



YOUNG EXPLORERS GRANTS

APPLICATION GUIDEBOOK



SUPPORTING THE NEXT GENERATION...

National Geographic's grant-making legacy spans over 125 years, and with more than 11,000 grants awarded, it has launched many notable careers.

The Young Explorers Grants program builds on that legacy by providing individuals ages 18 through 25 some of their first opportunities to carry out field-based scientific research, exploration, and conservation. The individuals whom the program supports might not yet have the credentials to qualify for other grants from National Geographic, but their well-defined and unique projects, combined with their achievements, have yielded outstanding results.

To date, National Geographic has awarded more than 350 Young Explorers Grants at a total of more than \$1.6 million for fieldwork in 76 countries.

While approximately 75 percent of Young Explorers Grant recipients are from the United States, the program is international in scope: It has supported individuals in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Australia, Europe, and South America. The program is further internationalizing its outreach with support from The Luce Foundation, which is encouraging fieldwork in Southeast and East Asian countries, as well as through special funds established in Northern Europe and in China. Additional support comes from the Billingsleys and The Brinson Foundation.

Young Explorer Grants are capped at \$5,000, are reviewed on a rolling basis, and support the following disciplines, exploration-based activities, and related documentation: anthropology, archaeology, astronomy, biology, climatology, conservation, geography, geology, mountaineering, paleontology, polar exploration, oceanography, adventure, photography, filmmaking and journalism.

This workbook provides advice on applying for the Young Explorers Grants. Use it to determine where your project might best fit, and how to tailor your application.

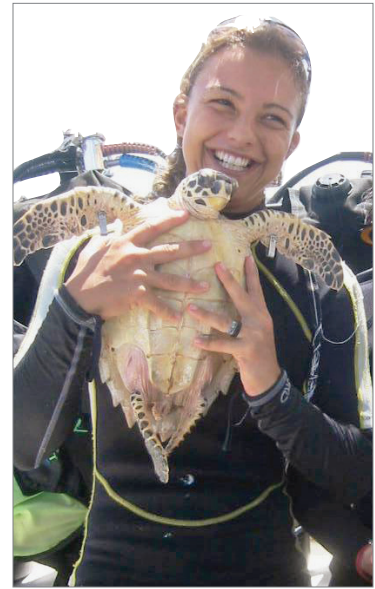
Finally, remember: **If your application is declined the first time around, you can always apply for a Young Explorers Grant again. Don't be discouraged, but rather take what you've learned from your first attempt to produce a stronger project proposal the next time.**

We look forward to receiving your applications!



Rebecca Martin

*Director, Young Explorer Grants and Expeditions Council
Research, Conservation and Exploration*



WHAT YOUNG EXPLORERS HAVE TO SAY...

"I think it is incredible that Nat Geo recognizes that young scientists and explorers come in all different packages and need the financial support to be able to blossom into careers that can make a difference in the world we live in today."

Dash Masland
2007 YOUNG EXPLORER

"The Young Explorers Grant enabled me to have my field experience; without this funding I would not have been able to go. The experience itself was integral to getting into graduate school (a PhD program in Biological Anthropology at Yale University), and has been a major influence in shaping my dissertation research."

Shayna Liberman
2010 YOUNG EXPLORER

"Not only did the funding act as initial funds to get us started, the power of the National Geographic brand opened numerous doors to other funding and sponsorship opportunities."

Drew Fulton
2008 YOUNG EXPLORER



THE YOUNG EXPLORERS GRANTS PROGRAM IS A SUBSET OF OUR THREE MAJOR GRANTS PROGRAMS.

- 1 COMMITTEE FOR RESEARCH AND EXPLORATION (CRE)
- 2 CONSERVATION TRUST (CT)
- 3 EXPEDITIONS COUNCIL (EC)

ADVICE FOR ALL APPLICATIONS

DO

- Include local collaborators
- Get advice from advisors and mentors
- Include examples of past work
- Write to inform and persuade a broad professional audience.

DON'T

- Propose a vacation
- Propose your advisor's project
- Put yourself in excessive danger
- Have other media commitments
- Use unnecessary jargon or try to impress
- Submit more than one application

THE BASICS OF APPLYING FOR A YOUNG EXPLORERS GRANT

- Learn about National Geographic grantees and their projects at www.nationalgeographic.com/explorers/projects and www.nationalgeographic.com/explorers/explorers-a-z/.
- Apply for a Young Explorers Grant at nationalgeographic.com/yeg. Determine if your project should be considered by the Committee for Research and Exploration, the Conservation Trust, or the Expeditions Council.
- Submit a pre-application and CV before you turn 26.
- If your pre-application passes review you will submit a full application and budget.
- Full applications are reviewed and voted on by a committee of experts.





