

## **FIREBIRD FOUNDATION FOR ANTHROPOLOGICAL RESEARCH**

### **Fellowships for the Documentation of Oral Literature and Traditional Ecological Knowledge**

#### **APPLICATION GUIDELINES AND INSTRUCTIONS**

The Fellowships in the Documentation of Oral Literature and Traditional Ecological Knowledge were created to record the rapidly disappearing oral traditions and traditional ecological knowledge of indigenous populations. With increasing modernization and schooling, oral traditions and the languages they represent are being lost at an alarming rate. This rapidly disappearing oral literature may consist of ritual texts, epic poems, curative chants, songs, legends, myths, spells, riddles, texts accompanying agricultural ceremonies, historical accounts, life history narratives, and so on. Critical information on the traditional uses of the environment may appear in oral texts and accounts which form part of the ecological knowledge of an indigenous people. It is the goal of the Foundation to record and collect these texts for scientific understanding, preservation, and to appreciate the intrinsic beauty of many of these oral traditions that should not be lost.

Since 1986, the Firebird Foundation has run the Sabah Oral Literature Project, a project started by Dr. George N. Appell and Laura W. R. Appell to collect the unique oral traditions of the Rungus people of Sabah. They now have a small team that collects and translates texts. Over its twenty-four year history this team has collected hundreds of texts, which are archived with the Firebird Foundation. The Foundation would now like to expand this idea to other areas of the world and is looking for urgent or unique projects that will lead to the collection and preservation of disappearing oral traditions.

Fellowships of up to US\$10,000 will be awarded to anthropologists, linguists, and other scholars, as well as to individuals or teams of local researchers in indigenous societies who are dedicated to preserving their own oral traditions. The funds in the Fellowships can be used to cover research expenses directly related and essential to the project (i.e., travel, essential living expenses during fieldwork, supplies and recording equipment, research assistance, and other relevant expenditures). Using funds to initiate local oral literature projects and local collection teams is also strongly encouraged. Aid is not offered for salary and/or fringe benefits of applicant,

tuition, non-project personnel, travel to meetings, institutional overhead, or institutional support.

Applicants should submit a proposal of no more than ten pages describing the importance of collecting oral literature and traditional ecological knowledge among the society in which they will be working and the goals to be achieved. The application should also include:

- Description of the project with the following information:
  - ▶ Ethnic group involved
  - ▶ Types of oral literature expected to collect
  - ▶ Methods used to collect the oral literature
  - ▶ Urgency of the project
  - ▶ Proposed timeline of the project
  - ▶ Brief review of literature on the ethnic group if applicable
- A brief description of your background and interest in oral literature or a CV
- Itemized Budget including total costs, costs to be covered by Firebird Foundation, and costs to be covered by other funding sources (all amounts must be listed in USD)
- If you are a graduate student, a letter from your academic advisor

Applications should be submitted by email in a legible font either as .doc or .pdf file or printed and sent via mail. The Fellowship is open to all nationalities but applications must be in English.

Applications are accepted for review quarterly: March 1, June 1, Sept. 1 and Dec. 1.

Please send application materials to:

Firebird Foundation for Anthropological Research, P.O. Box A, Phillips, ME 04966, USA, or to the Foundation's email address: [firebird@firebirdfoundation.org](mailto:firebird@firebirdfoundation.org)

Responsibilities of Successful Applicant for a Fellowship:

The successful applicant will receive a letter of agreement for the project which will be signed by the applicant and a Foundation officer. Please return the letter of agreement to the Foundation within one month of receipt. Funds will not be released without this letter. Please also let the Foundation know how you would like to receive your funds (wire transfer, check, etc.) and the date you need the funds.

The Firebird Foundation would like to receive periodic updates on your research from the field and as you process your data afterwards. We are also genuinely interested in hearing of any problems or unexpected experiences you had while collecting the material, as this will help us advise later applicants.

Copies only of the recordings, transcriptions, and other documents are to be deposited and archived with the Firebird Foundation's Program for Oral Literature and Traditional Ecological Knowledge along with a final report including a list of expenses incurred. Ownership of the research materials will remain with the Fellowship recipient. We welcome periodic updates on the status of your work on the materials as well as reprints of any publications resulting from your work.

We would like to receive copies of your collected materials no later than 1 year after the completion of your fieldwork. We would prefer digital copies. We would also like copies of any transcriptions made of the recordings. Recordings should be legibly labeled and the transcriptions should indicate which recordings they are paired with. We also encourage you to archive with the Firebird Foundation copies of any resulting publications about your research or other materials that arise from the analysis of your recordings.