



SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF AMPHIBIANS AND REPTILES

Roger Conant Grants In Herpetology Program: Guidelines for Proposal Submission

Proposals are currently being accepted for the 2024 SSAR Roger Conant Grants-in-Herpetology Program. This program is intended to provide financial support for deserving individuals (with a primary emphasis on student researchers) or organizations involved in herpetological research, education, or conservation.

Who can apply?:

All applicants must be students AND members of the SSAR with the following exceptions:

- Those applying for the International category must be students but DO NOT have to be SSAR members.
- Those applying for the Herpetological Education category DO NOT have to be a student or SSAR member.
- Those applying for support of regional herpetological society projects DO NOT have to be SSAR members.

In keeping with the Society's goal of encouraging participation by the broadest possible community of applicants, preference may be given to individuals who might not have access to other funding sources. Applications must be submitted by individuals only (but see special considerations for education categories below).

Students can also apply for the Dean Metter award, but will be awarded only one award.

Amount Available: Successful applicants in each of the categories listed below will receive an award in the amount of \$500 (US Dollars). A total of 14 proposals will be selected each year, through peer-review, to receive funding.

Deadline for Submission: 15 December 2024 (see special note on membership dues below).

Announcement of awards: The awards will be announced in March 2024.

Grant proposals will be considered in the following categories:

1. Conservation of Amphibians and Reptiles. Proposals should outline a conservation-oriented research project. This project may focus on species endangered or

threatened at the state, national, or international level, or address research on potentially threatened habitats or species, or on introduced injurious species.

2. Field Research In Herpetology. Proposals may address needs for field station fees or equipment and materials in field-oriented projects, or the field work portions of broader studies. This might include in-situ behavioral studies, ecological, life history, or sexual selection studies. Survey work by individuals or regional societies may be submitted here or in TRAVEL below depending on how the funds are to be used.
3. Laboratory Research. Proposals may address needs for equipment or materials in laboratory projects or laboratory portions of broader projects. This might include studies in behavior, biochemistry, molecular biology, biomechanics, or physiology.
4. Travel. Proposals may address support for travel to field study sites near or far, or to utilize distant collections or facilities. If funding is sought to get from one place to another, proposals should be submitted in the TRAVEL category. Proposals normally submitted in the CONSERVATION or FIELD RESEARCH categories should be submitted here if travel funding is being sought.
5. International. Proposals may address needs in any of the above five categories. The applicant must be a student, but not necessarily a SSAR member. Preference will be given to students with limited access to research funds and in countries where herpetological research has historically been under-funded. Note Regarding Eligibility in the International Category: In 2011, the President of SSAR, the Grants-In-Herpetology Chair, and several members of the SSAR Board of Directors decided that proposals in this category would only be accepted if they were submitted from institutions OUTSIDE of the United States. Proposals from students who are primarily affiliated with United States institutions are not eligible for this category. Also, SSAR cannot send funds to international applicants hailing from countries to which monetary transfers are forbidden. If you are a researcher in one of these countries, we cannot consider your application.
6. Herpetological Education. Proposals may address an educational project or start up support for an educational program in a zoo, museum, park, nature center, regional herpetological society, etc. The project must focus on a herpetological topic. Note: Although proposals for institutional projects are accepted, education proposals must be submitted by an individual (either sole applicant or principle contact person for the project). Applicants need not be students or SSAR member.

7. Undergraduate Research in Herpetology. Proposals in this category can outline any research project focused on questions related to amphibian or reptile taxonomy, biology, ecology or conservation. Funding can be used to purchase equipment, materials, or as re-imbusement for travel to conduct research (i.e., offset the cost of gas for trips to field sites, museums to investigate specimens, etc.). Applicants must be currently seeking an undergraduate Degree at an institution of higher learning. Applicants need not be affiliated with US institutions, and international applicants need not be SSAR members. Students that apply for this award must be working directly with a research advisor at an academic or professional institution (i.e., University, Regulatory Agency, Zoological Garden, Museum, etc.). This advisor must submit the letter of support for the student's work. This letter of support must explicitly confirm that the applicant is currently a student and has the time, ability and guidance to successfully complete the proposed project. Strong preference will be given for applicants that have limited funding from other sources.
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All proposals must include the following (with the exception of the "Education" category, see below):

(A) Title Page giving the title of the project, the name, mailing address, office and home telephone numbers and, if possible, fax number and e-mail address of the applicant. The title page should also include the following numerated items completed in this format on the bottom left corner of the Title Page:

1) Category:

2) Word count:

3) Student status (Name of school):

4) Advisor's Name:

5) SSAR membership since (may not be applicable to the International Category):

6) SSAR budget portion (amount and brief description):

7) a statement indicating that applicants "will comply with all applicable permit regulations, and adhere to all appropriate animal care guidelines in the course of conducting funded projects."

(B) Background and Objectives of the proposed project. This should include a clear statement of the problem being addressed and any outcomes predicted as a result of the research. Preference may be given to projects that appear particularly unique in their focus, methodology, or predicted results.

(C) Methods proposed for conducting the proposed project.

(D) Complete project budget (regardless of whether the SSAR grant will entirely cover expenses). Include an explicit explanation of how an SSAR award of \$500 would be applied toward the objectives of the project (here as well as on Title Page) and provide a listing of all current and pending support for the project.

(E) Brief Curriculum Vitae or Resume of the applicant or project coordinator.

