	Number:	<u> </u>

For Use by the Consortium Office

- The proposal is 1000 words or less excluding budget, biographies, references & citations.
The proposal includes a work plan with a timeline using months or quarters to identify work to be done and completion dates.
- The proposal includes a 1-2 paragraph biography of the applicant and all co-investigators.
The budget form is complete including the funds sought for this project, other pending applications for this project, and the amount/source of matching or other funds.
- All necessary approvals are pending or received.
- For proposals for curricular innovation, a letter of support from the applicant's department head or dean is included.

Applicant: **Jan Estep, Associate Professor, Department of Art, CLA**

Project Title: **Group Artist Book, *Issue: The Environment***

Introduction:

Given the advent of global warming, escalating energy prices, loss of wilderness, nature deficit disorder, land-use skirmishes, increasing amounts of waste and garbage, and rising interests in organic farming, prairie restoration, and watershed concerns, artists – as citizens – are directly impacted by changes in the environment. In fact, many artists address these issues in their creative work, creating new ways to frame what is happening. *Issue: The Environment* is a proposed group artist book that will collect environmentally themed artistic responses to share them with a wider public. *Issue: The Environment* comprises an innovative way to examine current thoughts about our relationship with the natural world as processed through a wide array of artistic sensibilities.

Background and context:

In the Fall of 2007 I produced the first volume of a new artist-book series titled *Issue*. This series represents one facet of my creative research. Working with my students in a newly designed course called *Issue: Image and Text*, we collaboratively created a group artist book, addressing a theme chosen by consensus. *Issue: Below Ground* collects 16 distinct artist projects using photography, graphic design, text, and painting, and explores all things subterranean. The projects individually examine various underground phenomena, both natural and social, creating altogether a complex artistic investigation. For the Consortium on Law and Values Project I propose to produce a second volume of *Issue*, this time themed about the environment. I am on sabbatical next year so *Issue: The Environment* would not be produced as part of a class, and would include student and non-student work.

The world of artistic independent publishing is flourishing, as more and more artists turn to the book form to communicate and disseminate our images and ideas. These are not scholarly publications or collections of art criticism but are a distinct art genre of creative production that is valued by the art world. The history of the artist book runs the gamut from exquisitely rendered unique objects to modest hand-made multiples to mass-produced, digitally offset-printed copies. I choose the later method for aesthetic and philosophical grounds, namely for the professional quality and accessibility of the final piece.

Independently publishing artists want our works in the hands of viewers. As opposed to the unique, hand-made object, mass-produced books can travel far and wide, allowing many more people to experience the artwork. Artist bookstores like Printed Matter in New York and READ in Vancouver specialize in artist publications, and many museum stores now carry independently published artist works alongside their monographs and catalogues. Artists appreciate the mobility, ease of circulation, affordability, and broader accessibility that artist publications enable. *Issue: The Environment* would be created within this context and would be widely distributed after production.

The project itself will comprise a collection of artistic mediations using photography, drawing, sculpture, painting, video, and text, exploring current environmental issues. (Any three-dimensional or time-based work would be reproduced two-dimensionally in print).

The collection will demonstrate a broad sweep of political and aesthetic approaches. Examples of proposed artist contributions include British artist Darren Almond's series of black-and-white photographs titled *Night & Fog* that picture the dead forests surrounding the nickel-mining towns of Norilsk and Monchegorsk in Siberia. My department colleague Christine Beaumler's paintings of endangered species, which she has studied on the Galapagos Islands. New York artist Joe Scanlan's creation of recycled compost, made primarily out of used coffee grounds. And Chicago-based artist Dan Peterman's sculptural installations concerning offset carbon gases and recycled plastics. I would also commission artist projects from a select group of our current MFA graduate students who address this topic in their art.

Such artists work within artistic contexts, using traditional conceptual approaches in art, to shed light on ongoing natural dilemmas. They use art as a platform for awareness, education, and engagement, but with a sensitive, open, and non-didactic attitude toward the issues. In art's ability to create new perspectives on familiar phenomena, it encourages viewers to reconsider what they might otherwise overlook or take for granted. By working artistically the various contributors also demonstrate creative approaches to real-world practical issues, thereby reinforcing imaginative problem solving as an important part of the solution. Again, as citizens, artists are directly impacted by current changes to the environment. *Issue: The Environment* would manifest our engagement and help make it more public.

Timetable and distribution:

The plan is to create *Issue: The Environment* during the academic year Fall 2008 – Spring 2009, with the goal of releasing the magazine on Earth Day, April 22, 2009. Early in the fall I will contact participating artists and discuss their contributions, in order to confirm all projects by December 15, 2008. The deadline for final digital images will be February 15, 2009. I will design and layout the publication and write any accompanying notes during the rest of February and March. The artist book will be printed by mid-April, 2009. With a print run of 1000 copies, I would circulate half of the artist books within the campus community at a local release event to coincide with Earth Day. The release event would include short presentations by participating artists, describing their individual contributions. The remaining half would be distributed within art-world contexts: copies would be sent nationally and internationally to relevant artists, curators, and artist-book collections, and the majority would be distributed as part of a gallery exhibition of my work (copies would be handed out to gallery viewers as a take-away piece). I will also promote *Issue: The Environment* on the art department's website and my own personal website (see www.janestep.com).

