The Buck Lab for Climate & Environment – Grants Program

Background

Through a very generous gift from Colby College Trustee Sandy Buck ’78 and Sissy Buck, Colby established the Buck Lab for Climate & Environment, a nexus for Colby students, faculty and community partners to collaborate on environmental scholarship, teaching and learning, civic engagement, and career explorations. The Buck Lab is also an incubator to incentivize new and broad-reaching interdisciplinary work to further understand and solve the world’s daunting environmental and climate-related challenges. By disseminating the insights gained from the environmental work of students, faculty, and staff, the Buck Lab creates a highly visible public face for Colby’s strong contributions to and leadership role in the study of the environment.

Says Sandy Buck, “There has never been a more important time for innovative thinking and investment in environmental issues. Having worked with Maine’s environmental organizations for a long time, I see how hungry they are for collaboration, and how much we have to do to change course and leave this planet in a better place for the next generation. I can’t think of a better way to do it than providing opportunities for young people who are passionate about this work.”

Through a series of grants programs, The Buck Lab support student and faculty research, experiential learning opportunities in the classroom and in the field, student internships with new collaborative partners doing environmental work, community engagement, professional skills development, career networking, and travel to professional meetings.

Buck Lab Student Research Grants for 2020-2021

Current Colby students from all disciplines are invited to apply for funding from the Buck Lab to support summer research related to climate change and environment (in-person or remote). Students may propose new independent projects or work with researchers on existing projects. We encourage applications from students in the humanities, social sciences, natural sciences and interdisciplinary programs who are investigating any aspect of climate change or other environmental subject. Students must identify a research mentor who will oversee the project, and if that person is not a Colby faculty/staff member, students must also identify a Colby research sponsor who will help mentor and evaluate the student’s research experience. And stay tuned for COVID-19 related information.

Two rounds of grants are available during each academic year to support research projects in January/spring semester (October deadline) and summer/fall semester (April deadline). Seniors are not eligible for summer funding after they’ve graduated.

Guidelines

Buck Lab Student Research Grants will be awarded competitively, and the award amount will vary depending upon the nature and location of the research project, quality of the research proposal, feasibility of the project, availability of funds, and other factors deemed important by the grants committee. Before submitting an application, students are strongly encouraged to discuss their

research plans and the grant guidelines and submission process with their faculty mentors. Students may also consult with Buck Lab Director Gail Carlson (gcarlson@colby.edu).

All successful grant recipients will be required to report back to the Buck Lab and the Colby community on their research experience and outcomes. At a minimum, students will present their results at a dedicated Buck Lab session at the Colby Liberal Arts Symposium (CLAS). Students will also submit to the Buck Lab a short description of their experience and at least one photo or other form of image for use in Buck Lab communications materials. Any publications or presentations resulting from this funded work should acknowledge the support of the Buck Lab for Climate & Environment.

**Deadlines:** Review of applications for summer grant proposals will begin on Monday, April 5, 2021.

**Submission:** Students must complete a Buck Lab Student Research Grant application as described below. All materials, including letters of recommendation, must be submitted electronically to bucklab@colby.edu by the deadline. Grant recipients will be selected by the Buck Lab Advisory Committee.

**Proposals**

Proposals should be concise and clear and include all sections indicated below. Please use one-inch margins, 12-point font, single-spacing, and do not exceed four (4) pages in length. Save your file as a PDF with the following label that indicates you are applying for a student research (SR) grant: **YourLastName_BuckLabSR_Date**.

Please include:

**PROJECT INFORMATION**
- At the top, your name, major and class year. Include your name in a heading on all pages of the document
- Indicate that you are applying for a Buck Lab Student Research Grant.
- Project title, names and affiliations of all project sponsors
- If you are working with an off-campus sponsor, also list the name and department/program of your on-campus Colby sponsor

**ABSTRACT**
- 150 words or less
- Briefly summarize the research question, environmental significance, proposed methodological approach and desired outcomes of your project.

