School of the Art Institute of Chicago Receives Motorola Solutions Foundation Innovation Generation Grant

Chicago, IL—The School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC), home to the GFRY Studio in the Department of Architecture, Interior Architecture, and Designed Objects, today announced it has received $75,000 as part of the Innovation Generation grant program from the Motorola Solutions Foundation, the charitable arm of Motorola Solutions, Inc. Through the grant, SAIC will offer its seventh GFRY Studio to 14 eligible undergraduate and graduate students. This year’s two-semester studio course, titled A View with a Room: Urban Data Observatory, will examine the role of participatory, embedded technology in the development of a sustainable city. Associate Professor Douglas Pancoast and Instructor Bo Rodda (SAIC MFA 2010) will teach this year’s studio.

Since 2007 the Innovation Generation program has provided $30 million to support science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) education programs, supporting more than 300 school, museum, and nonprofit programs across the United States. The Innovation Generation program awards funds to organizations such as SAIC that foster and support STEM initiatives for teachers and U.S. preschool through university students—especially girls and underrepresented minorities.

“Motorola Solutions Foundation’s support of the GFRY Studio makes possible a unique classroom experience that fosters vital industry partnerships,” said Elissa Tenny, SAIC’s Provost. “Our industry partners help students imagine the influence their design work can have beyond the classroom, where it can have a positive impact on the larger Chicago community.”

SAIC’s 2012–13 GFRY Studio will explore how data and physical infrastructures can inform sustainable development. The course will culminate in the design and exhibition of person-to-person and person-to-system interfaces that make complex interactions within Chicago accessible. The project has the potential to inform citywide planning efforts by benefiting Chicago’s 311 data system, the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) and the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP), among other civic entities. The GFRY Studio, named in memory of Motorola’s former Chief Marketing Officer Geoffrey Frost, aims to encourage students to apply creative strategies to solve societal problems, understanding that gaining technological proficiency in the course of their design work will provide students with the skills to do so effectively.

“Each year, I am truly amazed by the groundbreaking work our grant recipients like SAIC accomplish through their Innovation Generation grants,” said Matt Blakely, Director, Motorola Solutions Foundation. “These grantees are playing an active role in developing the future of STEM education for our country. As a company dedicated to helping people be their best in the moments that matter, Motorola Solutions could not be more honored to support programs such as SAIC.”

Innovation Generation is a part of Motorola Solutions’ larger commitment to engaging youth in STEM education. Beyond funding, SAIC will receive ongoing support from
Motorola Solutions employee volunteers, who will act as mentors, tutors, and experts in STEM careers.

For additional information on the Motorola Solutions Foundation grants programs, visit http://responsibility.motorolasolutions.com/index.php/solutions-for-community/ and for more information on SAIC please visit saic.edu.

About the School of the Art Institute of Chicago
A leader in educating artists, designers, and scholars since 1866, the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC) offers nationally accredited undergraduate and graduate degrees and post-baccalaureate programs to nearly 3,200 students from around the globe. Located in the heart of Chicago, SAIC has an educational philosophy built upon an interdisciplinary approach to art and design, giving students unparalleled opportunities to develop their creative and critical abilities, while working with renowned faculty who include many of the leading practitioners in their fields. SAIC’s resources include the Art Institute of Chicago and its new Modern Wing; numerous special collections and programming venues provide students with exceptional exhibitions, screenings, lectures, and performances. For more information, please visit saic.edu.

About Motorola Solutions Foundation
The Motorola Solutions Foundation is the charitable and philanthropic arm of Motorola Solutions. With employees located around the globe, Motorola Solutions seeks to benefit the communities where it operates. The company achieves this by making strategic grants, forging strong community partnerships, and fostering innovation. The Motorola Solutions Foundation focuses its funding on public safety, disaster relief, employee programs, and education, especially science, technology, engineering and math programming. For more information on Motorola Solutions Corporate and Foundation giving, visit motorolasolutions.com/giving.