Budget:

Funds are requested primarily to cover costs for printing *Issue: The Environment* as a perfect-bound, four-color artist book, in an edition of 1000 books. We would use a local printer ShapCo Printing that I have worked with on three previous projects. Additional funds are requested for mailing, promotional material, and release-event expenses. The Department of Art will contribute the means necessary to design and proof the artist book as well as space for the release event.

Bio:

Jan Estep has an expanded creative practice that comprises critical writing, creative writing, and a range of visual media including sculpture, video, drawing, embroidery, and independent publishing. Trained as both a philosopher—PhD, Washington University in St. Louis, 1993—and an artist—MFA, University of Illinois at Chicago, 1997—the relationship between thought and visual expression fuels a wide range of formal and conceptual investigations. Her research interests include contemporary visual art, early conceptual art, and the relationship between art and language. Her recent artwork focuses on the use of text within visual contexts to sustain dialogue and conceptual ideas. She has exhibited her artwork at Art in General, Dumbo Artist Space, and New York Arts Gallery, New York; Donald Young Gallery and Bodybuilder and Sportsman Gallery, Chicago; Franklin Art Works, Soap Factory, and Midway Contemporary, Minneapolis, among others. Since 1998 she has published over 70 critical pieces in art magazines such as *Afterall*, *Modern Painters*, *Frieze*, and *New Art Examiner*, and in exhibition catalogues by Whitechapel Art Gallery, London; Hayward Gallery, London; and Akira Ikeda Gallery, Japan. From 1997-2002, she was an editor of *New Art Examiner*, serving as senior editor from 2000-2002. Her artist publications can be found at Printed Matter, Inc. Estep received the McKnight Fellowship for Visual Artists, 2006-2007; the Jerome Artist Residency at Art in General, 2005; and a Jerome Research and Travel Grant, 2004. Originally from West Virginia, and for many years based in Chicago, Estep moved to Minneapolis in 2002 where she is an associate professor of art at the University of Minnesota.

Germaine to this proposal, Estep has a background in science: she double majored in art and biology as an undergraduate (Bucknell University, Lewisburg, PA), fulfilling the prerequisites for a pre-medical degree. She is a devoted hiker and naturalist, each year taking backcountry camping and hiking trips out West. And, many of her art projects have concerned the environment directly: *Desert Maps* and *Language Snow Crystals* (text drawings), *Animal List*, *Step*, and *Ad Infinitum* (videos), the *Survival Wear* and *Antarctica* projects, as well as selected writings: “A State of Hypoxia,” *Bridge*, 2002; “Hypothermia: conditioning the body to extreme cold,” Art Shanty Project, Medicine Lake, Minnesota, February 2008; and “Showing the Fly out of the Fly Bottle: Searching for Wittgenstein in Norway” *Cultural Geographies*, April 2008, forthcoming. See www.janestep.com for examples and more details.

Consortium on Law and Values in Health, Environment the Life Sciences
Budget for Faculty Proposals

Project Title: Group Artist Book, Issue: The Environment

Instructions: add rows for multiple personnel.

Category	Description & justification	Requested funding	Matching/ other funding	
		Amount	Amount	Source
Personnel <i>Explain what hourly wage & fringe are based on--departmental, community or other rate?</i>	Salary = ___hrs x _____ hrly wage	N/A		
	Fringe rate			
	What work will this person do?			
	Subtotal			
Speaker Honoraria	___ speakers x \$ _____ honorarium	N/A		
Supplies & Services:	List items and explain use. (1) Printing at ShapCo Printing Inc, Minneapolis, for four-color, perfect-bound artist book, in an edition of 1000 (2) Xeroxing of press release (3) Postage for mailing books to out-of-town venues and for mailing final artwork to Estep (4) Campus Release Event: tech support, flyers, miscellaneous expenses	(1) 8500 (2) 100 (3) 300 (4) 500		
Equipment <i>Equipment costs are allowable only if the justification clearly shows that the equipment is necessary for the project. Include explanation of what will happen to equipment at completion of project.</i>	Identify and explain use.	N/A		
Travel <i>Travel costs must include a description of the purpose of the travel, start and stop dates of travel, transportation costs, housing costs, and allowable per diem (use University rates found at http://travel.umn.edu).</i>	Explain.	N/A		
	Subtotal research supplies, equipment, travel, other	9400		
TOTAL BUDGET		9400		