



Guidelines for preparing short-term Fellowship Proposals

Deadline: 15th of February, April, July, and October.

Duration: Maximum duration is three months and extensions are awarded only in exceptional circumstances.

Description: Support is provided to carry out short-term research projects in the tropics in areas of Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute science, under the supervision of STRI staff scientists. STRI research associates may also serve as co-advisors in collaboration with a staff scientist.

- Smaller projects that are part of a larger thesis or dissertation are encouraged, in which case the specific proposal should also briefly sketch how the research project fits into the broader study.
- Exceptional exploratory projects or pilot studies with well-defined goals and methods will be considered.
- Most fellowships are awarded to graduate students but awards are occasionally made to outstanding undergraduates.

Eligibility: The following information is intended to help applicants prepare their proposals. Note that incomplete applications, or those that fail to follow the guidelines, will not be considered.

Before submitting a formal application, all applicants should consult with STRI scientific staff who will serve as potential advisors to confirm that they are willing to supervise and support the proposed project. Proposals without the support of STRI advisors will not be funded. When corresponding with advisors we strongly encourage applicants to ask for advice on the scientific merit of the proposed research, methodology and logistics, and for written comments on preliminary drafts of the proposals.

Main advisors **MUST** be members of the STRI scientific staff (list available at: http://www.stri.si.edu/english/scientific_staff/staff_scientist/index.php).

Co-advisors may be STRI Research Associates (list available at http://www.stri.si.edu/english/scientific_staff/research_associates/index.php).

A complete application must include the following components, compiled in the following order:

1. Application through SOLAA (*Smithsonian Online Academic Appointment system*)

Follow these steps:

- Go to: <https://solaa.si.edu>
- Select "New to SOLAA? Complete the information to create an account."
- Once you create your account and provide the information required, select the type of appointment. Choose as follows:

Program Type: "Fellowship"

Unit of interest: "Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute"

Program: "STRI Short Term Fellowship"

- *Fill in the application questions*
- *Upload the required documents*
- *Request the reference letters, giving sufficient time for referees to submit them. It is your responsibility to send the email request to your recommenders and check in the system that the letters have been submitted.*

2. A non-technical abstract no more than 250 words.

3. A research proposal with a narrative no more than 1,500 words, plus a bibliography that is not included in the word count. Longer proposals will be eliminated. The narrative should include a description of the research to be undertaken at STRI, including a general introduction to the research topic, the methodology to be used, and expected results. In preparing your narrative, be aware that diverse research fields are represented on the Academic Board, so the use of field-specific jargon in the proposals should be avoided.

4. A detailed three-month timetable for the proposed research.

5. Research budget and justification. Do not include airfare and stipend in the research budget. The Fellowship program will not pay airfare for assistants, and will not consider financial support for assistants.

5. Curriculum vitae.

6. Copies of most recent academic transcripts (undergraduate or graduate, depending on current academic level).

Proposals received after the application deadline will not be considered. Applicants usually will be informed of results approximately 6-8 weeks after the deadline. Incomplete applications will be eliminated.

Applications are evaluated on the scientific merits of the proposed research relative to its costs; the applicant's ability to conduct the proposed research in the time available (three months); and the relevance of the proposed research to STRI research programs and interests. Availability of space at the particular facility will also be considered.

Proposals usually receive two or three written evaluations — at least one of which is from a potential advisor. These evaluations form part of the application packet evaluated by STRI's Academic Board. If you plan to collect or export specimens during your proposed tenure, you must take into consideration that Panamanian laws require that you complete the proper permit applications. The processing of these permit requests by the Panamanian authorities takes a minimum of approximately three months.

Award: Fellowships may provide a modest stipend to cover living expenses while at STRI (currently \$800/month), may provide a modest research allowance that does not exceed \$2,000, and may provide a round-trip coach airfare. Applicants are encouraged to seek additional sources of funding. Partial awards are often given.

Inquiries should be sent to:

E-mail: FELLOWS@SI.EDU

Updated: May 2017