



2011 AHRC/ESRC Scholarship Scheme

American Library of Congress

Guidance notes for applicants

Introduction

1. The AHRC/ESRC Scholarship programme is a jointly funded scheme run in collaboration with the American Library of Congress (LoC). The scholarships provide the opportunity for **AHRC/ESRC funded** doctoral students, postdoctoral fellows and research assistants based in UK Higher Education Institutions to travel to Washington DC and work for a sustained period at the Library of Congress, with access to the internationally renowned research collections held there.
2. The Library of Congress is the USA's oldest federal cultural institution and serves as the research arm of Congress. It is also the largest library in the world, with nearly 145 million items on approximately 745 miles of bookshelves. The collections include more than 33 million books and other print materials, 3 million recordings, 12.5 million photographs, 5.3 million maps, 6 million pieces of sheet music and 63 million manuscripts, which cover a broad range of subjects from Naval Science to Fine Arts.
3. The vast size and subject range of the collection are such that **the scheme is open to all AHRC/ESRC subject areas** and is not limited to the research of American Studies.



4. The scholars funded through the scheme are based at the John W Kluge Center, located within the LoC. This Centre offers high quality research accommodation for scholars from across the world with a shared interest in exploiting the extensive collections held by the LoC. The AHRC/ESRC scheme forms part of a much larger Kluge scholarship programme which supports senior international academics and Research Fellows providing a natural forum for advanced research and high level intellectual discourse. Further details about the Centre can be found at: <http://www.loc.gov/loc/kluge/>

In this round there are up to 25 places available (dependent on available budget) to be taken up between 1 October 2011 and 30 September 2012. In the 2010 round, 56 applications were received and 26 awards were made. You can view some of the awards made in previous years (including 2010) on the

AHRC website –

<http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/FundingOpportunities/Pages/LibraryofCongress.aspx>



The Scholarship Programme

Aims of the scheme

5. The aims of the scheme are:
 - to provide dedicated access for AHRC/ESRC-funded researchers to the internationally renowned research collections held at the LoC;
 - through such access, to enhance the depth, range and quality of research activities conducted by scholars;
 - to create opportunities for networking with other international scholars working at the LoC.

Scholarships

6. The scholarships can last between three and six months, depending on the time required to complete the proposed research. The scholarships to be funded during this round will be expected to take place between 1 October 2011 and 30 September 2012.
7. In addition to research facilities provided at the Kluge Center, the scholarships will cover:
 - Flight costs of £500
 - Accommodation costs of £1,000 per month

As the scholarships fall within the period of an existing AHRC/ESRC award, they do not include any additional stipend or salary costs. Successful applicants will continue to receive their normal monthly stipend paid as part of their award holder funding.

8. Applicants should carefully consider the length of time that they wish to apply for and discuss any intended workplan with a supervisor to ensure that the research will be completed within an adequate and realistic timescale.
9. Scholars are unable to extend their stay beyond that originally applied for so careful consideration should be given to the length of time requested. Feedback from returning scholars suggests that given the wealth of the collections and resources at the LoC, certain projects may benefit from a minimum stay of four months, rather than the statutory scheme minimum of three months.
10. Successful applicants should contact the LoC for assistance with their visa in the first instance. (LoC Scholars require a J1 visa). If you require help with health insurance arrangements, or in securing accommodation, you should contact the UK HEI at which you are based. Please note that visa interviews take place at the US Embassy in London. Award holders are required to make their own arrangements for these appointments.
11. **Please note** that applicants wishing to start early in the academic year are strongly advised to begin making visa arrangements as soon as they accept their award to ensure that they start their visit on time.



Eligibility criteria

12. Applicants must be AHRC/ESRC award holders. They may be doctoral students, post-doctoral fellows or doctoral level research assistants supported under AHRC/ESRC projects, holding either full or fees-only awards. Please note that this scheme is open to all eligible award holders, not just those working in the area of American Studies.
13. Their award must be 'live' for the duration of the period between 1 October 2011 and 30 September 2012 when it is intended that the scholarships will take place.
14. The period of the scholarship must be accommodated within the period of the AHRC award or studentship. No additional time will be automatically granted to compensate for the time spent abroad on the scholarship. Applicants should therefore ensure that any persons with an interest in their research, such as Project Directors in the case of research grants, are content to release them should their application be successful.
15. Applicants who were successful in previous rounds are not eligible to reapply to the scheme.
16. Resubmission of a previously unsuccessful application is permitted.

Academic criteria

17. The proposed research must be able to demonstrate relevance to the LoC collections identified by the applicant. Further information on these collections is available at <http://catalog.loc.gov/>. If you have any queries regarding the collections in advance of application, these can be sent to Mary Lou Reker, Special Assistant to the Director of the Office of Scholarly Programs at the LoC (mrek@loc.gov).
18. The proposed research will also need to demonstrate how the scholarship would 'add value' to the *existing* work of the doctoral student, postdoctoral fellow or project of the research assistant.
19. On completion of the scholarship, the researcher will be expected to submit a short (2000 word) report to the AHRC. This will cover which key collections were used at the LoC, how these add value to the scholars' own research and indicate broader professional development outcomes. Award-holders are also invited to give feedback or contribute ideas on how the scheme might be further developed.

