

The Sonia Stonehouse Expedition Fund for Geography Dissertation Overseas Fieldwork

Background

The history of student expeditions at Newcastle dates back to 1948 when a small group of Geography undergraduates took part in a pioneering expedition to Iceland, guided by Hal Lister, who later became a Reader in the Geography Department and a noted Arctic and Antarctic explorer. Subsequent expeditions over the past sixty-five years have been organised and conducted by students, often in order to carry out independent research and collect data for their final year dissertation thesis. Overseas student expeditions have been a regular feature of the academic year, with trips to destinations including northern Norway, Greenland, Morocco, Senegal, Kenya, Java, the Faroes, the Himalayas, and the Yukon.

Sonia Stonehouse was a secretary in the Geography Department at Newcastle in the 1950s and early 1960s, during the time of active undergraduate overseas expeditions. Sadly Sonia passed away in 2007 and in remembrance of the happy time she spent in the Department her family, through kind donation, have established the Sonia Stonehouse Expedition Fund to support overseas fieldwork for dissertation research.

Through the fund we are able to make annual awards to groups of Geography undergraduate students undertaking overseas fieldwork, as part of their compulsory dissertation in Physical or Human Geography. Applications are reviewed by a panel of academic staff on the basis of quality of research, depth of planning and logistics, and appropriate consideration of health and safety and ethical issues. The committee particularly encourages teams of 2 or more students.

Eligibility

The fund is open to all F800, L701 FH82 and LK74 stage 2 students to help support overseas fieldwork for their final year dissertation. Individuals may apply but the committee particularly encourages expedition teams of 2 or more students. Preference will be given to proposals that demonstrate one or more of the following (1) valuable experiences for Newcastle students and their counterparts from the host country, (2) the least possible exposure to predictable risks, (3) promotion of the University's and the School's name, and (4) a lasting positive impact for the locality and/or the host country.

Note: If your planned dissertation research is combined with a volunteering programme/internship please specify clearly in your application how the intended voluntary participation/internship has been motivated by the requirements of the dissertation.

Applications and Reports

Application is via the SSEF application form which should be filled in carefully according to the application guidelines and emailed to Dr Seb Pitman (seb.pitman@ncl.ac.uk). **The closing date for applications is the last Friday in April.**

If your project is funded you are required to submit a short report in the format of an electronic poster to the Committee. The poster report will also be passed on to the SSEF donor. If you have photos you are willing to share with the donor and/or for use to promote expeditions and the SSEF please do also include these with your report.

Reports need to be submitted no later than the end of April in the year following funding to Dr Seb Pitman (seb.pitman@ncl.ac.uk)

Application forms can be found on the Geography Expeditions webpages:

<https://www.ncl.ac.uk/gps/study-with-us/study-geography/undergraduate/expeditions/>