Below are is a list of questions on the Grants-in-Aid (GIAR) program posed at the February 26, 2015 Google Hangout. We were unable to answer all the questions during the Hangout, so we have included our responses here. We are still working on a few questions. Please check back for a completed list of responses.

General Grant Writing and Eligibility

1. **What are our chances if we are not a member of Sigma Xi?**
   o *Grants are first reviewed based on their scientific merit and how well they match the funding restrictions of the GIAR program. Applications flagged for funding are then matched against two pools of money, one limited to applicants who have a member connection to Sigma Xi and another that has no membership limitation. A meritorious application is more likely to receive full funding if the applicant is a member or their research advisor is a member. Membership is not required to apply. (Kevin)*

2. **Doe receiving a GIAR increase my chances of becoming a Sigma Xi member?**
   o *Sigma Xi considers receipt of a GIAR grant as a good indication that the student is a promising researcher. We invite successful applicants who are not members to join the Society. (Kevin)*

3. **If we just write about a smaller part of a larger thesis project, do we need to mention that it is part of a larger project? Or do we just write it as if it is the only project we are working on?**
   o *We typically suggest that you allude to the larger project, especially if it will put the subject of your grant application in context. Having said that, you should focus most of your writing about the methods (etc.) related to the specific part of the project for which you are requesting funding. (Kevin)*

4. **Is there a preference between stating hypotheses upfront, or presenting them as questions originally, then stating hypotheses and/or expectations later in the grant?**
   o *No preference – either format is acceptable. (Kevin)*

5. **What types of proposals are generally accepted in the field of astronomy? Does it hurt your chances of being funded if your grant is purely for travel in this area of research?**
   o *We frequently fund travel in astronomy, it is one of the most commonly requested expenses. (Kevin)*

6. **For the recommendation letter, should I get the letter from my advisor and upload online on my own?**
   o *When you submit your application, you will be asked to provide your advisor's email address. The application software will contact your advisor with instructions on how to submit the letter. (Kevin)*

7. **If I am going to graduate this summer, am I eligible for applying for this grant?**
   o *We typically require that an applicant be enrolled in a degree seeking program at the time they receive a grant. (Kevin)*

8. **Is a project less likely to get funded if the total project will require a lot of funding? For example, if the project we're proposing costs $30,000 and we're just getting started, $1000 may not get us very far. Is this looked at unfavorably?**
   o *Response pending*

9. **Are field guides in remote and difficult terrains considered assistants?**
   o *Typically they would be considered assistants for the purposes of the GIAR program.*

10. **I am submitting an application for the Grants in Aid of Research and have a quick question about word count for the Proposed Investigation. Do the in-line numerical citations count toward the total word count? I have 499 words without these numbers, but 520 words when my 21 in-line citations are counted as words.**
    o *Citations and captions for tables/figures (within reason) do not count toward the 500 word count limit. (Kevin)*

Review Process
1. **Will my proposal be reviewed by individuals within my discipline (such as ecology)?**
    o *Proposals are assigned to readers with a background in the same general field of research. (Kevin)*
2. **Do you provide feedback on submitted proposals so applicants can gain insight into what worked or didn't work for their application?**
    o *Yes, reviewers use a feedback rubric and submit comments. All of these can be viewed online by the grant applicant after reviews are completed. Reviews are only available for a limited time before the grant applications is archived, typically just before the start of the next grant cycle. (Kevin)*
3. **If we applied before and want to re-apply now, how do we know if our score on the previous submission is good enough to resubmit?**
    o *Scores on the feedback form are just a tool to communicate how effective parts of the grant submission were in the minds of the reviewers. We do not have cutoff scores for the purposes of making awards. You should use the individual ranks of each criterion to determine if you should tweak your hypothesis/research purpose statement, methods, budget (etc.) when resubmitting your proposal. (Kevin)*
4. **Often when I get reviews of my proposal, I get conflicting responses, where one person thinks I did something well, while another reviewer thinks I did that same thing poorly. Do you have any advice for how I can attempt to satisfy multiple reviewers?**
    o *Response pending*
5. **If there is a large disparity in the scores received, ie: a 29 and a 20, does the application ever go to a 3rd reviewer?**
    o *Occasionally we do assign a third reviewer to a proposal if the original reviewers are not able to make a final funding decision based on the merits of the proposal…or if a specific third reviewer has expertise that may assist in the review of the proposal. This third reviewer generally serves in an advisory capacity to the first two reviewers. (Kevin)*
6. **Do you consider a balance between science and engineering when funding different projects?**
    o *We fund based on a percentage of applications received. If our target is 20% then we would fund 20% of applications in every field. There are a few exceptions (Astronomy and vision research) where additional funds increase our funding percentages. (Kevin)*

Budget & Grant Management
1. **What supplies can sigma xi "not fund"?**
    o *We do not fund standard lab equipment, educational programs, short courses, workshops etc.*
    o *We do not support tour guides, assistants, guides etc.*
    o *We do not pay manuscript costs*
    o *We do not pay institutional overhead*
    o *We do not fund more than two GIARs (Emma)*

2. **Can we request funds to cover the travel expenses of research assistants?**
   - *Sorry, we only can support your own travel. (Emma)*

3. **Question about what to focus on for the budget: my fieldwork budget is around $10,000.00, involves travel to another country, and includes research at several different sites in this country - would I be better off selling. this as one big project and asking for $1000.00 to cover travel costs to get there, or focusing on one of these sites as a 'mini-project' and asking for $1000.00 to enable the research at this site? Not sure if it.**
   - *There is no perfect answer to this question. I would try it both ways and see which is more coherent and persuasive. It depends on the context of your project, I have seen both approaches succeed and create compelling funded projects, and other times I have seen both approaches fail. (Emma)*

4. **Are field guides in remote and difficult terrains considered assistants?**
   - *I'm afraid so, this means we do not support them. (Emma)*

5. **I'm doing a community-based archaeological research project. The community is economically disadvantaged and has very little in the way of "standard" scientific equipment. Can I receive funding for very basic field and lab equipment?**
   - *I have two answers to this question. Firstly, there is no universal concept of what basic supplies entail. This is why we allow you to use the budget section to justify your purchases, especially if they might be considered "basic".*
   - *We fund archaeology as a subset of Anthropology submissions. (Emma)*

6. **Does the receiver of the grant have to provide receipts for the equipment asked for in the budget? Are applicants able to purchase it before finding out about the grant?**
   - *The reporting requirements for a GIAR do not include the submission of receipts. Typically we prefer not issue grants as a reimbursement for previous expenses, but exceptions can be made. Contact the program manager if you have a situation where the grant might be issued after you need to make a purchase. (Kevin)*