

## Center for Music, Brain, and Society 2025 Call for Pilot Grant Proposals

### A. Overview

The Center for Music, Brain, and Society (CMBS) is pleased to announce the 2025 Pilot Grant Program, designed to support innovative, interdisciplinary research projects in music across USC. This program aims to foster new ideas and collaborations by providing early-stage support for graduate students and postdoctoral researchers whose work aligns with the Center's mission.

CMBS will award **five pilot grants of \$4,000 each** to selected applicants. These grants are intended to fund early-stage or exploratory projects related to music, the brain, affective science, cognition, health, and/or society.

### B. Eligibility Criteria

- Applicants must be **graduate students** or **postdoctoral researchers** at USC. At the time of application, applicants do not need to be members of the Center for Music, Brain, and Society; however, if awarded, they and their adviser will be asked to join the Center as an affiliate member.
- Each applicant must have a **primary advisor affiliated with USC Dornsife College**.
- If the proposed research is based in another USC school (e.g., Thornton, Keck, Viterbi), the applicant must include a **co-advisor with a primary appointment from Dornsife**.
- Awardees will be expected to:
  - Join the **CMBS Student Planning Committee** for the 2025–26 academic year
  - Help invite and host **three invited speakers** of the Student Planning Committee choice during the academic year as part of CMBS programming
  - **Present their awarded project** as part of the CMBS seminar series
  - **Acknowledge the Center for Music, Brain, and Society** in all publications and presentations resulting from this work.

### C. Grant Guidelines

- Each grant is up to **\$4,000**.
- Funds may be used for:
  - Participant compensation
  - Research materials and supplies
  - Travel for data collection or presentation

- Study planning or data analysis support
- Funds may **not** be used for:
  - Equipment purchases over \$500
  - Tuition or salary
  - Indirect costs

## **D. Application Components**

### **1. Title Page**

- Project title
- Applicant name, email, and academic program
- Primary advisor and co-advisor (if applicable)
- Amount requested
- Statement confirming:
  - Commitment to join the CMBS Student Planning Committee if awarded
  - Agreement to present the awarded project as part of the CMBS seminar series

### **2. Proposal (maximum 2 pages)**

- Specific Aims and Research Question(s)
- Background and Significance
- Research Design, Methods, and Timeline
- Future directions (e.g., potential for external funding or further development)
- Plan for interdisciplinary engagement

### **3. Budget and Justification**

- A simple budget table with a brief rationale for each expense

### **4. CV or NIH Biosketch (maximum 2 pages)**

### **E. Review Process and Selection Criteria**

Applications will be reviewed by a faculty panel affiliated with CMBS, based on the following criteria:

- Significance and relevance to music, brain, and society
- Innovation and feasibility of the proposed work
- Interdisciplinary scope
- Applicant preparedness and alignment with CMBS goals
- Potential for future development or funding

### **F. Key Dates**

- **Call for Proposals Released:** April 8, 2025
- **Application Deadline:** May 15, 2025
- **Funding Notification:** June 10, 2025
- **Project Period:** July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026

### **Submission Instructions:**

Please send all application materials as a **single PDF** to **cmbs@usc.edu** with the subject line **“Pilot Award Application”** by **May 15, 2025 at 5:00 PM Pacific Time**. Late applications will **not** be considered. Please direct any questions about the application process to **cmbs@usc.edu**.