

# Lewis N. Cotlow Award Application

Department of Anthropology

The George Washington University

Washington, DC 20052

*The Lewis N. Cotlow Field Research Fund of the Department of Anthropology at The George Washington University was established in 1990 through a bequest by the explorer Lewis N. Cotlow to support anthropological fieldwork and exploration. All undergraduate and graduate students at GW are eligible to apply, but proposals must be clearly informed by anthropological questions, literature, and research methods. Funds are to be used for costs related to the student's research project.*

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## **Instructions:**

- Use 12-point font in filling out the application; a smaller font is not acceptable.
- Use single-spacing for your answers.
- Do not exceed the page limit indicated for each section.
- When you submit your application, please name your file like this: lastnamefirstname

## **Deadline and submission process:**

The deadline for application is 5 p.m. EST on the second Friday in March of the year for which support is requested. Applications must be submitted electronically to the following Google address: [cotlowapplication@gmail.com](mailto:cotlowapplication@gmail.com). Applications from undergraduates are submitted by their faculty advisor. Only complete applications will be reviewed; remember to attach a scanned version of your transcript.

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## **I. Personal Information**

(a) Applicant's name:

(b) Email:

(c) Degree sought:

(d) Field of study/major/minor/concentration:

(e) Expected date of graduation:

(f) Faculty advisor(s) (who have served as your mentor or mentors for this proposal):

## **II. Title of the Project and Summary**

Project Title:

Project summary [150 word maximum]:

### III. Project Proposal

**Question 1:** Describe your research question/hypothesis or research objective. That is, what will be the focus of your investigation? [*approximately one page, single-spaced*]

The formulation of a developed research question, hypothesis, or research objective is the single most important characteristic of a successful proposal. There are three major guidelines that applicants should follow:

- (1) The research question, hypothesis, or objective should be narrowly focused and ask “why,” “how,” or “what” about an issue of significance to anthropology. Do not present a vast research topic as the object of investigation; instead, develop answerable questions (or testable hypotheses) in the context of the larger research topic.
- (2) Research questions should not be presented as if the answer were already known. Applicants need to demonstrate that the proposed research will answer (or test) the question/s (or hypothesis).
- (3) Applicants should also be realistic about what can be achieved. Many applications fail because they assert that the research will answer such a wide variety of questions that the investigation may not answer any single one fully and carefully.

**Question 1:** Describe your research question/hypothesis or research objective. That is, what will be the focus of your investigation?

**Question 2:** How does your research build on existing scholarship in anthropology and closely related disciplines? Give specific examples of this scholarship and its findings. [*approximately one page, single-spaced*]

It is important to clearly demonstrate that you have a good knowledge of the anthropological literature, as well as other disciplinary literature, relevant to your topic of research. Be explicit in showing how your research will expand on previous findings.

**Question 2:** How does your research build on existing scholarship in anthropology and closely related disciplines?

**Question 3:** What evidence will you need to collect to answer your research question? How will you go about collecting and analyzing this evidence? Why is it critical for you to conduct fieldwork to answer this question? [*approximately one page, single-spaced*]

Applicants are strongly advised to clearly and explicitly demonstrate that the evidence gathered and the analytical procedures proposed will realistically support the research goals expressed in Question 1.

Applicants should provide a timeline for their research. They should also demonstrate that the plan for conducting the research can be managed in the allotted time and with the available funds. A feasible research plan with clearly defined procedures is much better than one so broad that it seems impossible to accomplish within the limits of the time and funding available.

**Question 3:** What evidence will you need to collect to answer your research question? How will you go about collecting and analyzing this evidence? Why is it critical for you to conduct fieldwork to answer this question?

**Question 4:** Describe your training and preparedness for this research (examples: language competence, technical skills, previous research, and any other relevant experience). Describe any work you have already done on this project, and/or how it relates to your prior research. If you are collaborating with other academic personnel, describe their role/s in the project and the nature of the collaboration. [*approximately one page, single-spaced*]

In assessing a project, the committee pays close attention to the researcher's preparation. Have the required language and/or other relevant skills been acquired? Have local contacts or academic affiliations been made? Do you have the relevant permission/permits to conduct this research? Has the applicant already carried out a pilot project? If so, what data/results are already available? Are there any safety or access issues involved with the fieldwork or other forms of data collection? If so, how will they be managed? What are the ethical issues involved with the research and how have these been addressed?

**NB:** Your research project must be conducted in accordance with anthropology guidelines and the guidelines of your particular field within anthropology, and in the case of "Human Subjects Research," according to the criteria of GW's Institutional Review Board. For the former, consult the American Anthropological Association on "[Methods and Ethics](#)." For the latter, discuss requirements with your faculty mentor and/or with staff at GW's [Office of Human Research](#). Most student projects involving living humans fit in the IRB category of "excluded," meaning that IRB forms do not need to be submitted, if they follow AAA ethical guidelines in terms of informed consent and avoidance of harm to participants, do not involve medical topics and do not identify particular individuals. In some instances, IRB approval does need to be sought, usually in the "expedited" category. If your research involves animal subjects, please make sure to consult the Office of the Vice President for Research's website on research approval for animal subjects (IACUC).

**Question 4:** Describe your training and preparedness for this research (examples: language competence, technical skills, previous research, and any other relevant experience). Describe any work you have already done on this project, and/or how it relates to your prior research. If you are collaborating with other academic personnel, describe their role/s in the project and the nature of the collaboration.

**Question 5:** What contribution does your project make to anthropological theory and to the discipline? [*approximately half a page, single-spaced*]

A successful application is one that emphasizes the contribution of the proposed research not only to the specific area of research being addressed but also to the broader field of anthropology. Applicants should be explicit about the potential contribution of their research to anthropological theory, as well as discuss how the finding will be disseminated, for example, through a presentation at a professional meeting, a film, a museum exhibit, a publishable paper, or a thesis.

**Question 5:** What contribution does your project make to anthropological theory and to the discipline?

**IV. References Cited/Select Bibliography** (list the sources you have cited in the proposal and/or used as background research). Use the style defined by the American Anthropological Association, which as of 2015 follows the [Chicago Manual of Style, 16<sup>th</sup> edition](#). [*approximately one page, single-spaced*]

## **V. Budget Amount and Projected Expenditures**

Total Amount Requested: \$\_\_\_\_\_

Projected Expenditures: List the expenditure categories for your project, for example, transportation (international, domestic, local); room and board; and research supplies. Funds from a Cotlow award cannot be used for tuition, academic fees, or for purchasing equipment such as a laptop or camera [awards range from a few hundred dollars to \$1800].

**VI. Permits/supporting documents:** Demonstrate that you have, or are seeking, any necessary permits such as a research permit, a research visa, an antiquities permit, letter of welcome from an institution, etc. Attach copies to this proposal.

**VII. Transcript:** Submit a copy of your transcript with this proposal; it can be either official or unofficial. Without a transcript, your proposal is incomplete and will not be considered.

**Additional information**

- Legal conditions of the award: If you are granted an award, you will be asked to sign a letter agreeing to the following conditions: that you will submit an expenditure report to the Anthropology Department chair within three months of the end of the fieldwork, and that you will comply with GW regulations about safety when doing research internationally.
- International research: Students who are doing international research should consult the GW International Travel Approval Policy on the GW website.
- Safety during research: Under no conditions should you request Cotlow funds to pursue research in an area deemed unsafe. All students are strongly advised to do their utmost to ensure their personal safety and that of their research participants.