

## Small Grants 2015 Call for Proposals

Blacksmith Institute for a Pure Earth announces Small Grants 2015. Blacksmith Institute for a Pure Earth focuses on the scope, effects and remediation of toxic pollution in countries belonging to WHO Mortality Strata B, C, D and E<sup>1</sup>. The 2015 Small Grants program will provide manuscript support. Grants are intended to support researchers to write up findings for publication in an international, peer-reviewed journal.

**Description:** Proposals encompassing point source pollution, related health impacts, environmental control and/or remediation technology are invited. Pollutants of interest include heavy metals, pesticides, radionuclides, dioxins, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), volatile organic compounds (VOCs), air particulates (from point sources only - PM10 and PM2.5), and other severe and persistent toxins. Proposals focusing on lead, chromium, cadmium, mercury, radionuclides or arsenic are particularly encouraged.

Projects relating to the following will *not* be funded:

- greenhouse gases or climate change impacts, adaptation or vulnerability,
- sewage and non-toxic municipal waste,
- ambient air pollution (such as particulates from power plants and vehicles)
- biological or chemical oxygen demand (BOD and COD),
- noise pollution,
- pollution which has no potential human health impact, or for which there is no pathway to humans.

Research **must** relate to countries that belong to WHO Mortality Strata B, C, D or E<sup>1</sup>.

**Eligibility:** All types of institutions are eligible to apply. Individuals are eligible to apply. Small Grants are open to all nationalities and disciplines. Applicants from countries that belong to WHO Mortality Strata B, C, D or E<sup>1</sup> are especially encouraged to apply. Applicants must submit findings for publication in a peer-reviewed journal. Applicants and Principal Investigators should have a Masters, PhD, MD or other graduate-level degree in a relevant field. In all cases, applicants must show proof of sufficient research capacity.

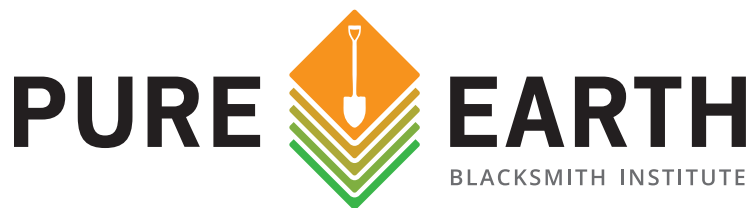
**Awards:** Awards for Small Grants 2015 are up to USD1,000. Up to 20 grants will be awarded. Manuscripts must be completed by May 15, 2015, and submitted to a peer-reviewed journal by June 15, 2015. The deadline for application is Monday, January 12, 2015. Successful applicants will be notified by February 2, 2015.

**Application Requirements:** Applications should be no longer than 4 pages and include:

- Administrative information (details of applicants, including past experience, research and qualifications)
- Research summary (study rationale, objectives/testable hypotheses, study design, methods (field, laboratory, data management, statistical analysis), expected outcomes and results dissemination). This can be in the form of a first draft manuscript if available

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<sup>1</sup> World Health Organization, *Global Burden of Disease Regions used for WHO-CHOICE Analyses*.  
<http://www.who.int/choice/demography/regions/en/index.html>



(4 page limit would be waived if a first draft manuscript is sent)

- Proposed budget (include salary support needed, if any, during the manuscript writing period, as well as anticipated publication-related charges, such as copy editing, translation, or page charges)
- Include references cited if available (Note: budget and references/citations do not count towards the 4 page limit)
- Rigorous methodology is crucial. Appendix A includes application requirements for reporting on methods used.

*Blacksmith Institute for a Pure Earth takes plagiarism seriously.* Proposals showing evidence of plagiarism will be disqualified from consideration. For definitions and help avoiding plagiarism, visit [www.plagiarism.org/](http://www.plagiarism.org/).

