The Michael Brill Research Grant for Urban Communication and Community Design supports innovative research that seeks to enhance the quality of community life by examining human communicative behavior in the context of the technologies and the physical environments in which those interactions occur. This research should address and connect theoretical perspectives from the fields of communication, design, and the social sciences. Research supported by the Brill Grant may focus on how physical community places influence the mode, nature, and content of human communicative behavior, OR use a communication lens for examining communal places and human activity.

This Grant honors EDRA member Michael Brill, whose work encompassed both design and communication, extending his recognition that both fields are undergoing radical change.

Amount of Award: $3000

Awardee Responsibility: Research results based on the grant must be presented at an EDRA conference within 3 years of the Grant's award. The awardee must acknowledge the Grant when presenting or publishing work resulting from research supported by the Grant. A brief progress report is due if research is not completed 12 months after the award.

Application Requirements

Phase 1: Each Phase 1 application must include
Research Proposal (brief) A maximum 500 word description of the research project that has the following sections:
1) What is your research question or issue?
2) How your research seeks to understand how the design of environments influences communication, OR, how communication processes can inform environmental design. Simply communicating your research or communicating as part of the research process does not meet Grant's intent.
3) How the research concepts from these fields are operationalized as <u>measurable</u> concepts in the study.
4) What research method(s) will be used in the study.

Additional Phase 1 documents to be submitted
- Proposer(s) CV - The focus should be on demonstrating the expertise needed to complete the research using the research methods proposed.
- Bibliography of up to 10 core references
- Indicate if this is a student, faculty or practitioner proposal
- Which grant approach category does your study fit into. (Give letter and title from list in this document)

Phase 2: If your phase 1 proposal is accepted, you will be asked to expand your proposal and submit a full package. The second proposal will need to include:

Research Proposal (full) <mark>(1500 words maximum)</mark>

1) <mark>What is your research question or issue and what prior work does it build upon?</mark>
2) The significance and contribution of this work to the body of knowledge.
3) How research from the field of communication and a field of design are integrated to understand how the design of environments influences communication, **OR**, how communication processes can inform environmental design.
4) How the research concepts are operationalized.
5) A detailed description of the research method(s).
6) Expected results
7) How you plan to disseminate the findings.

The committee prefers that the issues listed above become separate sections of your proposal.

Schedule and Budget – (one page please)

- A schedule for your research plan with notes on any potential challenges.
- The budget
    o How this grant plays a clear role in funding the research and include how additional funding has been obtained or will be sought.
    o If the grant does not cover all expenses, what will you do if you do not get additional funds from other sources?
    o Note that the viability of the budget and schedule will be considered in evaluating your proposal.

Appendices –

- Optional enhanced bibliography (one-page maximum) responsive to committee comments. It must include literature from both the communication field and a design field.
- May include photos, figures, etc. that can help describe your proposed work.

What this grant will not support:

- Implementation of design or art projects.
- Development of research tools
- Theoretical reviews or conceptual pieces

Submittal Notes & Notification Schedule

Questions - direct questions about proposals to *BrillGrantCommittee@gmail.com*

Proposal Submission - Submit proposals to the EDRA Michael Brill Grant Committee via the submission form on the EDRA web site (https://www.edra.org/page/brill_submission)

Use of AI: Inclusion of fictitious sources or fictitious material in proposals is grounds for immediate disqualification of a proposal. Submitters are assumed to vouch for the legitimacy and veracity of all materials in their proposal.

Naming Files for Submittal – please title each file with the last name of the primary submitter followed by the proposal element (e.g,. Jones Appendix1). For Curriculum Vitae of additional submitters, title the file as "primary submitter last name" - last name of person vita. (e.g., Jones-Ohn vita)

Critical Dates (all submittal times are 11:59 PM Pacific Time)

October 15, 2025	Phase 1 Proposals due
November 30, 2025	Notification of advancement to Phase 2
January 31, 2026	Phase 2 Proposals due
February 28, 2026	Notification of Grant Award
TBD	Presentation of Grant Award at the EDRA Conference

Definition of Terms

Communication – Communication "is the discipline that studies all forms, modes, media, and consequences of communication through humanistic, social scientific, and aesthetic inquiry" (National Communication Association https://www.natcom.org/about-nca/what-communication). In this grant Communication is research that "focuses on how people use message to generate meaning within and across various contexts" (NCA Website)

Research Project – This grant is intended to fund research, which may include action or participatory research where the research is a substantial component. Design research with no communication component or communication research with no community environment element will not be funded.

Communal Environments – Research submitted to this grant must involve environments that 1) are located in communal settings and are places in which people congregate or 2) are urbanized environments.

Grant Approach Categories

You must indicate which of the categories below your proposal fits in.
Bullet-point examples are not intended to exclude other topics that meet grant parameters.

A. Research on mediated communication technologies that are integrated into communal spaces and the impact these have on the design or use of those places. For example:

- Digital screens or billboards as skins on building facades;
- Media Architecture- installations in which displays are integrated into building structures;
- Smart cities – cities that deploy technology into the built environment, such as providing wifi in public plazas, modifying pay phone booths to act as wifi access points..

B. Research on the use of mediated communication technology in community spaces and the impact these have on the design or use of those spaces. For example:

- Using cell phones in public spaces;
- Smartphones, smart glasses, spatial navigation and space augmenting information;
- Tablets, laptops, drones, robots

C. Research on community activities involving the use of mediated communication technologies in <u>physical</u> spaces and how this technology impacts the design or use of these places. For example:

- Large screens in public squares for concerts, protest, meetings, etc.;
- Large screens in major interior communal venues;
- Blogging from communal activities/events;
- Video record-making of communal activities;
- Temporary displays or objects in public spaces

D. Research on the design of communal places and how mediated communication technologies and processes impact the design or use of communal places. For example:

- Plazas, parks, sidewalks, parking lots, sacred spaces, concert venues, museums, monuments, historical sites, kiosks…

E. Research on how adding communicative technology to physical places has an impact on the development and maintenance of communities. For example:

- Healthy behavior or communal activities among physically isolated persons;
- Security, safety, privacy, technology and place;
- Flash mobs and other digitally generated gatherings.
- Hybrid work environments (work-from-home and in-office)

F. Research on the connection/disconnection via mediated communication in lieu of communal places. For example:

- The use of cellular, wifi, and internet technologies in public spaces relative to interaction within community and place;
- Virtually interacting communities without place (online support groups, chat rooms, work-from-home Zoom, telehealth, educational)