

TO: DMA, PhD, and first-year masters students
CC: Department Chairs and Program Directors
FROM: ESM Graduate Studies Office
RE: 2024 Presser Graduate Music Award

For the thirty-fifth consecutive year, Eastman is one of fifteen US music schools invited to nominate a graduate student to receive a Presser Graduate Music Award, which carries a one-time stipend of \$10,000 to the individual.

We are soliciting applications for the 2024 Presser Graduate Music Award from interested and highly qualified students. All applications must be approved and ranked by department chairs and sent to the ESM Graduate Studies Office by **noon on Friday, December 8, 2023**.

Please note this is a professional (scholarly & career) development award – *“designed to encourage and support the advanced education and career of truly exceptional graduate music students who have the potential to make an outstanding contribution to the field of music.”*

The Presser Foundation expectations:

*“Consistent with our Social Justice Statement and Values, the Foundation seeks to promote diversity, equity, inclusion, and access in our processes, practices, and decisions. The Award is meant to provide support for enrichment and musical advancement affording the Award recipient opportunities, which are not normally provided in a university or conservatory setting. **Please note that all projects should be completed within the academic year following receipt of Award funds.** We believe that it is important to give the recipient a full year to complete the project and provide a meaningful final report. We request that proposals **NOT** include expenses associated with applying to and auditioning at other graduate schools of music for further study.*

To further clarify intent, the following are illustrative projects from the past year:

- *Conducting a study of Hindustani classical music in India and developing curriculum about the musical tradition*
- *Organizing and preparing a musical focused on Black classical musicians*
- *Commissioning and recording of pieces focused on environmentalism and its intersection with music”*

While Awards may be (generally are) used to advance a specific research or scholarly project, the foundation also intends for the award to significantly advance awardees’ musical and scholarly careers. To that end, *“the Foundation seeks proposals that are imaginative as well as practical, and that will make clear how use of the Award will enhance the student’s professional development.”*

Applications should clearly indicate how the proposed project will enable scholarly enrichment and musical advancement through opportunities that are not normally provided in a university or

conservatory setting. The Foundation is increasing interested in projects which promote diversity, equity and inclusion (as illustrated by the projects listed above). Funding may support activities such as: a summer abroad to study with a noted teacher or to conduct scholarly inquiry/activities not possible at Eastman; travel to audition with orchestras, opera companies, chamber ensembles, etc., for professional opportunities; short term enrollment in programs such as Aspen and Tanglewood.

Each applicant for the Award must be a returning graduate student in 2024-2025.

Internal Applications

By noon on Friday, December 8th, 2023, applicants must submit to my office:

- A written statement/project proposal indicating how the Presser Graduate Music Award would be used, and how the activities proposed would further their professional development (i.e., through access to unique resources / otherwise not easily accessible to the student, or through professional connections made, new skills or areas of musical/academic expertise developed).
- The applicant's proposed project must include a budget that accounts for the \$10,000 (taxable) stipend, and the project must be completed by May 2025 (the awardee will need to submit a final report on the project by June 2025).
- The applicant should indicate if they have prior experience with and/or a previous award from The Presser Foundation.
- Two pages for the plan and the budget will suffice.
- **Please submit your application to Deanna Phillips at dphillips@esm.rochester.edu.**
- **Each applicant should also send their proposal to their departmental chair, who must provide a written endorsement in the form of a letter to the Presser Foundation Graduate Award Committee.** If there is more than one applicant from a single department, the Chair may write either a separate letter for each applicant or one letter that addresses the relative strengths and weaknesses of all the applicants from that department. In any case, the chair should rank the proposals from the departments. The Chair's written endorsement is also due in the Graduate Office on **Friday, December 8th, 2023.**

From the applications, the review committee will select Eastman's nominee for the 2024 Presser Graduate Music Award.

After reviewing and approving the plan and budget, the nominee will work with Emily Goodenough (Director, University of Rochester - Foundation Relations) to frame/finalize the request and submit it to The Presser Foundation by the Foundation's February 15, 2024 deadline. The Presser Foundation provides the final review and approval of all projects.

Thank you!