

2015 – 2016 SPA / Lemelson Student Fellowships Frequently Asked Questions

- *Can funds be used across two summers?*

No. The funds may only be used during the 12 month period from May 2015 through April 2016. It is generally expected that the funds will support a single research trip during the summer of 2015.

- *Can funds be used to support trips to multiple field sites?*

Funds can be used to support trip to different field sites as long as they are part of a single, coherent project.

- *Can the funds be used to pay for language training?*

The primary focus of the research is exploratory research and methods training. Language training may figure as a minor part of your exploratory research if instruction in the field language is not otherwise available, but applications whose primary purpose is to obtain support for language instruction will not be funded.

- *I will soon be leaving for my dissertation research. Can I apply for the Lemelson Fellowship to support some last minute methods training before I begin the research?*
- *I have already completed my dissertation research, but have not finished writing up and am interested in pursuing a completely new project on a new topic. Can I apply for a Lemelson Fellowship to support exploratory research on this new topic?*

The SPA / Lemelson Fellowships are designed to provide financial support for exploratory research and methods training that will help students develop their dissertation research projects and put them in a position to assemble more competitive grant applications. Although students at other points in their educational trajectories may also apply for the Fellowship, other projects are not a funding priority. Given the competitive nature of the program, it is extremely unlikely that any such applications would be successful.

- *I've never written a budget or justification for a grant before. What should be included?*

The application instructions ask you to provide a “detailed budget and justification for the items and amounts included”. This means that we want a budget with far more detail than: “Airfare \$1,000; Room & Board \$4,000; Additional expenses \$750.” Where will you be flying and when? How did you determine the cost of airfare and how might we confirm it? Where specifically will you be staying and what is the approximate cost per day or week? How did you determine that price? What additional expense have you included and why is each one necessary to the success of the research project? How did you determine their cost?

Although no one will be rejected for a fellowship on the basis of their budget alone, a detailed, clear budget helps make the case that the proposed project is well-constructed and likely to be

successful. When all things are equal, proposals with clear, concise budgets are more likely to be funded than proposals with vague ones.

- *My research site is expensive and my proposed budget exceeds \$6,000. Will the SPA pay it?*

Although you may request funding beyond the stated limit of \$6,000, be aware that it is very unlikely that an award over that amount will be made. Any request for over \$6,000 should specify in detail why this additional funding is critical to the project. Reviewers may ask, for example, why couldn't less time be spent at the research site to lower the overall cost of the project to the appropriate funding range of \$4,000 to \$6,000?

- *Can I send additional materials (e.g., letters of support from field sites, articles, grant proposals, etc.) with my application?*

No. Additional materials will not be sent out to the selection committee.