Application and Assessment processes

20. Applicants are asked to complete the application form available from the AHRC website here- www.ahrc.ac.uk/FundingOpportunities/Pages/LibraryofCongress.aspx
Applications must be submitted no later than **17:00 on 1 April 2011**. Applications received after this time and date will not be accepted.
21. Applications may be submitted electronically as a scanned copy and must contain original signatures and an institutional stamp.



22. Applications will initially be assessed by a subject specialist and you should indicate in Section 2 of the application form the subject area to which your application relates. Specialist staff at the LoC will also have an opportunity to comment upon the proposed use of their collections. These reviews will be used by the AHRC/ESRC Executive to make the final funding decisions.
23. Applications will be expected to demonstrate that they meet the aims of the scheme (detailed in paragraph 4). In addition, they will be judged by the following assessment criteria:
- The extent to which the research proposal demonstrates relevance to the LoC collections;
 - The extent to which the scholarship will 'add value' to the existing work of the doctoral student, postdoctoral fellow or research assistant;
 - The extent to which the proposal identifies personal development opportunities through networking with other Kluge research scholars. This might include the presentation of ongoing work or immediate or longer term collaborative opportunities;
 - The extent to which the scholarship would be an effective use of the candidate's time;
 - Where appropriate, whether the proposal demonstrates that the applicant has the necessary language expertise (other than English) required to undertake the proposed research.

Timetable

24. **The closing date for applications is 1 April 2011.** The outcomes will be announced by the end of July 2011. **Applicants should consider this alongside the visa requirements for their relevant nationality when choosing a start date for their research.**

Guidance for completing the application form

General points

25. The form should be completed in at least 10pt font. All sections of the form should be completed; we are unable to accept applications that are incomplete. **It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that all parties have completed the relevant sections of the form in time for it to reach the AHRC by the closing date.**
26. Please ensure that you preserve the format of the application form. Small boxes may be completed by hand if you are unable to complete them electronically. Please do not exceed the page or word limit where stated.
27. The closing date for applications is **1 April 2011**. We will not accept any applications that arrive after **17.00 hrs on 1 April 2011**.



Section 1: Applicant details

Question 1. Details of applicant and current award

28. Please give the details requested **in full**.

29. If you are unsure of your **AHRC studentship reference number**, please contact the officer responsible for your institution. Contact details can be found on the AHRC website here –

<http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/About/ContactUs/Pages/pginstitutionofficers.aspx>

30. Under **Duration**, please indicate the **exact dates** during which you hope to be in residence at the Library of Congress.

Question 2. Applicant's statement

31. The applicant is asked to provide a statement in support of their proposal for a scholarship. This statement (no more than 1000 words) should include the following:

- a brief summary of the applicant's AHRC/ESRC-funded research project
- the stage in the research at which the scholarship would take place, e.g. brief details of the research undertaken to date, the number of months/years of study completed on the project, and the timescale for completing the research
- the primary collections to be accessed. If the applicant is successful, s/he would not be restricted to the collections named, but it is important that the candidate demonstrates the relevance of the identified LoC collections to their proposed research. The details of the categories used by the Library of Congress can be accessed using the following link: <http://www.loc.gov/catdir/cpsolcco/>
- how access to these collections would add value to the applicant's current and planned research activities
- the amount of time sought (between 3 and 6 months) and how the time would be used
- whether the scholarship would provide personal development opportunities other than those arising directly from the research (for example networking with other Kluge scholars, giving presentations of current work, or immediate or long term collaborative opportunities)
- where appropriate, whether the applicant has the necessary language expertise to undertake the proposed work.



Section 2: Subject Classification and Key Words

Please indicate which subject area your application relates to using either the AHRC or ESRC subject classification table included at the end of the application form. Please write this into the box provided in section 2.

The applicant is required to list six 'key words' in the box provided, which best identify the focus of their research. These key words will be used to ensure the application is peer reviewed appropriately.

Section 3: Please provide details of other qualifications and relevant academic experience in support of your application

32. Please give details of your career in Higher Education to date and of any professional or other appropriate experience relevant to your application.

Section 4 : For completion by Supervisor/Principal Investigator

Question 5. Details of Supervisor/Principal Investigator

33. Please give the details requested in full.

Question 6. Statement of support from Supervisor/Principal Investigator on proposed research

34. Please give a statement in support of the application, including:

- confirmation of how the proposed research and use of the LoC collections will enhance the current work of the applicant
- confirmation that the applicant has the skills necessary to exploit effectively the resources available
- assurance that the time spent at the LoC will not result in extra time being required to complete the existing research funded by the AHRC/ESRC.

Section 5: Research Organisation Authorisation

Question 8. Authorisation of application

35. This section should be completed by a senior member of Registry staff or another senior staff member with the appropriate institutional authority. In completing this section, you are confirming your institution's support of the application and undertaking to provide the support outlined in paragraph 8 if the application is successful.



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Submission of application forms

36. The AHRC must receive a signed scanned copy of your application form by **17:00 on 1 April 2011**. Scanned copies must include signatures and an institutional stamp in order to be eligible and should be submitted to loc@ahrc.ac.uk, preferably in pdf format. You do not need to return the list of subject classifications with your application form. If you have any queries, you should direct them to this address in the first instance or you can contact Sam Lamshead on 01793 416072 and Allie Brown on 01793 6074.