FIELDWORK RESEARCH GRANT IN ANTHROPOLOGY

*COMPETITION ANNOUNCEMENT*

The Department of Anthropology is pleased to announce that a generous gift from an anonymous donor has allowed us to create a competitive grant in Anthropology. More specifically, this competition is open to declared majors in the department at Barnard specifically for ethnographic research that will be conducted in anticipation of a Senior Thesis in Anthropology. The grant is designed primarily for juniors who wish to conduct summer field research, although exceptions may be made depending on personal circumstances. Applicants must submit FIVE COPIES of their proposal, following the format provided below.¹ Proposals are due no later than April 1st at noon in Jennifer Williams’ box in 411 Milbank. We highly recommend that you attend the Senior Thesis Research Meeting on March 10 as you think through your proposal. This year we anticipate making several awards ranging (roughly) from about $500 - $1,000 each. Only proposals with a strong fieldwork component will be considered.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

The proposal, as outlined here, follows a format typical of that required by many funding agencies. You should aim for a clearly written proposal that outlines in specific terms what you hope to do. You want to be well-organized and eloquent, but jargon-free. The language should be strong and confident; where possible state “I will…” instead of “I hope…” or “I wish…”.

Your full proposal (maximum 5 pages, including all parts noted here) must include the following sections by the due date in order to be considered for this competition:

I. A Cover Sheet (maximum 1 page);
II. A Project Proposal (including budget and working bibliography; note that in specific sections we’ve provided guidelines for maximum length, offering you the flexibility to determine the length of the remaining sections according to your specific needs) (together 2-3 pages, the text double-spaced, the bibliography single-spaced); and
III. A Human Subjects Protection Statement (1-2 pages double-spaced)

These should be organized in the order described below.

All materials must be typed, with one inch margins, and set in 12 point type.

Should you have any immediate questions, please feel free to contact Jennifer Williams, jrwillia@barnard.edu.

¹Please note that this proposal parallels guidelines for a proposal that all majors normally write during the first semester of their senior year as a course requirement in the Department’s senior thesis seminar. A similar requirement is also part of the course “Ethnographic Field Research in New York City” and, thus, the format may already be familiar to some of you.
I. **Cover or Title Sheet (maximum 1 page)**  
**Proposal Title**: This should state clearly the focus of your research. Poetic titles are fine, but beware: you don't want to use something that is so obscure that the review committee cannot identify your purpose. YOUR NAME should appear below the title.

**Abstract/Summary** (up to 150 words): Begin with a brief and straightforward description of the project. This statement should identify the most important feature(s), aim(s), and goal(s) of our research. In addition, identify your informants and your primary data collection methods. It is always a good idea to write this last--only after you have written the body of the proposal will you know what to include here.

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II. **The Project Proposal** (this begins on a new page; 2-3 pages total for all parts listed here)  
**Introduction**: Here you introduce the reader to your topic. The opening sentence should be particularly strong, since it is a topic sentence for the entire proposal. Briefly pose the problem (or phenomena) you wish to investigate and your understanding of its anthropological significance. This paragraph should be a strong introduction for the next sections.

**Background**: Here you clarify for the reader what has been done so far by other researchers: include a brief literature review (identifying the most relevant texts for your topic and making their significance clear) and a statement about what it is you hope to add to the existing body of literature. The sources cited here should be included in your working bibliography. In addition, you want to discuss your biographical position within the project (as an active participant, new member, complete outsider, etc.).

**Project Description**: This is the meat (or tofu) of the proposal, a comprehensive explanation of its purpose and objectives. Consider these questions: Why do you wish to investigate your topic? What makes it so compelling? What sorts of questions and/or hypotheses drive your research? What do you want to accomplish? Be realistic! Be sure to include information on WHERE you will do your research and WHO and WHAT will be the focus of our group.

**Methodology**: This is often the hardest part of the proposal to write even for the most seasoned of anthropologists. Please be specific and detailed in your description of data collection methods. Since this grant focuses specifically on ethnographic research, your methods must be especially strong and clearly articulated. An assumption is that interviewing and participant-observation will be central to your research. This does not mean, however, that you should necessarily limit yourself to these techniques--other categories of data collection may be helpful, too. Thus, ask yourself this--how does your methodology address the major issues and questions you have identified? Be clear about how you will operate in the field. If you will rely on participant-observation, how, where, and when? During interviews, how many informants will you need? How will you identify them? Categorize them (i.e. by socioeconomic parameters such as gender, age, ethnicity, age, class, etc.--and/or by "member-recognized" categories)? Present a reasonable scope of ethnographic activities in accordance with your resources at the time.
**Time Table** (note that a few sentences will probably do here): Describe the schedule you will lay out for yourself over the course of the weeks and/or months to follow in such a way that it is clear you can carry out this project successfully.

