

International Society for Reef Studies: ISRS Graduate Fellowships

Next Application Due Date: February 23, 2018

Award Limit: \$2,500 per award

The International Society for Reef Studies (ISRS) is pleased to announce six (6) Graduate Fellowships for Coral Reef Ecosystem Research.

These Fellowships will provide funding of up to \$2,500 per award that may be used for travel, accommodation away from home, fieldwork, and/or laboratory analyses to be undertaken elsewhere, related to research the results of which are to be included within a degree thesis. Three of the Fellowships are available to anyone worldwide, who is a student (or full) member of the ISRS, and is in the first or second year or at the beginning of the third year (or at the equivalent stage if part-time) of a research degree (e.g. PhD, MPhil or MSc by research) program at an accredited college or university. Three further Fellowships are reserved for students coming from a developing country that possesses coral reefs, though applicants must likewise be student (or full) members of ISRS, and in the first or second year or at the beginning of the third year (or equivalent) of a research degree programme.

Background to the Fellowships

Coral reef ecosystems around the world continue to be threatened by direct anthropogenic stresses and climate change. Scientists and reef managers are increasingly working together to develop sound management strategies that are based on rigorous science. There remain, however, many unanswered questions about reef disturbances and reef resilience, climate change and adaptation, reef connectivity, marine protected areas, fishery impacts, and effective management practices. Many coral reefs are in poor condition, yet we do not fully understand the threats that are undermining their integrity or their interactions. What processes and mechanisms are causing differential mortality and how are some species still able to survive and indeed be successful in times of stress. Research supported by the ISRS Fellowships should increase our understanding of social, biological, and/or ecological processes that are relevant to improved management of coral reefs at local, regional, and/or global scales.

The intent of the Fellowships is to assist research students develop skills and address problems related to coral reef ecosystem science and management. The funding may be used, for example, by a student resident in a developed country to visit and undertake fieldwork on coral reefs in another country, or by a student from a developing country to visit and work on data or samples at an institution in a developed country, or for travel and other expenses within the same country. However where applications are judged to be of similar merit, an award will tend to be given to a candidate whose work appears more strongly reliant on ISRS support.

Conditions of the Award

Conditions of each ISRS Fellowship are that:

- a) Recipients must be student (or full) members of the International Society for Reef Studies at the time of submission of their application,
- b) Recipients must report back to ISRS on the progress of their research, outlining their findings in a form suitable for publication in Reef Encounter, either as a one page progress report, or as a fuller article. (Reports should be submitted to the recording secretary of the society within 15 months of the award of the Fellowship.)
- c) Recipients must so far as is practicable publicize their project and acknowledge appropriately the support provided by ISRS.

Application Format and Directions

Each proposal should consist of the following components:

1. **A short cover letter**
2. **A curriculum vitae (cv)**
3. **The Research Proposal**
4. **Two letters of support**

Specifications for these items are as follows:

1. **Cover Letter:** this should show or state the University or College to which the applicant is affiliated, state the degree for which the applicant is registered, and also state if the applicant is originally from a different country (to assess eligibility for one of the awards reserved for candidates from developing countries). The letter should give the title or topic of the applicant's thesis. It should include a statement confirming that the applicant is a member of ISRS, stating how many years the applicant has been a member, and mentioning if appropriate any contribution made to the Society. It should also indicate whether the letters of support are included with the application or will be sent separately and if so by whom.
2. **Curriculum Vitae:** this should not exceed three (3) pages in length. It should include the educational history of the applicant but focus on past project work and marine activities and include details of any scientific papers already published, mentioning the contribution made to each.
3. **The Research Proposal:** this should be written in English and **not exceed six pages in length** (using 12-point font with one or one-and-a-half line spacing between lines, saved as a pdf file). It should include the following sections:
 - a. **Key Information**
 - i) The applicant's name and institutional address
 - ii) The degree for which the applicant is enrolled or registered, together with the start date and anticipated date of completion
 - iii) The title of the proposed research or activity
 - iv) The total cost of proposed research and amount requested from ISRS
 - v) The applicant's Senior Supervisor / Major Professor's name, institutional address and contact information
 - b. **Proposal Summary**

This section should summarise in no more than 12 lines the proposed research or other activities. It should briefly place the proposed research in context and indicate the principal research aims or questions which led to the proposal.
 - c. **Proposal Background**

This section should summarise the scientific and / or other background to the research. It will likely include a brief overview of the relevant literature (a detailed review is not required). It should also explain the rationale behind the proposal, leading to a clear explanation of the project's aims or objectives.
 - d. **Project Activities**

This section should briefly layout the research and/or other activities that it is proposed to pursue, and provide an indicative timetable. It should also include details of locations and/or institutions to be visited and indicate whether host institutions or staff have been contacted in support of the visit.
 - e. **Methods**

This section should provide details of particular methods to be used, explain any experimental design, and state how the data will be analysed.

f. **Relevance & Implications**

This section should briefly outline the expected outcomes, and indicate how the findings are expected to contribute to resolving coral reef ecosystem management and/or science issues.

g. **Detailed Budget & Justification**

Please give a simple budget for the proposed research and related activities and state the amount(s) of funding anticipated from ISRS and from any other sources. The amount requested from ISRS must not exceed \$2,500. Evidence of cost-sharing is desirable. This might include either additional funding, or accommodation or equipment, or access to laboratory facilities to be provided at reduced cost or free of charge.

h. **Literature Cited**

Please provide details of the literature cited, preferably using the bibliographic format for the Society's journal, Coral Reefs.

4. **Letters of Support:** two letters of support are required, one of which should be from the applicant's major professor / senior supervisor who should so far as possible comment on both the proposed work and the applicant's background and abilities. The letter of support may be included with the application or come directly from the academic concerned in which case please ask for it to be sent as an e-mail attachment with the phrase "ISRS Graduate Fellowship" and the applicant's name included in the email's subject line.

The completed application document should be sent by email, preferably as a single file, to the corresponding secretary of ISRS, who is currently Professor Rupert Ormond, Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh, Scotland, UK (email address: rupert.ormond.mci@gmail.com). For 2018 applications must be received by the end of the day on 23rd February, 2018.