Research Grants for the Promotion and Assessment of Prosociality, Empathy, Altruism, Compassion, and Ethics (PEACE Grants)

REQUEST FOR LETTERS OF INTENT
Deadline: April 14, 2017

The Mind & Life Institute is a non-profit organization committed to building a scientific understanding of the mind and human behavior as a way to reduce suffering and promote flourishing. In particular, we promote the integration of rigorous scientific inquiry with contemplative practices and wisdom traditions by supporting the emerging field of contemplative sciences. As part of this mission, we are offering a new grants program to fund research on novel interdisciplinary approaches for investigating and nurturing wholesome mental qualities related to Prosociality, Empathy, Altruism, Compassion, and Ethics (PEACE).

Programs delivering contemplative training in various settings have expanded rapidly over the past decade. Our knowledge of cognitive, physiological and clinical effects of these practices (particularly mindfulness) has grown steadily, in large part due to the ongoing efforts of the Mind & Life Institute. Expanding from a focus on awareness-based practices to include the cultivation of virtuous, prosocial qualities and actions is clearly warranted as we look to foster positive change in the world. To this end, the Mind & Life Institute is pleased to lead the way in supporting the development of this critical field through our new funding program, the PEACE Grants—supporting projects that advance our understanding of the mechanisms, implementation and outcomes of contemplative strategies to promote wholesome mental qualities and positive interpersonal and social action. In addition, we encourage the development of measures to rigorously assess these qualities in various real-world contexts.

Here, “contemplative” approaches can include a wide range of practices that involve introspection and awareness of mind-body states, including various forms of meditation, embodied or movement-based practices, reflective writing, contemplative prayer, and others. Likewise, our use of the term “PEACE” is meant to encompass a range of wholesome characteristics beyond the acronym itself (prosocial, empathy, altruism, compassion, ethics), including gratitude, love, forgiveness, sympathetic joy, patience, presence, and resilience. We encourage research proposals that work across traditional disciplinary boundaries, and use methodological approaches that meet the highest standards of rigor.
Grant Information

Two levels of funding are available through this program: up to $25,000 and up to $100,000 (USD). Grants will be awarded through a competitive application and selection process. Proposed research should be completed within a 2-year period, and annual progress reports are required for grantees to remain in good standing. Applications are reviewed and selected based on the following criteria:

- Significance and impact to the field
- Methodological approach/design
- Innovation/novelty
- Quality of the applicant, likelihood of success and future contribution to the field
- Strength of research environment

To be eligible, the applicant (Principal Investigator) must have completed a terminal research/doctoral degree and sufficient training, experience and institutional resources to accomplish the proposed work.

Application Information

Letters of intent must be submitted through the Mind & Life Institute website on or before April 14, 2017. All applicants must submit a letter of intent to be considered for invitation to submit a full proposal.

The following elements will be required for the letter of intent application:

- Project description, including:
  - Explanation of the overall aims of the research project (500 words maximum)
  - Brief description of the methodological approach (e.g., population, procedures, analysis; 700 words maximum)
  - Significance and potential impact of the work (300 words maximum)
  - Funding level you will be seeking ($25,000 or $100,000). Grant funds may be used to cover any research-related costs; salary and/or time buy-out is permissible.
- Abbreviated CVs or NIH-style biosketches of key personnel (3 pages maximum per biosketch)

All applicants will receive email notification by June 6, 2017 as to whether they have been selected to submit a full proposal.

If selected to submit a full proposal, a detailed request for proposals (RFP) will be sent to you at that time. Proposals for the $25,000 level grant will be 6 single-spaced pages maximum and the $100,000 level grant will be 12 single-spaced pages (excluding appendices and references). Full proposals will be due August 30, 2017; grantees will be announced in November 2017.

We encourage your inquiries. Please direct any questions to PEACEgrants@mindandlife.org.