**Special Qualifications** (again, a few sentences only): This section is optional, and should be brief if you choose to include it. This is where you may wish to stress your language fluency, should you plan to conduct research in a language other than English; explain where you plan to live while conducting research; and/or outline any current contacts you might already have that you feel will help you accomplish this project successfully.

**Conclusion:** Provide a quick wrap-up expressing your confidence in carrying out this proposal. You can also use this section to add anything else you wish to tell the proposal reviewers.

**Budget:** Please itemize on a separate page the expenses you anticipate you will incur during your research and justify in a sentence or two each category. Keep in mind that this grant does not cover salary but, rather, is designed to assist you with, for example, travel costs, writing, computer, and/or photographic supplies, etc. You will be asked to submit receipts at the end of your research period so please be certain to keep these in a safe place.

**Bibliography of References Cited**
Be sure to include not only book titles but also up-to-date articles and/or book chapters from academic sources. In most cases, your authors should be anthropologists or, more generally, social scientists. In composing this bibliography, follow AAA guidelines (for instructions see a current issue of the journal *American Anthropologist*).

**III. Human Subjects Protection Statement** (2 pages maximum)
This is where you describe the ethical issues relevant to your project. For greater details see the follow page. Please note that if you are funded you may not begin your project (and funds will not be released to you) until you have completed the RASCAL tutorial on-line. Please see the last page of these instructions for details.
III. HUMAN SUBJECTS PROTECTION STATEMENT

An essential aspect of ethnographic research is a heightened awareness of and respect for the ethical dilemmas that often plague this sort of work. In what ways, if any, are informants and/or others put at risk as a result of our activities? Where do our responsibilities lie, and to whom (such as fellow students, other ethnographers, anthropologists more generally)? This Statement should be the final (and a separate) part of your research proposal. Please provide thoughtful answers to these. Relevant parts are as follows:

I. Project Overview
1. Project's working title and your name
2. 1 sentence description of project
3. Please describe (briefly) the setting(s) in which the project will be carried out and a brief description of data collection methods that will be used (1 brief paragraph)
4. Human subjects: Who (what types or categories of people) will be your informants? Will any minors be involved? Or any other vulnerable or stigmatized populations? How will you select informants? How will you acquire consent--written or orally? How will you protect their identities? (Two common strategies include the use of pseudonyms for informants and locations, as well as composite descriptions of informants, which take essential elements shared by a number of informants and condense them into one personality.) (1 brief paragraph).
5. Risks: Under what circumstances, if any, might anyone (informants, yourself, your informants' acquaintances, kin, etc.) involved in your research be put at risk? In answering this question, consider both the short- and long-term effects of your research. When, if ever, might informants' names be preserved? How will data collection methods affect this? If there are any potential dangers, what will you do to avoid or eliminate these? (1 brief paragraph)

II. Informed Consent
Please include a 1 paragraph statement that you will use to describe your project to informants. Will this be read aloud or stated to informants, or will they read it themselves? Remember that you must be honest about your intentions; you must also make it clear that all participation is voluntary and that informants have the right to suspend, terminate, or withdraw from the study and/or questioning at any time. They also have the right to refuse to answer any of your questions during the course of the interview. Finally, make it clear that pseudonyms will be used to protect identities. At the end, leave room where you can both sign and date the form or, depending on the nature of your research, where at least you sign and date the form, using a code name for each informant, so that you have a record that informed consent was given.

If you will be conducting your research in a language other than English, please provide the statement in the field language, followed by an English translation.

NOTE: You must store these forms in a safe place; you may not conduct an interview if you have not first acquired informed consent.

III. Questionnaire Schedule
Please include a list of questions that you will pose to each informant. If your research is comparative (for example, if you are comparing women and men's experiences and attitudes) make it clear how, if at all, questions may differ for each category.
IV. **RASCAL CERTIFICATION**
Finally, *if you are given funding, before you begin your project*, you must take an online RASCAL TUTORIAL and give a copy of your certificate to Jennifer Williams. Keep a second copy on file at home. Here are the necessary steps:

- Go to: [http://www.rascal.columbia.edu/](http://www.rascal.columbia.edu/)
- Login using your uni and password
- Click on “Training Center”
- Choose “Course Listings”
- Scroll down to “Morningside/LDEO/NEVIS” and choose the course TC0087 “Human Subjects Protection Training”
- Click on “Take Course”
- Once you’ve completed the course, click on “Take Test”
- When you’ve successfully completed the test, please print out two copies of your certificate; keep one for yourself, and give one to Jennifer Williams
- Don’t forget to logout when you are done.