Inter-American Foundation (IAF)
Grassroots Development Fellowship

2014-2015 Application Instructions

Please read these guidelines carefully. Instructions have changed.

The Inter-American Foundation (IAF) was created in 1969 by the United States Congress to fund the self-help initiatives of the organized poor in Latin America and the Caribbean and the groups that directly support them. To complement its work, the IAF has reinstated its Fellowships for candidates for Ph.D. degrees from United States universities as they conduct their dissertation research. IAF's Fellowships are intended to increase awareness of grassroots development efforts while building a community of professionals and scholars knowledgeable in the subject. Fellows examine the efforts of the rural and urban poor to improve their lives, their methods of organization and production, and the policies and programs designed to alleviate their poverty. The IAF disseminates research findings of its Fellows to a broad audience concerned with development.

The Institute of International Education (IIE) has partnered with the IAF to administer its Grassroots Development Fellowship Program. The IAF will not respond to inquiries. All inquiries should be directed to The Institute of International Education at iafinfo@iie.org.

Before you begin your application, you are encouraged to review the eligibility information below, and to attend one of the informational webinars offered. The current schedule is available at www.iie.org/iaf. .

Eligibility:

- The applicant must be currently enrolled in a Ph.D. program in a U.S. university in the social sciences, physical sciences, or a technical field.
- Applications for clinical research in the health field will **NOT** be considered.
- Successful applicants must have completed all course requirements and qualifying or comprehensive examinations for the doctoral degree ***before initiating*** IAF-funded field research.
- Applicants must be U.S. citizens or citizens of independent Latin American and Caribbean countries (except Cuba).
- Proposals must be for research conducted in independent Latin American and Caribbean countries (except Cuba) – research in Puerto Rico or the Dutch, French and British territories is not eligible.
- Applicants must speak and read the language(s) appropriate to the research. An evaluation is required.
- Each applicant must demonstrate at least one planned substantive collaboration during the field research period, with a development or applied research institution in the Latin American or Caribbean country of the research. A letter confirming this affiliation is required.
- The Applicant's research must be related to topics on grassroots development in the region.

Inter-American Foundation (IAF)
Grassroots Development Fellowship

Also note:

- IAF Fellowship requirements prohibit application by an individual who, at the time of submission and during the period when such application is under consideration, is a party to a contract with the Inter-American Foundation to perform in-country services or is a director, officer, employee, or contractor of an in-country service organization under contract to the Inter-American Foundation.
- During their field research period, IAF Fellows are prohibited from being a party to a contract with the Inter-American Foundation to perform in-country services or from holding the position of a director, officer, employee or contractor of an in-country service organization under contract to the IAF.
- IAF Fellowship requirements prohibit the award of an IAF Fellowship to individuals employed by and on payroll of a U.S. government agency during the field research period, and to past IAF employees during the 12-month period following their separation from the IAF.
- IAF Fellows cannot receive funding from other sources in support of research conducted during the period funded by the Fellowship without the IAF's prior written consent. The IAF disburse funds for benefits duplicated by another donor.
- Funding is for between four and twelve months. **Research during the 2014-2015 cycle must be initiated between June 1, 2014 and March 31, 2015.**

Benefits

- Round-trip economy-class transportation to the field research site from the Fellow's primary residence. Fellows must comply with the Fly America Act.
- A research allowance of up to $3,000, pro-rated monthly.
- A stipend of $1,500 per month for up to 12 months, pro-rated monthly.
- Accident and sickness insurance
- Attendance at a required "mid-year" Grassroots Development Conference to discuss each Fellow's progress with members of the IAF's academic review committee and meet with IAF and IIE staff

Criteria

Awards are based on both development and scholarly criteria. Proposals should offer a practical orientation to field-based information. In exceptional cases the IAF will support research reflecting a primary interest in macro questions of politics and economics but only as they relate to the environment of the poor. The Fellowship Program complements IAF's support for grassroots development in Latin America and the Caribbean, and preference is for those applicants whose careers or research projects are related to topics of greatest interest to the IAF. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Organizations promoting grassroots development among poor and disadvantaged peoples;
- The financial sustainability and independence of development organizations;

- Trends affecting historically excluded groups, such as African descendants, indigenous peoples, women, people with disabilities and young people;
- Transnational development;
- The role of corporate social responsibility in grassroots development;
- The impact of globalization on grassroots development;
- The impact on the quality of life of the poor of grassroots development activities in such areas as sustainable agriculture and natural resource management, housing, health care, education, urban development, technology transfer, jobs creation, and marketing and small-enterprise development.

