

Guidelines for Preparing Short-term Fellowship Proposals

(includes Grupo Adelante, Short Term and A. Stanley Rand Fellowship Programs)

*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.***

Support is provided to carry out short-term research projects in the tropics in areas of STRI research, under the supervision of STRI [Staff Scientists](#) and STRI [Research Associates](#); STRI postdoctoral fellows may also serve as advisors, usually in collaboration with a staff scientist or research associate.

- Projects usually are complete in themselves and their maximum duration is 3 months; extensions are awarded only in exceptional circumstances.
- 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 undergraduate and postdoctoral candidates.
- Fellowships may provide a modest stipend to cover living expenses while at STRI (currently \$750/month); a modest research allowance that rarely exceeds \$2000 and is usually less; and round-trip coach airfare. Applicants are encouraged to seek additional sources of funding, and partial awards are often given.

- The deadlines for submitting applications are the **15th of February, May, August, and November**. Proposals may be submitted in English or Spanish:

Before submitting a formal application *all* applicants should consult with STRI research 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 named 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.

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

1. A two-page application form available at <http://www.stri.org> (or below) with the requested information, including the names of primary and secondary advisors.
2. A non-technical Abstract of **not more than 250 words**.
3. A research proposal with a narrative of **not 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 utilized, 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 3-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 in most cases will not consider financial support for assistants.

5. Curriculum vitae.

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

A complete *application package* consists of items 1 through 5, which *must* be compiled into a SINGLE ELECTRONIC FILE. We prefer to receive a single PDF file, though we will also accept a single file in Word. The file should be named as follows: “Your surname_first initial.PDF” (e.g., if your name is Jane Smith, then the file name is “Smith_J.pdf”). By prior arrangement with STRI’s Office of Academic Programs printed applications will be considered in exceptional circumstances where students lack access to electronic media.

Additionally, you must arrange to have two (2) letters of recommendation sent directly to STRI’s Office of Academic Programs at the address given below. We prefer to receive electronic copies of letters of recommendation, but will accept printed copies. Applicants should contact their recommenders and confirm that the letters were submitted (incomplete applications will not be considered).

The complete application should be received at the latest by February 15, May 15, August 15 and November 15. Applications received after the deadline cannot 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 (3 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 named advisor. These evaluations form part of the application packet evaluated by STRI's Academic Board. In preparing your proposal, 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. 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 two months.

Inquiries and applications should be sent to:

E-mail: FELLOWS@SI.EDU

or

Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute

Office of Academic Programs

Unit 0948

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