



SOCIETY OF PHYSICS STUDENTS

An organization of the American Institute of Physics

Marsh W. White Award Proposal

Project Proposal Title	Children's Book Outreach
Name of School	University of Iowa
SPS Chapter Number	University of Iowa-ZONE11-SPSChapter3165
Total Amount Requested	\$300

Abstract

SPS at University of Iowa wants to write a short children's book for ages 7-10 to improve communication skills and do outreach through Kindle Direct Publishing. The cost would go toward an art student who would have the motivation to help because they would want to build up their portfolio.

Proposal Statement

Overview of Proposed Project/Activity/Event

No matter where a scientist goes, they will always have to communicate their research to an audience that doesn't have a full understanding of the technical terms. Scientists have to write lab reports and grants in order to captivate their audience and receive funding. A scientist might not think that they will have to communicate and defend their research to a non-scientific audience, but more often than not, a scientist will have to interact with the public and communicate their work effectively. We, the Society of Physics of Students at the University of Iowa, want to develop meaningful communication skills and create a product for outreach that impacts the Iowa City community in a healthy and positive way.

The Society of Physics of Students at the University of Iowa plan on writing a children's book that communicates a complex scientific topic such as the properties of different stellar bodies. Writing this children's book will benefit us, while also instilling a sense of wonder and curiosity in the children that read our book. Our book is directed at the Iowa City community but the Kindle platform will allow us to have an international audience. We plan on reading the book at different outreach events that we already hold with our physics department.

Our SPS chapter has the unique opportunity of being in a UNESCO City of Literature. This gives us many opportunities to find feedback and collaborators for this book.

How Proposed Activity Promotes Interest in Physics

This project would captivate the imaginations of children and would allow us SPS Students to write about a topic that fascinates us. This project would boost interest in the general public and would target a demographic that would more likely be involved in STEM later in life. The SPS chapter at the University of Iowa already has a passion for outreach including our various demo shows and public observing nights with the telescope. This children's book would enhance these events and allow the attendees to learn more about physics and astronomy as a whole. We would also like to include characters that include women and minorities and help boost science toward demographics that have historically lacked the opportunities to fulfill their passions in science.

Plan for Carrying Out Proposed Project/Activity/Event

The University of Iowa chapter of SPS plans on meeting every week on Thursdays at 4:00 pm to discuss writing the book and the book's content. Not only do the SPS students know art majors and other students involved in art at the University of Iowa, but we are able to send a mass email to the school requesting artists. We are also able to put up fliers in the art buildings to recruit an artist. The publishing would be free and would take about a day to publish the children's book through Kindle Direct Publishing. To make sure it's good, we will preview it with professors and the world famous Iowa Writers Workshop. We will also do test readings with professors children. Maxwell Bernstein will be in charge of organizing this event, and as a journalism major, has experience writing articles for publications and has knowledge on science communication from a science rhetoric class. The 10 committee members that are writing this book have research experience with astronomy and physics which allows us to put complex scientific content into a context that a young audience will understand. With the added knowledge from

classes, physics and astronomy students are able to identify fascinating topics that many children will not have encountered from other children's media.

Our end goal is to present and read the book to children during public outreach demo shows, at public library events, and at the Children's Hospital at the University of Iowa throughout the Spring semester. We have already reached out and confirmed that the Children's hospital and public libraries will be available to do such an event during the Spring, and the demo shows we would present at are already hosted by us.

Project/Activity/Event Timeline

November: Submit Marsh W. White Proposal and have an entire meeting dedicated to the story as a whole.

December: Research on the topic and compile information that pertains to the story as a whole.

January: Storyboard and contact artists.

February: Write the book and have artist work on art.

March: Workshop with outside sources.

April: Publish the book and read it at events.

May: Submit a report to SPS National.

Activity Evaluation Plan

The success of this activity would be determined by how many children attend readings, downloads on Kindle, and how many free paper copies we have handed out to families. The goal of this project is to create content that is accessible and able to be disseminated easily. We plan on also creating a free pdf download for the book which would allow anyone to download the book or read it from their computers, tablets or mobile devices.

Budget Justification

We plan on paying the artist \$30 per page for 10 pages. Having art done by a skilled artist would make the book more enticing and would make the content more comprehensible due to visual aspect. SPS students do not have any knowledge or skills when it comes to creating visual content. We want to create a children's book that has a professional quality to it.