**Review Criteria:** Grant selection will be based on (note: not in order of importance):

- Relevance and originality of the research questions
- Public health significance
- Internal validity, scientific rigor of proposed methods
- Ethical considerations
- Budget and value for money
- Potential for publication

**Conditions of Grant:** For institutional applicants, evidence of approval from the host institution is required (note: letters of support do not count towards the 4 page limit). Both project and financial reports will be required at the end of the funding period. Awardees are responsible for ensuring that ethical issues relating to the research, if any, are identified and brought to the attention of Blacksmith Institute for a Pure Earth. In particular, if the research involved human subjects (see U.S. definition of human subjects research at <http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/humansubjects/guidance/45cfr46.html>), applicants must demonstrate proof of approval by the appropriate human subjects ethical review authority in the host country (note: approval letter(s) from human subjects research authority(ies) does not count towards the 4 page limit). Applicants are also responsible for disclosing any potential conflict of interest at the time of application.

**Application Submission:** Please send proposals and direct questions to Sandy Page-Cook at [sandy@blacksmithinstitute.org](mailto:sandy@blacksmithinstitute.org). Unless otherwise indicated, information contained in the application is regarded as confidential.

**Timeline**

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Deadline</i>
Closing date for applications	January 12, 2015
Applicants notified	No later than February 2, 2015
Projects completed	No later than May 15, 2015
Final reports due	No later than June 15, 2015

## **Appendix A – Methods Requirements**

The study hypotheses should be clearly stated. Details should be provided on the specific statistical tests used to test each hypothesis.

*If environmental and/or biological sample collection was done*, be sure to include the following details in Methods:

- A description of the site selection: Why was the particular site/sites chosen? What are the geographic boundaries? How were they delineated?
- If human subjects were included, include a description of the study population and sample selection method: Is it a randomized probability sample or a convenience sample? How specifically was the sample enumerated? How were subjects recruited? Which applicable ethical clearances were obtained prior to recruiting subjects? How was informed consent obtained?
- If environmental samples (but no human subjects) were included, what was the sampling methodology (i.e. are the samples designed to be geographically representative?)
- A description of the sample size calculation formula used (or other sample size justification) and target sample size to test the main study hypothesis/hypotheses

*If laboratory analyses were done*, include detailed descriptions of the relevant quality assurance/quality control (QA/QC) procedures that were followed, including but not limited to:

- A description of the laboratory's experience analyzing the proposed analytes in the proposed sample media, including any current international certifications the laboratory holds, and/or participation in international laboratory round-robin activities. Attach copies of any relevant laboratory certifications to your proposal (these will not count towards the four page limit)
- A description of how sampling equipment was prepared/cleaned to avoid contamination, including the analytical grade and manufacturer of any solvents/reagents used [e.g., "Trace Metals Grade nitric acid (J.T. Baker, Inc.)"]
- The limit of detection for each analyte/medium and how it was calculated
- How background contamination was evaluated (e.g., through collection of field, laboratory, and solvent blanks)
- Methods for demonstrating accuracy (e.g., used of isotopically labeled or non-labeled internal standards, analysis of certified reference materials [CRM], analysis of matrix spike samples) whenever possible, international CRMs should be used over in house spiking to demonstrate method accuracy, since spiking samples does not always allow for accurate replication of matrix effects; if the laboratory does not have the relevant CRM(s), then a line item should be included in the budget for CRM purchase/shipping)
- Methods for demonstrating precision (e.g., field and laboratory duplicates or triplicates)

For guidance on QA/QC data and procedures for laboratory data, see <http://www.epa.gov/region9/qa/pdfs/lrdv.pdf>.

*If questionnaire data are included:*

- If a standardized questionnaire was used, include a description of the source of the questionnaire (with proper citation) and what it was originally designed for
- Or, if you designed the questionnaire yourself, a list of the questions to be asked, the source/citation of any questions you will adopt verbatim from somewhere else (such as a



national census), and a description of how you pre-tested/pilot tested the questionnaire (note: you may attach a copy of the questionnaire and it will not count towards the 4 page limit).

- A description of the original language of the questionnaire and any translations/back-translations that were performed
- A description of who conducted the interviews and how interviewers were be trained (e.g., such as training on ways to minimize the number of missing responses without coercing subjects or making them feel uncomfortable)
- A description of methods such as double key entry and/or other methods you used to minimize error in electronic coding of questionnaire data