

FAQs for Anthropology Grads

Short-term GRAF and Departmental Summer Funding

Short-term GRAF

What can short-term GRAF funding be used for?

A short-term GRAF is most often used by students to support summer fieldwork abroad. It is meant to be used for “foreign-based research by doctoral students whose field-based or archival research requires an extended period of residence in another country or countries.” Funding can be used for travel and living costs for periods “up to but not exceeding 3 full months.” The amount awarded for summer funding is up to \$6,000. A short-term GRAF cannot be used for language study or for attending foreign workshops or conferences. It can however be used for preliminary research; deciding on an appropriate research site; making institutional contacts in country; collecting archival materials; etc. It is best used after your first or second year of coursework. <http://www.bu.edu/cas/current-students/phd-mfa-students/financial-aid/aid-for-phd-students/>

Does a short-term GRAF count against my total number of funded semesters?

No.

Do I need to secure IRB clearance for a short-term GRAF?

Probably, yes, but it depends very much on your specific project. You should consult with your advisor and someone from the IRB. In many cases, if you do need approval, the expedited or exempt path is possible.

Can I apply for more than one short-term GRAF?

Yes, you can apply for more than one short-term GRAF if your projects are sufficiently different. Hypothetically, you could apply for one after your first year of graduate study and a second after your second year. But your projects must be “sufficiently different” one from the other. [An example is a student who makes a preliminary visit to their proposed field site one summer and discovers that it is not viable; the next summer they explore a new field site.]

Do I need to consult with my faculty advisor and write a proposal for short-term GRAF funding?

Yes, there is a proposal requirement of “not more than 4 pages” (see website) and funding is competitive (though our students typically do very well). You should definitely discuss your proposed research with your faculty advisor. Fellowships are awarded to students nominated by their departments and recommended by a faculty committee. Your advisor will need to write a letter supporting your nomination that comments on your ability to carry out the proposed research, your academic preparation including language skills, whether GRAF funding is augmenting any other funding you might have for your research, and how this research contributes to your dissertation project.

How is short-term GRAF funding different from departmental summer funding?

The department is provided with a sum of money by GRS to offer support for graduate student summer projects not covered by the short-term GRAF. The amount varies from year to year. This fund is supplemented by unused faculty research funds and any funds from the operating budget which will expire if not appropriated.

Departmental Summer Funds

What can departmental summer funds be used for?

Departmental funding can be used for preliminary field research and related travel as well as language study or professional training or workshops that may be critical for students' academic preparation and dissertation research. Requests cannot exceed \$5,000.

Are all students who apply guaranteed departmental summer funding?

No, student requests for money are not automatically funded. A student may receive no money or may be funded only in part. Funding is competitive and depends on the total amount available. Note that requests for funding in a given year are typically twice the amount of funding available. Students are encouraged to seek other sources of funding especially for fieldwork projects (for which small-term GRAF are available).

Do I need to write a proposal for departmental summer funding and consult with my faculty advisor?

Yes, you are required to submit a statement of no more than 1,000 words. Department funds are competitive. This means that a student with a strong research statement is likely to be judged more favorably than a student who does not clearly articulate how funding will further their academic project. Discussing your proposed research with your faculty advisor will likely result in a stronger statement.

Do I need to secure IRB clearance for a project funded by department summer funds?

Probably, yes, but it depends very much on your specific project. You should consult with your advisor and someone from the IRB. In many cases, if you do need approval, the expedited or exempt path is possible.

Who determines which students get summer funding?

The DGS in consultation with the graduate advisory committee decides who will get funding and how much. Student's previous research, experience in country, year in academic program, and progress to date, are all taken into account.

What are the criteria/priorities that are considered in making decisions about funding?

(1) Predissertation fieldwork or lab work that will lead to stronger research proposals; (2) necessary language study, field schools, and training workshops; (3) summer writing and/or lab support at home; (4) later field trips if those prove to be absolutely necessary. Note that you cannot hold any other fellowship (including summer school teaching) while receiving this funding.

Questions?

Feel free to consult the director of graduate studies, the chair, or your faculty advisor.