



## Diversity

The vision for the grant is to boost, strengthen and extend the scientific discoveries of cultural evolution regarding flourishing human futures. To achieve this, the funding call explicitly aims to encourage diversity in the awards funded and reach a broader audience (whether the public, policy-makers or other disciplines; Holland Jones et al. 2020), through the following objectives.

### **Enhance opportunities for early career researchers (ECRs).**

The challenges of fostering a research career, whether within academia or not, are ever increasing. The next generation of researchers face much stiffer competition and higher hurdles to achieving secure employment compared to previous generations. The funding, training opportunities, and mentorship (see our [Application Procedures and Review Processes for those invited to full application](#)) provided by the grant are intended to support the best emerging thinkers in cultural evolution, and thereby deliver real change to the field.

- ECRs will be within 7 years of receiving their PhD (not including career breaks but including teaching experience and/or time spent in non-academic organisations).

### **Extend the geographical reach of CES beyond Northern America and (Western) Europe.**

Within the many fields that make up cultural evolution, there is recognition of the overemphasis of research effort upon Western, Educated Industrialized, Rich and Democratic (WEIRD) populations (Henrich et al. 2010) and the negative impact this has through neglecting cultural diversity and reinforcing erroneous and damaging, Western-centric assumptions (Mesoudi et al. 2016; Kline et al. 2018). The most effective and ethical way to redress the balance is to include, support and collaborate with scientists beyond WEIRD populations (Meadon & Spurrett 2010; Kline et al. 2018). Cultural evolutionary theory, with its emphasis on human diversity, provides a unique basis on which to redress the oversight of a WEIRD research focus, and in doing so will improve the basis on which we advance understanding of human futures. We note, however, that such efforts to decolonize our field must be extremely careful to prioritise equitable collaborations (Urassa et al. 2021), use culturally appropriate research methods and involve communities (Brosch et al. 2020).

- Research Projects or Working groups involving PIs/Co-Is/PDRAs from outside Northern America or Western Europe, or indigenous

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individuals from within these areas, will be considered favourably.

- Western Europe (regional group of UN): Andorra, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, The Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, San Marino, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom.
- Northern America: United States of America (contiguous only), Canada.
- Evaluation will be made on a case-by-case basis (using information provided by you at application stage, such as nationality, ethnicity, location of undergraduate and postgraduate degrees).

#### **Extend the disciplinary reach of the CES.**

The humanities and social sciences have been sceptical of genetic approaches to human evolution, in part because these approaches leave little room for the impact of human culture, belief, and practice. Cultural evolutionary theory helps explain why genetics and culture are both essential parts of human existence. Through this funding scheme CES hopes to catalyze the study of cultural evolution, by better engaging with interested collaborators in cultural psychology, social psychology, sociocultural anthropology, philosophy, history, sociology, social analytics, political science, economics, and business studies, as well as individuals from cognitive science, computer science, linguistics, cultural neuroscience, and physics (disciplines with which we are not yet engaged, or lie on the field's periphery), plus integrated field and laboratory studies or empirical and theoretical studies.

- Research Projects or Working groups involving PIs/Co-Is from different disciplines will be considered favourably. Such disciplines include, but are not limited to, those listed above.

#### **Investigate and support the application of cultural evolution research to societal issues.**

Public policies attempt to accomplish cultural change in a practical sense to reach their various objectives, yet they rarely draw on an explicit scientific theory of cultural change. In contrast, the sciences often investigate what needs to be changed but invest less in how this may be achieved. Cultural evolutionary theory enables combination of standard approaches to public policy with an understanding of how people learn and adopt new behaviours (e.g. Wilson 2011; Moya et al. 2020). This funding scheme will catalyse the study, and practical applications, of cultural change in society, enriching public appreciation of mechanisms that shape shared heritage yet also underpin cultural diversity.

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Involvement of non-academic organisations and stakeholders in applications is particularly encouraged, and will be considered favourably, where appropriate.

The topics to be funded by the grant are pitched to enable applications from the utmost diversity of disciplinary, geographical, and career stages to enhance diverse engagement with cultural evolution. A high-quality proposal is paramount and applicants are not required to meet any of the above criteria. However, the extent to which an application addresses the objectives will be influential in final funding decisions.

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