

CALL FOR RESEARCH PROPOSALS – 2010

The International Research Foundation for English Language Education (TIRF)
invites proposals for
Doctoral Dissertation Grants
in the field of English language education.

**PROPOSAL SUBMISSION DEADLINE:
MAY 15, 2010**

INTRODUCTION

The International Research Foundation for English Language Education (TIRF) was founded in 1999 as the TESOL International Research Foundation (TIRF), an international, non-profit organization. Its aim is to generate new knowledge and to collect and organize existing knowledge about the teaching and learning of English for the purposes of informing educational policy; improving classroom practices; and, ultimately, expanding educational, occupational, and social opportunities for individuals in a global society. TIRF is governed by a Board of Trustees composed of scholars, authors, and corporate sector volunteers and is supported by charitable donations. TIRF is committed to developing and implementing an innovative, proactive applied research program, the ultimate purpose of which is to help ensure that English as a second or foreign language is taught, learned, and tested in a manner that is demonstrably effective, expedient, and economical. TIRF is committed to strengthening links between theory, practice, and policy, and to fostering partnerships among researchers around the world.

One of the activities TIRF undertakes to advance its mission is the funding of research. In 2010, TIRF will consider Doctoral Dissertation Grant (**DDG**) proposals. The DDG funding is intended to support worthy applicants who have advanced to candidacy or the dissertation phase in their doctoral programs and whose dissertation research plans address topics that TIRF has prioritized (see below). For Doctoral Dissertation Research Grants, \$5,000 USD is the maximum award. Proposals are due by **May 15, 2010**.

TIRF DOCTORAL DISSERTATION GRANT (DDG)

Research Priorities

For Doctoral Dissertation Grant (DDG) proposals, applicants may choose from among any of the research priorities topics listed below and listed and described on the Web site (<http://www.tirfonline.org>)

- **Bilingualism/plurilingualism in Business and Industry**
- Effective Grammar Instruction for English Language Learners in Primary and Secondary Education Context
- Integration of Grammar Instruction into EFL Curricula: Approaches and their Effectiveness
- **Language Assessment**
- **Optimal Uses of Technology in the Delivery of English Language Instruction**
- Students' Age and Effective English Language Education in Schools
- **Teacher Education**

Applicants may address any of the research priorities. For the TIRF 2010 DDG competition, TIRF is particularly interested in research that deals with the research priorities that are highlighted in bold above and will give preference to proposals that address one of them. Please visit TIRF's website (<http://www.tirfonline.org>) for complete descriptions of all research priorities, including background information. You will want to make certain that your proposal is a good fit for the priority you have chosen.

Features of the TIRF Doctoral Dissertation Grant

- Doctoral Dissertation Grants are awarded for up to USD \$5,000 per proposal. Smaller sums may be awarded, depending on the budget.
- Allocations of funds are made subject to budgetary availability. However, it is likely that we will fund **five** Doctoral Dissertation Grants for the 2010 competition.
- Preference is given to projects that can be completed in one year.
- Preference will be given to proposals that address one of the following research priorities (those that are highlighted in the list above): bilingualism/plurilingualism in business and industry, language assessment, optimal uses of technology in the delivery of English language instruction, and teacher education.
- Preference is given to projects that have clear implications for policy-makers and others in positions to make decisions involving English language education practices.
- Research involving multiple research methods (e.g., qualitative and quantitative approaches) is encouraged.
- If English proficiency testing is planned (for either students or teachers), we strongly recommend the use of appropriate international, standardized English language tests whose results can be easily interpreted by researchers in other contexts; if other tests are to be used or developed, please include the rationale for the selection or development of these particular instruments.
- Research that involves the synthesis of existing data sets and research findings will also be considered.

- TIRF will fund conference travel only to a total of US \$2,000 per DDG. Additional travel funds may be requested for data collection or essential researcher meetings. Personal expenses, such as the cost of storage, moving, insurance, salary, and rent are not permissible budget items.
- TIRF strongly encourages grantees to disseminate their findings via electronic media and standard means of academic and professional presentations and publications as well. TIRF must be acknowledged in all forms of dissemination.
- Additional sources of funding applied for or received for the same research project or a larger project should be declared. Seeking or obtaining other sources of funding for the project does not prevent you from applying for a TIRF DDG grant; however, it is important that you state the unique contribution a TIRF grant will make to your research project.
- In addition to submitting progress reports to TIRF every six months, grantees must submit a two to five-page narrative final report for the project by August 31, 2012. The final report should be written for a general audience and must contain references. TIRF also requires a final financial report by August 31, 2012, documenting how the funding was used. Final reports should be sent to rac@tirfonline.org

NOTE: TIRF reserves the right to fund less than the requested amount in DDG proposals, based on TIRF's fiscal constraints and feedback from reviewers about the appropriateness of budgets.