No interviews will be conducted during the review process. Failure to provide **all** information requested could result in the elimination of your application. Material not requested will not be considered. Applications should be sent in pdf format to iafapplications@iie.org.

Supporting documents (such as university certification and letters of reference) should be saved as a pdf file (preferred) or Word (.doc) and forwarded electronically by the party submitting it to iafapplications@iie.org. The applicant's full name and university should be clearly indicated in the subject line of the e-mailed message and the attachments. Mail materials to:

Institute of International Education
Attn: IAF Fellowship Program
1400 K Street, N.W.
7th Floor
Washington, DC 20005

Applicants are encouraged to use a service that confirms receipt, but it is not required. Due to the volume of applications we are unable to guarantee confirmation of individual documents. Applicants are responsible for confirming documents have been sent by the individual, or for collecting them and forwarding them to the address above. For further information contact 202.326.7796 or iafinfo@iie.org.

Please note the following required attachments:

University Certification

The applicant should contact the appropriate university office to certify the Fellowship application. Fellowship applications have recently been certified by the department chairperson or other designated university officials. The document should:

- Name the applicant and certify that the applicant, if successful, plans to use the IAF Fellowship to conduct field research toward completion of the dissertation required by the university for the Ph.D.
- Clearly state the name, title and office of the university official authorized to draft this certification as well as his/her address, telephone number, fax number and e-mail address.
- Be signed and dated by the authorized university official.

- Be submitted via e-mail (iafapplications@iie.org) as a .doc or .pdf file by the university representative authorized to sign (referencing the Applicant's Name in the subject line) or included with other required attachments forwarded by the applicant.

Letter(s) of affiliation

- Letter of affiliation from the host organization(s). This must include the complete contact information for the individual writing the letter, should be on letterhead, contain an actual or graphic signature, and may be in Spanish, English, French, or Portuguese (as appropriate). One letter should be submitted from each host organization.
- Letters should be submitted via e-mail (iafapplications@iie.org) as a .doc or .pdf file by the collaborator (referencing the Applicant's Name in the subject line) or included with other required attachments forwarded by the applicant.

IRB Approval or Exemption

- Approval or declaration of exemption of the research design by university's Institutional Review Board (IRB) or an official document that confirms that the IRB has the research design under consideration.
- If the IRB process has not yet begun, a statement from the Applicant acknowledging the requirement that, if the application is successful, IRB approval must be provided before beginning IAF-funded research.
- IRB statements are to be submitted via e-mail (iafapplications@iie.org) as a .doc or .pdf file by the appropriate office (referencing the Applicant's Name in the subject line) or included with other required attachments forwarded by the applicant.

Language Proficiency Report

Please see the report document accessible on the program website. Native speakers do not require an evaluation, but should complete Part A of the document.

Transcripts

- Transcripts of **all** graduate course work must be submitted. Do not send undergraduate transcripts. *Web transcripts are not acceptable.* Student copies issued by the registrar's office (subject to verification) or official copies (which include the most recent grading period) are acceptable. Transcripts for graduate coursework at foreign intuitions do not require translation, but it is appreciated if available.
- Transcripts are to be submitted via e-mail (iafapplications@iie.org) as a .doc or .pdf file by the registrar's office (referencing the Applicant's Name in the subject line) or included with other required attachments forwarded by the applicant. University transcripts provided via a secure automated document delivery service or link are acceptable if this is your university's practice.

Inter-American Foundation (IAF)
Grassroots Development Fellowship

Three Academic References

Three letters of reference are required from professors whose personal knowledge permits them to provide a full assessment of the applicant's proposed field research study, academic qualifications and personal abilities. **One reference is required from the chair of the applicant's dissertation committee or student's advisor.** The two additional references should preferably be from other members of the applicant's dissertation committee. The applicant should provide each individual reference with a copy of the proposal and the guidelines below.

To the reference writer

The reference writer may prepare a letter or use any standard form. If using a form, the writer may provide commentary on one attached page. The entire reference should not exceed two pages, single-spaced. The academic reference should comment on the applicant's ability to complete the proposed field research project and to conduct independent scholarly research. The reference should specifically provide the following:

- **An assessment of the applicant's proposed field research:** Each reference writer is requested to evaluate the potential contribution of the proposed field research study to grassroots development approaches that promote significant benefits to the poor in Latin American and Caribbean. The document should address how the proposed research will advance practical development theory and approaches.
- **An evaluation of the applicant's academic qualifications:** These include the applicant's ability to conduct independent scholarly research in the region, to successfully complete the proposed dissertation project, and to contribute to the academic and development professions as well as to literature on social change.
- **An assessment of the applicant's integrity, interpersonal skills, adaptability** to other cultures and countries, and the applicant's foreign language competency as related to the proposed research on site.