(F) Letter of Support Proposals must be accompanied by a letter of support from another member of the SSAR, the student's faculty advisor or committee chairperson, or a regional society president. Note: education proposals must be accompanied by a letter of support from the herpetological curator, the director of the facility, the regional society president, or a professional that can speak to the project/applicant's qualities. If the person submitting the proposal is also the president/overseer of the institution or organization seeking funds, a letter of recommendation from someone other than the applicant is required (i.e., a member of the board of directors, a past advisor, etc.).

(G) Liability Waiver All grant applicants must sign, scan and submit an electronic version of the SSAR GIH liability waiver.

Here is a PDF of the waiver: [SSAR GIH Release Form](#)

Proposal Length: Must not exceed 1,200 words (excluding title page, literature cited, curriculum vitae/resume, budget, and liability waiver).

Proposal Format: The entire proposal should be typed and double-spaced.

Submitting your proposal: All proposals must be submitted electronically via Dropbox ([link](#)) as a single PDF file named "lastname-category.pdf" no later than 15 December 2024 to be considered. The letter of support may be included with the proposal or sent separately; it must also be submitted via Dropbox, and its file name must also begin with the applicant's last name. Exceptions to electronic submission and file format may be allowed for special cases with prior approval by SSAR-GIH Chair.

Failure to meet these guidelines may result in elimination of a proposal from consideration.

Proposals in the Education Category must include the following:

(A) Title Page giving the title of the project, the name, mailing address, office and home telephone numbers and, if possible, fax number and e-mail address of the applicant. The title page should also include the following numerated items completed in this format on the bottom left corner of the Title Page:

1) Category:

2) Word count:

5) SSAR membership since (If Applicable):

6) SSAR budget portion (amount and brief description):

7) a statement indicating that applicants “will comply with all applicable permit regulations, and adhere to all appropriate animal care guidelines in the course of conducting funded projects.”

(B) Background and Objectives of the proposed project. This should include a clear statement of the problem being addressed and any outcomes predicted as a result of the educational project.

(C) Methods proposed for conducting the proposed project.

(D) Tell us about your audience and expected outputs and outcomes:

Identify your targeted audience (e.g., zoo visitors, elementary schoolchildren, family units visiting a nature center, etc.

What do you expect the intended audience to know, feel or do at the conclusion of your project? Explain your intended impacts (outcomes), and why they are achievable.

What outputs (such as the number of people in attendance at a workshop) will be measured?

(E) How will you know if you have accomplished your outcomes? How will they be useful to amphibian and/or reptile conservation?

Explain how you will show if your desired impacts (outcomes) occurred, and how the results will be useful to the applicant and/or to the project. Identify evaluation tool(s) you plan to use, such as but not limited to surveys, focus groups, pre- and post-tests and/or retrospective pre-/post- questionnaires. Applicants are encouraged to include a copy of their entire evaluation, or draft evaluation, as an attachment to their proposal. (Note: a copy of your evaluation will not be added to your overall word limit).

(F) Complete project budget (regardless of whether the SSAR grant will entirely cover expenses). Include an explicit explanation of how an SSAR award of \$500 would be applied toward the objectives of the project (here as well as on Title Page) and provide a listing of all current and pending support for the project.

(G) Brief Curriculum Vitae or Resume of the applicant or project coordinator.

(H) Letter of Support Proposals must be accompanied by a letter of support from another member of the SSAR, the student’s faculty advisor or committee chairperson, or a regional

society president. Note: education proposals must be accompanied by a letter of support from the herpetological curator, the director of the facility, the regional society president, or a professional that can speak to the project/applicant's qualities. If the person submitting the proposal is also the president/overseer of the institution or organization seeking funds, a letter of recommendation from someone other than the applicant is required (i.e., a member of the board of directors, a past advisor, etc.).

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Failure to meet these guidelines may result in elimination of a proposal from consideration.

Important Points to Consider:

- Membership dues must be paid (to SSAR Treasurer) no later than 15 December 2023 for proposals to be considered.
- Applicants are limited to a submission of one proposal per year.
- In June 1999, the SSAR Board of Directors decided that past award recipients are not eligible for any future GIH awards.
- The committee reserves the right to reassign proposals to categories other than those they were submitted to by the applicant.
- If proposals in any of the categories are not forthcoming, or judged not to be of sufficient quality, the funds in those categories may be transferred to other categories.

- The Society prefers that no amount of grants awarded be used to cover institution Facilities and Administration Costs (i.e. overhead).
- In 2012, the SSAR Board of Directors decided to make it mandatory that a waiver of liability also be submitted by each applicant (see liability waiver URL above).

General Criteria Given to Reviewers For Scoring Grant Applications:

Please note that these criteria are not rigid and we do not require reviewers to adhere to them implicitly. Their purpose is to help reviewers organize their thoughts regarding each application.

(1) Strong Introduction or Background?

(2) Is the topic unique or does it fill a necessary void in the current knowledge of the species/topic in-question?

(3) Clear Statement of problem being addressed, the objectives, and predicted outcomes of the research. Note for Education Category: has the applicant clearly identified the audience, outlined expected outputs/outcomes? Does the applicant appear to know if the educational outcomes are accomplished?

(4) Soundness of Methods

(5) Strong Letter of Support

Successful applicants are encouraged to submit the results of their research for publication in the Journal of Herpetology or Herpetological Review, or to present their findings at the annual meeting of the SSAR.

Submit questions regarding application procedures to:

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