Characteristics of Successful TIRF Doctoral Dissertation Grant Proposals in Previous Years

In the past the strongest DDG proposals have been submitted by an applicant who

- has clearly advanced to Ph.D. candidacy or dissertation stage in accordance with the requirements of his or her institution (this criterion is absolutely necessary and must be attested by the doctoral supervisor);
- has written a proposal directly and clearly related to one of the priority research topics identified by TIRF;
- has written a literature review that 1) demonstrates familiarity with other recent research on the topic and related issues and 2) identifies a gap in the research that motivates the proposed doctoral research;
- has provided a detailed account of research methods;
- has included a letter of support from a supervisor attesting to the fact that the applicant has advanced to candidacy or is at dissertation stage; and
- shows scholarly and professional promise, as judged from the short CV.

Common Reasons Proposals Are Not Funded

The most common reasons for not funding DDG proposals are the following:

- the student is not a doctoral student,
- the student is not yet far enough along in his or her doctoral studies,
- the proposal is off topic,
- the proposal does not fit with any of TIRF's research priorities,
- the proposal has not been carefully proofread,
- the proposal is poorly written and organized; we recommend that students have their research supervisors read their proposals before submitting them to TIRF, or
- TIRF's guidelines have not been followed carefully.

DDG Application Procedures

- The deadline for receipt of complete proposals is **May 15, 2010** (11:59 p.m., Mountain Daylight Time—Canada/USA).
- All applications must be submitted electronically by email using a single Word document as an attachment that includes all parts of the completed application. Please send completed applications to the TIRF Research Advisory Committee at ddgapply@tirfonline.org. Faxed or mailed applications will not be accepted.
- Please indicate "TIRF DDG Application" in the Subject heading of the email. This format will help us to review applications in a timely way.
- Please do not submit your application more than once. If you submit multiple copies of your proposal, only the first one received will be processed.
- Acknowledgement of the receipt of applications will be sent to the email address from which the application was sent unless otherwise noted on the cover sheet.
- Finally, if you have any difficulties submitting your proposal electronically, please send an email to ddgapply@tirfonline.org using the subject heading "Technical difficulty." If you have not had your application acknowledged within 48 hours of sending it, please contact MaryAnn Christison rac@tirfonline.org using the Subject heading "TIRF Inquiry." Late submissions will not be accepted.

Applications must comply with the required proposal format (see below). Applications that do not follow these specifications or are incomplete will be rejected. Please do not exceed the page lengths indicated for each section of the proposal.

DDG Grant Adjudication

Research proposals will be adjudicated by the TIRF Research Advisory Committee (RAC), composed of at least three currently appointed TIRF trustees. In addition to the RAC's internal review of proposals, the RAC may elect to send proposals to external reviewers with relevant

academic expertise. The TIRF Research Advisory Committee retains final authority over all decisions concerning recommendations for funding made to the TIRF Board of Trustees.

We regret that we are unable to provide feedback to unsuccessful applicants about the reasons for which they were not funded. Unfortunately, because of the limited funds available, not all applications worthy of funding will be approved for funding; in 2010, we anticipate funding five DDGs, based on the merit of proposals and other fiscal considerations.

Notification of Results and Disbursement of Funds

Notification of results for DDG Awards will be made by **August 1, 2010**. The project summaries of successful proposals and photographs of grant recipients will be posted on the TIRF Web site by October 31, 2010.

For DDG award recipients, progress reports are expected at approximately six-month intervals: by February 1, 2011; August 1, 2011; and February 1, 2012.

Funding will be paid out in three installments.

1. Once researchers accept a TIRF grant, they will receive half of the award. At that time, they will also indicate what they expect to accomplish by the time their first interim report is submitted (i.e., the milestones).
2. In the first interim report, awardees must note which of their research “milestones” they have reached. At that point, the second funding installment will be sent. This installment will include all but \$500 of the remaining monies.
3. When the research project is completed and the final two to five-page final report has been submitted and accepted by the RAC, the third and final payment of \$500 will be sent to the awardee. The two to five-page final report should summarize the research findings for a general audience with implications for practitioners and policy-makers. References must also be included. In addition, TIRF also requires a final financial report documenting how the funding was used. Final reports for DDG awards for the 2010 competition are due by August 31, 2012. Final reports should be sent to rac@tirfonline.org.