**INTRODUCTION**
- Provide background information and description of environmental problem and how your proposed research project fits with research and knowledge in this field
- Include references to key literature in the field
- Include a statement about the connection of your proposed project to the mission of the Buck Lab and how this research fits with your academic priorities and possible career plans
- Indicate if this research is part of an independent study, honors project or course work for credit
- Include a description of evidence that you have the skills necessary to carry out this research, usually indicated by relevant completed course work
APPROACH
- Provide a detailed research plan, including:
  o Location where research will be carried out and rationale for this location
  o Research partners, resources, organizations, field stations, etc. – all people and places that will provide resources, collaborate, serve as guides, mentors, research subjects, etc.
  o Expected start and end date for this project
  o Planned methodologies
  o Equipment, data or source materials needed
  o Tentative timeline of activities
  o If needed, confirmation that the Colby Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval for human subjects research has been granted (see www.colby.edu/psych/irb)
  o Issues related to safety, cost, research feasibility, etc. that may be of interest to the grant committee

OUTPUT
- Describe expected final products from this research, including honors thesis, research paper or poster, exhibit or performance, conference presentation, manuscript, archive, etc.

BUDGET
- Use a table format for each expense category (travel, lodging, food, site transportation, supplies, other expenses). See sample table below.
- Indicate Unit Cost (e.g., estimated lodging cost per night), Number of Units (e.g., number of nights’ lodging) and Total Cost (e.g., unit cost x number of units)
- Make sure all budget items are justified by your project description. This is best done by including an Expense Justification column and annotating your budget items.
- Make sure the costs are reasonable – don’t underestimate and use the minimum possible cost, but also don’t overestimate and budget extravagant expenses; economy in budget planning is encouraged when possible.
- Include a stipend if needed to cover the equivalent amount of work study earnings or summer earnings that would otherwise be earned during the grant period, not to exceed $400 for Jan 2019 and $2,500 for summer 2019.
- Include the total amount of funding requested in bold in the bottom row.
- Indicate in narrative form if you are seeking funds for this project from sources other than the Buck Lab

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Are you applying for funds for this project from sources other than the Buck Lab?
Letters of support

Students must arrange for a letter of support to be submitted to Buck Lab committee separate from the student’s application and by the deadline. This letter must come from the student’s Colby sponsor, verifying that this research project is reasonable and that the student has the skills necessary to carry it out. If students are proposing research with a non-Colby sponsor, they must arrange for an additional letter of support from that sponsor. Letters should be emailed to bucklab@colby.edu.

Disbursement of funds

Successful grant recipients will receive their awarded funds as a lump sum from the Office of Student Financial Services in advance of the start of the project. Students must keep and submit all original receipts covering all expenses. Receipts must show clearly the date, what was purchased and for how much. Best practice is to keep a spreadsheet of all expenses as you go along. Submit all receipts in an organized budget report within one month of completion of the project to bucklab@colby.edu.

Emergency contact information

All grant recipients must provide a detailed itinerary and emergency contact information prior to travel using Buck Lab funding. If the itinerary or emergency contacts change, please let Gail Carlson (gcarlson@colby.edu) know as soon as possible.

Liabilities and consent

Students are responsible for any expenses or liabilities incurred during their research travel and activities that are in excess of the approved award from the Buck lab. Award recipients are solely responsible for insuring their own safety during all research activities. Colby College, the Buck Lab for Climate & Environment, and faculty and staff associated with this grant are not responsible for health or safety issues that may arise as a result of this grant award.

Students are responsible for checking on travel warnings to their research locations (e.g., from the U.S. State Department). Students need to submit a travel waiver as required by the Off-Campus Study Office and Risk Management Office for travel to countries with travel warnings. For research that requires international travel, students are required to sign up with the college’s new travel registry through the off-campus study office (http://www.colby.edu/offcampus/travel-registry/).