CELSS Grants for Graduate Student Dissertations

The Columbia Experimental Laboratory in the Social Sciences (CELSS) provides funding to support PhD dissertation chapters that utilize experimental data. Applications are accepted both for studies conducted in the lab and for studies conducted online.

Eligibility
Applicants must be advanced doctoral students at Columbia in Economics, Political Science, SIPA, the Business School, Sociology or in a department affiliated with ISERP.

The dissertation funds are restricted to doctoral students who have previously obtained a graduate student seed grant from CELSS and can demonstrate that the project has high probability of becoming part of their dissertations. In addition, the proposal must have been presented at a workshop or colloquium with some faculty presence (for example, in the Economics department: a field colloquium, CELSS Experimental Lunch, the Cognition and Decision Lab meeting, etc.).

Application
The deadline for responding to this call is February 21, 2024.

The application must include the following, separate documents:

1. a cover letter, which states the name of the workshop or colloquium where the proposal has been presented;
2. a paper or presentation slides summarizing the results from the initial CELSS grant;
3. an appendix with experimental materials;
4. the budget (i.e., a summary table with a clear description of how the grant funds would be spent on participant payment, fees, etc.);
5. the applicant’s CV;
6. a statement detailing additional sources of funding for the project (successful, pending, and rejected applications);
7. the endorsement of the student’s thesis adviser.

The cover letter (maximum 2 pages) should outline briefly the basic rationale of the research, the question under study, and the experimental procedures. Please note that longer proposals will not be considered.

The appendix should contain materials that demonstrate what the experiment will look like. Examples of such materials include experimental instructions, questions, and screenshots.

The maximum budget is $4,000. All applicants must show a good faith effort of obtaining funding from external sources.

The endorsement of the thesis adviser can be an email to the CELSS director (celss-director@columbia.edu), CCing the CELSS manager (celss-manager@columbia.edu). The adviser needs to state explicitly that he/she (1) is familiar with the work done so far, (2) is confident that the project can produce a high-quality dissertation.
chapter; (3) will be responsible for following the progress of the project. Please also include a copy of this email in the application package.

The applicant should send the documents, in a single compressed folder, to the CELSS manager at celss-manager@columbia.edu. The subject of the e-mail should be “Application for CELSS Funding; Dissertations” and the name of the compressed folder should be “LastnameFirstname_CelssFundingApp”.

Notes:
1. Unless part of a class, any experiment run on CELSS’ subject pool or with financial support from CELSS requires approval by the Institutional Review Board (http://www.columbia.edu/cu/irb/) and the respect of CELSS rules (https://celss.iserp.columbia.edu/research-projects/rules).
2. The funding allocation expires at the end of the second semester following the grant (here: May 2025). Unused funds will be reappropriated by CELSS.
3. CELSS requires that all experiments pay participants an average of $15/hr and a minimum of $1.
4. CELSS generally does not fund field experiments. Please contact the CELSS manager at celss-manager@columbia.edu if you’re unsure whether your experiment falls under this category.

Requests for clarification
Questions concerning this call for proposal and the use of the lab can be addressed to the CELSS manager, at celss-manager@columbia.edu, or to the CELSS director at celss-director@columbia.edu.