

LYDIA PRESS MEMORIAL FUND

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FIELDWORK BURSARY SCHEME

WHY?

Lydia Press was an Oxford University earth science graduate who died in a tragic mountaineering accident aged 24 in May 2008. At the time of her death, Lydia was studying for an M.Sc in Environmental Science, Policy & Management (MESPOM) at The Central European University in Budapest. Lydia was an energetic, gregarious and enthusiastic person; her life touched the lives of many others and often seems to have inspired them. We are trying in some way to carry this inspiration forward and hopefully foster similar qualities in other young people. Lydia had undertaken fieldwork in Cambodia investigating arsenic contamination of groundwater on behalf of Action Contre la Faim and contributed to a publication on the findings. This is the model for the present scheme.

WHAT?

We intend to provide several bursaries each ranging from £500-2000 every year that will be used help fund M.Sc or research students to undertake fieldwork where the findings may have a direct environmental, humanitarian or sociological relevance or benefit. Ideally this fieldwork will be undertaken in partnership or on behalf of an established Charity or Non-governmental organization (NGO), even better would be that the NGO contributes to the project – financially or practically, however much or little. This would demonstrate their genuine interest in the results. The bursaries are not to support undergraduate geological mapping projects.

Besides the groundwater example above, projects could range widely from assessment of geo-hazards (eg. seismicity, vulcanicity, landslides) to geographic or ethnographic fieldwork looking at climate change induced effects such as shifting agricultural patterns or population displacement. See the Awards section of the website for more ideas.

WHO?

The bursaries are intended to cover one field 'season' and are ideally suited to data gathering for an M.Sc thesis, however, the data might become part of larger research efforts, and could be a part of a Ph.D, although we think the latter should normally be funded by other means. Initially we intend to make the bursaries available to students in the Departments of Earth Science at Oxford and Manchester Universities, to students on the Erasmus Mundus MESPOM course and to all students of St Peter's College, Oxford.

We expect that most potential candidates will hear about this opportunity from their supervisors, and that often the research target will be focused on existing interests of the supervisors or departments involved. We also intend to solicit interest from Charities and NGOs but part of the aim is to encourage applicants to make their own investigation of suitable partner Charities and NGOs or collaboration and funding sources. Applicant's demonstrated energy and success in this respect will affect our funding decisions.

HOW?

We are asking applicants to send us a short and simple document (in MS Word, by email to nigelpress@crockhampark.com) normally by mid-January each year providing a paragraph of information on each of the following;

Curriculum Vitae; education, interests, achievements, future aspirations. Home address, contact details, passport style photo inserted in the text.

Scope; needs, what will be done, benefits.

Budget; how the funds will be used, together with collateral (if any) to be supplied by the NGO. (Do not simply ask for the amount we have mentioned – show why you need it – or more)

Plan; how the project will be executed, contingency plans, expected results.

Summary; (if wished/needed) why should the project be done and why you should do it.

References; contact details for your supervisor, from whom we will seek a reference, and NGO contacts.

In all this should not exceed 2-3 pages. However you are welcome to email your Scope idea at any time to check in advance if it conforms.

We will choose the projects we are able to support during February and let you know the outcome by the end of that month. **There will probably be a second round of funding with a later closing date.**

Successful Applicants will have their Bursary Funds paid to their Department during March. Please note that your University/Department might be able to 'top-up' any funds we provide, however we are not a Registered Charity. There is a scheme that may apply for this top-up purpose in the UK available to HEFCE-funded higher education institutions.

Successful applicants will have to undertake a risk analysis on the project to be approved with their department before funds can be released. This will not be required with the application, but you need to be confident it can be achieved if you are successful.

WHAT DO WE EXPECT?

We expect you to demonstrate a genuine interest in scientific fieldwork and environmental, sociological or humanitarian issues together with the work of Charities and NGO's.

If your application is successful, at the conclusion of the project we expect to receive a short report (5-10) pages on your fieldwork and findings, together with a slide show illustrating conditions and observations from the field. We may want to publish all or part of this on a future web site describing the projects we are supporting. We may ask to show your original application document on the website as well.

The Fund has no obligation to fund any particular application and the choice of projects supported will lie entirely with the consensus of The Trustees, and will be independent of applicant's race, gender or creed.

The Fund can take no responsibility for any misadventure whatsoever occurring during fieldwork.