COMPONENTS OF A SUCCESSFUL PRE-APPLICATION

Research

1 Introduction “THE HOOK”; 1 PARAGRAPH Introduce the topic or the issue that you plan to research; give the basic background without delving too much into details; capture the reviewer’s interest to read more of your application.

2 Research Question 1 SENTENCE Pose a clear and succinct research question—one that can be answered in a single year, pertaining to the topic or issue raised in the introduction.

3 Hypothesis/Hypotheses 1 SENTENCE EACH What are the most likely answers for the research question posed above? More than two hypotheses are unlikely to be tested with a single NGS grant so keep your scope limited (even if you plan to test other hypotheses in later seasons).

4 Methodology 1 PARAGRAPH How do you plan to test the hypotheses (and thereby answer the research question) over one year/in one field season? Be as specific as possible about what you will do, and what this will test/answer.

5 Conclusion “SO WHAT?”; 1 PARAGRAPH Why is it important to answer this particular research question? What will be your project’s contribution to your field? To science in general? To your professional development?

HELPFUL HINTS

Remember that your full application will be reviewed both by scholars in your field/discipline, as well as by a Committee comprising scholars from a wide range of scientific disciplines.

- 1** Avoid jargon as much as possible and explain any jargon you must use.
- 2** Make sure to give us the who, what, when, where, why of any culture, species, location, etc., that you mention unless it’s widely known (e.g., elephant, New York City, the Romans).
- 3** The “So What?” factor is of critical importance, because you must convince scholars in other disciplines to vote in support of your project over projects in their own disciplines.
- 4** Identify local collaborator(s).

Questions?
Contact cre@ngs.org



COMPONENTS OF A SUCCESSFUL PRE-APPLICATION

Conservation

1 Background (“WHY WE SHOULD CARE”; 1 PARAGRAPH OR LESS) Introduce the conservation challenge you plan to address — demonstrate that there IS a conservation challenge that needs addressing; give the basic background without delving too much into details; capture the reviewer’s interest to read more of your application.

2 Project Aim(s) (CAN BULLET FOR CLARITY) What is the main aim of the project? What conservation goal do you aim to accomplish? Provide a clear and succinct project aim, one that can be addressed in a single year or season, pertaining to the topic or issue raised in the introduction.

3 Project Design Describe the methods you will use to accomplish your goal(s).

4 Expected Measurable Outcomes (1 PARAGRAPH) What measurable outcomes do you expect for conservation and how will you test these post-project? Be as specific as possible about what you will do to measure the impact of your work and evaluate the project’s effectiveness.

5 Dissemination of Results Any science conducted for this program should not occur in a vacuum. What type of local outreach/education will your project include and how will results be disseminated to/with key stakeholders (local community members, policymakers, conservation managers, etc).

HELPFUL HINTS

Remember that your full application will be reviewed both by scholars in your field/discipline, as well as by a Committee comprising scholars from a wide range of scientific disciplines.

- 1 Avoid jargon as much as possible and explain any jargon you must use.
- 2 The “Why should we care” factor is important for demonstrating that a conservation challenge exists and needs attention, AND in demonstrating that you will approach the challenge with a creative and/or effective solution.
- 3 Be sure to describe why this is a fresh approach to conservation, i.e. why your approach is novel and likely to make a difference on the ground. We value projects that are innovative solutions to a local challenge and also might have broader application to conservation elsewhere.
- 4 Identify local collaborator(s).

Questions?
Contact conservationtrust@ngs.org

COMPONENTS OF A SUCCESSFUL PRE-APPLICATION

Expeditions Council

1 Introduction Briefly introduce your subject and tell us what makes your idea unique and timely. Why should your project happen now? Please research if a similar project has been carried out in the past and explain how yours will differ.

2 Story Succinctly explain the story you seek to tell. The Expeditions Council is media-driven so we are keen to know about the story potential of your proposed project, and how you plan to convey the story through media.

3 Focus Define the scope of your project in realistic terms. A project that narrows in on just one region or topic will be more successful than one that is global in scale. If you are working on a large-scale project, tell us which portion of the project you seek to fund with an Expeditions Council grant.