E-signatures are not accepted. Reference writers may include a graphic signature, or mail the letter with their signature across the flap. References may be forwarded:

1) By e-mail directly to the program office in .pdf or .doc format (iafapplications@iie.org) from the writer's business e-mail address (please include the applicant's full name in the subject line);
2) By mailing it directly to the program office at the address below (please sign across the back flap) :

Institute of International Education
Attn: IAF Fellowship Program
1400 K Street, N.W.
7th Floor
Washington, DC 20005

3) By returning it to the student in a sealed envelope with your signature across the flap (and the evaluation signed) so they may forward it directly to the program.

Please note that evaluations that do not include a signature will be discarded and the applicant disqualified.

NOTE: No member of the IAF Academic Review Committee in the current competition is permitted to write a reference for any applicant in the current competition. If the chair or a member of the applicant's dissertation committee serves on the committee, he or she shall assist the applicant in obtaining an alternate reference from another professor, which should state that the IAF committee member, although on the applicant's dissertation committee, cannot submit a reference because of IAF policy on potential conflicts of interest.

Additional Notes for Applicants:

A note about text limits: As you complete your application, please note that any text that goes beyond the borders of the boxes will NOT be visible to the review committee. Brief descriptions should be very concise to ensure they are visible – usually not more than one sentence.

Application review and confirmation: A confirmation e-mail will be sent to all applicants approximately three weeks after the deadline. Final decisions on application status are generally available in mid-April. Please note that incomplete applications (including those without signatures or missing the appropriate required attachments) may be disqualified.

Applicant's Personal and Contact Information - The applicant is responsible for updating contact information. All Fellowship correspondence is sent to the two e-mail addresses on the application. No physical mail is sent.

Applicant Certification: Please note that applications that do not include a signature will be discarded and the applicant disqualified.

Abstract of Proposed Research: This should be a short, clear, jargon-free description of the research project and its relationship to grassroots development. The abstract may not exceed 200 words.

Honors and publications: Scholarships, assistantships, publications, awards or other recognition relevant to the proposed activity in reverse chronological order. Do not forward copies.

Work and volunteer experience: List significant employment and volunteer experience in reverse chronological order. Do not include odd/occasional jobs unrelated to your future career or this proposal.

Field research period abroad: Please note that we are looking for how many months of support you are seeking from the IAF program. If the total field work is more than 12 months, please indicate as such under Rationale as you explain the period of support you are seeking from the IAF. Grants will not be awarded for research lasting less than 4 months.

Inter-American Foundation (IAF)
Grassroots Development Fellowship

The Personal Statement should address in 250 words or fewer your personal history, special interests and abilities, career plans, and/or your interest in grassroots development in Latin America or the Caribbean.

The "Research Plan" is a comprehensive summary of the proposed field research for the dissertation which explains its significance and its relevance to issues relating to poverty and grassroots development. Do not exceed the limits specified and **do not use footnotes**. The Research Plan must not exceed 1,500 words and should provide information which combines general theory and specific detail; it should address the following topics:

1. Summarize the problem to be investigated and explain its relationship to practical grassroots development efforts promoting benefits to poor and disadvantaged groups.
2. Clearly detail the project's direct link to grassroots development.
3. Provide a compelling reason for conducting the proposed field research in a Latin American or Caribbean country in order to complete the dissertation and indicate how much time is required for completion. If field work has already begun, indicate progress to date, and describe the plan for completing the project.
4. Discuss the specific research questions and, if applicable, hypotheses to be examined.
5. Explain the theoretical framework for the field research and dissertation. Define the body of literature or field of study to which the dissertation will contribute. Describe "gaps" in knowledge which will be addressed by the dissertation.
6. Specifically describe the methodology used to acquire data. If multiple methods are used, explain which methods apply to which aspects of the research study. For quantitative methods, define key variables (or clusters of variables), sampling methods, and the relationship between the study's methods and widely-accepted standards in the applicant's discipline. For qualitative methods, describe specific methodologies, techniques, participant sampling criteria, and the relationship between the study's methods and widely-accepted standards in the applicant's discipline. If the applicant has past experience with field work, indicate its applicability.
7. Demonstrate a substantive collaboration with an affiliated development or applied research institution during the field research period in the Latin American or Caribbean country. Identify the local organization, explain the rationale for its selection, and describe its role in the project. (This should take just a few sentences.)

Bibliography List the primary sources to be cited in the dissertation and any references cited in this Field Research Prospectus. This bibliography should be limited to two pages, **single-spaced**.