

## Luce Initiative on Asian Studies and the Environment (LIASE)

**Please Note:** LIASE was approved by the Foundation's Directors as a five-year initiative. Round Five represents the final round of competition. We are no longer accepting new pre-proposals or inviting applications for LIASE exploration grants.

The pre-proposal application process for Round Five exploration grants is now closed.

Although the exact dates have not yet been determined, the approximate schedule for the Round Five exploration grant competition is as follows:

- Review of preliminary proposals (February–March 2014)
- Issuance of invitations to submit full proposals for exploration grants (April 2014)
- Submission deadline for exploration grant proposals (September 2014)
- Announcement of Round Five exploration grants (March 2015)
- Recipients of Round Five exploration grants will be eligible to apply for an implementation grant (September 2016)

General information on the competition follows:

### Eligibility

Liberal arts colleges and formal associations of liberal arts colleges in the United States with identified strength in both Asian studies and fields relevant to the environment/sustainable development will be invited to submit proposals. "Liberal arts colleges" refers to four-year colleges with a primary focus on undergraduate education in the arts and sciences.

### Grants

There are two stages to the LIASE competition. The first stage involves small *exploration grants* intended to support efforts by faculty, students and administrators over a period of approximately 16 months to share ideas, formulate plans, test concepts and pilot projects for a program of activities focused on Asian studies and the environment that could be expanded or further developed during the second stage. Exploration grants will typically be capped at \$50,000. Recipients of exploration grants will be eligible to submit proposals for larger, multi-year *implementation grants* in the second stage.

### Review Process and Selection Criteria

A panel of advisors will evaluate proposals for both exploration and implementation grants, and will make recommendations to the Luce Foundation. The Foundation will make the final determination on grants. The number and size of awards in each of the two grant categories

will depend on the quality of proposals received as well as the funds available to the Foundation.

Proposals will be judged on the basis of intellectual merit, creativity, feasibility, evidence of institutional commitment, reciprocity with Asian partners and sustainability beyond the grant period. Applicants must demonstrate existing strength in Asian studies and fields relevant to the environment/sustainable development.

The following will also serve as guides for the exploration period and in planning for the implementation phase:

Asia. A primary goal of LIASE is to strengthen, broaden and diversify the study of Asia at the undergraduate level. Substantial input and participation by Asian studies faculty is required.

Interdisciplinary Work/Institutional Commitment. LIASE aims to bring Asia specialists and non-specialists together to enrich Asian studies programs and broaden literacy about Asia on college campuses. This effort will in many instances entail the continuing education of faculty, re-envisioned curricula, and changes in pedagogical approaches. Conducting interdisciplinary work within the usual institutional structure of departments, disciplines and undergraduate majors can be challenging and requires administrative support at all levels, from president to department chairs. Implementation grants will provide funding and incentives to catalyze this work, but we will look for evidence in the proposal of strong institutional commitment and support (both in-kind and financial) for the proposed activities. For example: How will the proposed program be integrated into the college's strategic plan or made part of the academic structure? How will the proposed activities be integrated into the institutional reward and promotion system? Is release time available for course development or research? Will full teaching credit be awarded to all faculty members in a co-taught course? Will departments commit courses to the proposed program of activities?

Science. Humanists and social scientists will benefit from engagement with scientific contexts, familiarity with scientific concepts and an understanding of scientific data gathering and analysis; scientists, in turn, will benefit from an appreciation of the relevance to their work of historical, social and cultural context and concepts. For this reason, the involvement of science faculty and students is encouraged, as is the inclusion in science curricula of Asia-relevant case studies, labs, and citizen science and field-based opportunities. While we recognize the potential curricular challenges associated with building new requirements into programs in disciplines such as the sciences or engineering, our aim is to support more than superficial exposure to Asia.

Language. Institutions are asked to address the question of language instruction. Not all students may be able to include in-depth study of an Asian language in their course of study, but a competitive proposal must include at least some exposure to an Asian language for participating students. A proposed program might, for example, create incentives for early introduction to Asian language study as a prerequisite for participation in LIASE program activities, or consider a tiered structure with differing levels of language instruction for different types of students.

Travel. Travel enables interaction with local communities, increases understanding of local conditions and reinforces the importance of culture. Although travel cannot constitute the principal activity supported by a grant, LIASE welcomes academically focused travel as a component of the proposed activities, such as a faculty-led study trip to Asia during the summer or a winter term. The value of travel, however, will be enhanced by other Asia-related classroom and field-based programming, such as pre-departure or post-trip courses and activities, to aid students in processing and consolidating what they have learned. We encourage collaboration and exchange flowing in both directions. That is, proposals may include activities that bring students and faculty from Asian institutions to the U.S. as well as the reverse. Because travel is not carbon neutral, applicants are also encouraged to examine how they might mitigate the impact of any travel proposed and the use of other strategies, such as digital technologies, to connect scholars and classrooms.

Partnerships in Asia. Applicants must show evidence of established institutional relationships with any Asian partners with whom they propose to collaborate. Cultivating effective, *mutually beneficial, respectful and reciprocal partnerships that are sensitive to and serve local needs* can take time, and grant funds will not be made available to foster the creation of brand new partnerships during the grant period.

Sustainability Beyond the Grant Period. The Foundation's hope for LIASE is to support work that is transformative for individual participants and institutions alike. In proposals, applicants should describe how the proposed activities relate to institutional priorities and long-range plans, and how the supported work would be integrated into the curriculum and otherwise continued beyond the implementation grant period to have durable institutional impact.