4 Project Goal Make the aims of your project clear. Are you setting out to explore a neglected region, create a short film, build a body of photographic work, write an article, develop a website? Don't feel that your project needs to do all of the above. Instead keep in mind that a well-thought-out plan with a clear objective is much more interesting to us than a project that tries to do too much.

5 Visual Possibilities National Geographic is known for highly visual storytelling. Give us an idea of the types of images and video that might come out of your project.

HELPFUL HINTS

Remember that your full application will be reviewed by representatives from National Geographic's editorial groups, including experts from our magazines, book division, television production, digital outlets, and public programs. Media interest is necessary for Expeditions Council grants.

- 1** Avoid jargon as much as possible and explain any jargon you must use.
- 2** Make sure your full application demonstrates that you have done your research. This not only shows the council that you have a deep understanding of your subject, but also that you are the right person to carry out the project and communicate the story.
- 3** In your full application make sure to identify local collaborators.
- 4** If you are not a photographer or filmmaker, let us know if someone else on your team will be producing visual assets.
- 5** Your application should not be academic in tone. Write for a lay audience.

Questions?
Contact ecouncil@ngs.org



Budgets

If your pre-application is approved you will submit a full application and a budget. Take a look at the following budget to get an idea of the level of detail you will need to provide.

ADVICE FOR SUBMITTING A BUDGET

- Review the guidelines on our website.
- Research and estimate the actual costs for your project.
- Seek additional sources of funding outside of National Geographic.
- Don't ask for salary.
- Remember that Young Explorers Grants do not exceed \$5,000.

SAMPLE BUDGET: RESEARCH

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	NGS	OTHER SOURCES
TRANSPORTATION			
Airfare	Airfare for four to Keflavik from New York City (flights approximately \$700)	\$2,800.00	\$0.00
Vehicle Rental	We already have access to a reliable field vehicle in Iceland, and will not be renting another.	\$0.00	\$0.00
Vehicle Gas & Maintenance	We have access to a reliable field vehicle in Iceland, and anticipated costs only involve gas. Gas in Iceland costs about \$1.25/L, and our field vehicle can go about 8km/L. For about 1300km of total anticipated driving, we anticipate has to cost about \$250.	\$250.00	\$0.00
Other	Return bus transport from Keflavik airport to Reykjavik, where we will pick up our car, is about \$30. For four people, we anticipate the cost to be about \$120.	\$120.00	\$0.00
SUBSISTENCE			
Lodging	We have access to a reliable and economical campground near Husavik, which will cost approximately \$9.50/day/person.	\$380.00	\$0.00
Food	We anticipate about \$25/person/day.	\$0.00	\$1,000.00
Other	None.	\$0.00	\$0.00
FIELD WORK			
Equipment	We will bring necessary field equipment with us from the Peabody museum; anything else will be obtained from collaborators at the Icelandic Institute of Natual History.	\$0.00	\$0.00
Field Supplies	Supplies we'd need to purchase include plaster (\$30 per 100lb bag x 3 bags), burlap, gypsona plaster bandages (-\$100/24 bandages), paper towels, large plastic bins for mixing plaster, and heat-treated wood for building crates to ship specimens.	\$750.00	\$0.00
Assistants/Consultants	0	\$0.00	\$0.00
Other	Safe transport of the specimen from Iceland to the Yale Peabody Museum (USA)	\$0.00	\$2,000.00
LABORATORY ANALYSIS			
Equipment	None.	\$0.00	\$0.00
Lab Supplies	None.	\$0.00	\$0.00
Assistants/Consultants	None.	\$0.00	\$0.00
Tests	None.	\$0.00	\$0.00
Other	Fossil preparation will be undertaken at the Yale Peabody Museum by trained professionals for no additional cost.	\$0.00	\$0.00
OTHER			
Telephone/fax/postage	None.	\$0.00	\$0.00
Miscellaneous	None.	\$0.00	\$0.00
TOTAL		\$4,300.00	\$3,000.00

The National Geographic Society is one of the world's largest nonprofit scientific and educational institutions. Its mission is to increase and diffuse geographic knowledge while promoting the conservation of the world's cultural, historical and natural resources.

1145 17th Street N.W. • Washington, D.C. 20036-4688
202.857.7000 • www.nationalgeographicsociety.com

THE YELLOW BORDER DESIGN IS A TRADEMARK OF
THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