TIRF reserves the right to use information from project proposal summaries and final reports for dissemination on its Web site and in other media. Copies of dissertations and other publications should be sent electronically to rac@tirfonline.org. In addition, all publications and professional presentations resulting from a TIRF grant must acknowledge the support of TIRF.

TIRF Doctoral Dissertation Grant 2010 Proposal Format

Items 1-5 must be sent in a single document.

1. Cover page must contain each of the following pieces of information.

- Title of project
- Type of grant application: **Doctoral Dissertation Grant.**
- TIRF Priority to be researched. NOTE: DDG applicants may choose from any of TIRF's research priorities; however, those given preference in the 2010 DDG competition are highlighted below.
 - **Bilingualism/plurilingualism in Business and Industry**
 - Effective Grammar Instruction for English Language Learners in Primary and Secondary Education Context
 - Integration of Grammar Instruction into EFL Curricula: Approaches and their Effectiveness
 - **Language Assessment**
 - **Optimal Uses of Technology in the Delivery of English Language Instruction**
 - Students' Age and Effective English Language Education in Schools
 - **Teacher Education**
- Name and affiliation(s) of applicant.
- Email, phone, fax, and mailing address of applicant. It is crucial that all email addresses for applicants are correct; be sure to indicate the email address to which you would like the results of the competition to be sent.
- Name, address, and email address of the research supervisor or advisor.

2. Project summary (200-250 words): NOTE: The summaries of successful proposals will be made public on the TIRF Web site as well as through other media. Please prepare your summary with this in mind, and please proofread all proposals carefully.

3. Detailed proposal (6 pages maximum, single-spaced, 12-point font), using the following section headings:

- **Statement of research issue.** State the problem and relationship to TIRF's current research priority.
- **Theoretical background.** Please integrate within this section the research literature that you are drawing upon to situate your study; you must convince us that you are familiar with current, relevant research in the area of the Research Priority.
- **Research methodology**
- **Implications.** Provide a statement of the likely implications of the proposed research for theory, policy, and/or practice
- **Timetable** (in months)
- **Plans for dissemination.** Include the scholarly conferences at which you would likely present the results and journals or other forms of publication that would be appropriate. TIRF must be acknowledged in all types of dissemination.

- **Research ethics.** Provide a brief explanation of how principles of research ethics will be upheld. If you are not familiar with guidelines for ethical research, you may wish to consult the Informed Consent Guidelines published at the back of each issue of the *TESOL Quarterly* or in most current research methods textbooks in education.
- **References.** Provide a selected, up-to-date list of references (1-2 pages maximum). References are not included in the 6-page limit for your proposal.

4. Detailed budget and brief rationale for all items (2 pages maximum)

- Itemized expenses (e.g., personnel, transportation, communication, supplies and other expenses, dissemination).
- Please note that computer hardware is not an allowable budget item. Conference travel is limited to \$2,000. Travel for data collection and/or required researcher-meetings is allowable. A rationale is needed for all budget items. Please be as specific as possible and indicate all costs in USDs.
- If applicable, provide a statement about other research funding applied for or received for the same project or for a larger/related study, and how the TIRF grant will make a unique contribution to the successful completion of the project. (NOTE: Applicants are permitted to seek or obtain additional funds to complete the research project, but should explain the nature and function of the funding from the different sources.)
- For other information about allowed/disallowed budget items or limits, please see TIRF Grant Features section, above.

5. A short, current CV for the applicant (2 pages maximum; the CV should be contained within the master document; please do **not** send separate attachment files for each section of the proposal, including this one.)

6. Letter from doctoral supervisor

NOTE: An email letter (one page maximum) must be sent by the doctoral student's supervisor directly to TIRF ddgapply@tirfonline.org with the Subject heading "Supervisor's Letter for [your name]" by the application deadline to verify the student's status in the program. Please do not submit letters from more than one supervisor. To be eligible, students must have completed all doctoral program requirements apart from the dissertation and must have had a research proposal or topic already approved by a supervisory committee or appropriate Faculty Board. The letter from the research supervisor should comment on the student's readiness and ability to undertake the proposed TIRF project. The supervisor should also indicate whether s/he has read the proposal that is being submitted.