

Request for Book Grant Proposals

“Science, Philosophy and Theology Book Grants for Latin America”

Science, Philosophy and Theology in Latin America

The Ian Ramsey Centre for Science and Religion
University of Oxford

Aim and summary

The Ian Ramsey Centre for Science and Religion (IRC) at the University of Oxford is pleased to offer 10 grants of **U\$S6,000** to University Libraries in Latin America to purchase an interdisciplinary collection of volumes at the intersection of science, philosophy and theology. Grant award winners will have up to September 2017 to complete the purchase of the collection. Grants will be awarded by competitive evaluation on the basis of academic institutional commitment. Applicants should submit proposals by **15 December 2016**.

Eligibility

Latin American University libraries may apply for these grants, providing that a university faculty, centre, or institute of that University supports the application. The proposed collection of volumes to be purchased should engage with issues at the interplay between science, philosophy and/or theology and the themes are broadly included in the IRC project theme “Perspectives on Life, Persons and the Cosmos”.

Topics

The key topics and themes of the books purchased should fall within the broad scope of the IRC project as a whole, and thus involve some interdisciplinary component. The detailed list of volumes will be determined by the applicants in dialogue with their libraries, closely following, but not limiting to, the suggestions expressed by the IRC in the list [available on the website](#). The final collection must fit the John Templeton Foundation’s mission, avoiding volumes supporting ‘creationism’ or ID, and excluding books focussed principally on environmental questions and issues.

The following questions are intended to stimulate and guide choices of volumes, but applicants are welcome to address other questions within these general themes. If you have any doubt, please contact the IRC:

- The Origin and Concept of Life: What is natural, human, and divine life, how do we recognize life, and what do we know or could we know of the origins of life?
 - Can a ‘nature’ be distinguished adequately from a ‘machine’? Is some form of teleology required to distinguish a nature adequately from a machine?
 - Does matter have a propensity for life? Is matter necessary for any being that could be described as alive, in the broadest sense of the term?
 - Is there more than one ‘tree of life’ on earth and how might we test this? Are there philosophical and theological implications for more than one tree of life?

- The Brain, the Mind, and the Human Person: Are persons their brains and, if not, how can science, philosophy and theology promote a more adequate understanding?
 - What am ‘I’? Am I to be identified with part of my physical being and, if so, which part? What are my boundaries, for example, can artefacts become extensions of ‘me’ in some limited sense?
 - Are advances in neuroscience helping to clarify the relation between the brain and the mind, and are there also growing sources of confusion regarding this relation?
 - Does the cognitive science of religion have implications for the rationality of theism, atheism, or more specific religious commitments?
- The Place of the Person in the Cosmos: Are ‘persons’ irreducible in the cosmos, and are persons irreducibly important?
 - Among the possible meanings of the term ‘creation’ by a personal God, which, if any, are most appropriate for understanding the origin of the cosmos today?
 - Does the philosophy of the person, especially in second-personal terms, have relevance to understanding physical theories, e.g. quantum mechanics?
 - How might the investigation of the cosmos promote personal happiness, considering such fulfilment from a theological, materialistic or other perspective?

Prospective applicants are strongly encouraged to visit the project’s website for a more detailed list of possible research questions to guide the choice of purchases.

Monetary amount

The book grants will be of U\$S**6,000**. Purchases must be finalised by 30 September 2017.

Proposal submission instructions

Prospective applicants should notify the IRC of their intention to apply by 20 November 2016. For the final proposal, which must be received no later than **15 December 2016**, applicants are required to submit, in English, Spanish or Portuguese, the following documents:

- An application form (which can be downloaded [from the website](#)), with all the following fields completed:
 - principal contact
 - name and basic details of the institution;
 - justification statement for the proposed collection of books;
 - faculties, centres, or institutes that will benefit from the collection (which and how will they benefit);
 - relation to the IRC project themes (life, persons, and the cosmos);
- Statement of support from the faculty, centre, or institute (as appropriate);
- Statement of support from the director of the library;
- The list of proposed books, using the selection list [available on the website](#). Follow the instructions in the selection list to produce your own selection.

Application materials should be submitted via email to latin.america@theology.ox.ac.uk with the subject line: “**Science, Philosophy and Theology Book Grant Application**”.

The IRC will announce the results of the applications by 28 February, 2017.

Selection criteria

Proposals will be rated by a panel of IRC members and external assessors in the United States and Europe according to the following criteria:

- high institutional academic commitment to science, philosophy, and theology;
- quality of the proposed collection;
- engagement with up to date developments in science, philosophy and theology;
- quality of the justification statement;
- prospects for dialogue across disciplines, institutions, and confessions;
- potential for longer-term plans for institutional development

The justification statement must explain how the proposed collection meets these criteria.

Successful applicants' obligations

Successful individuals or research teams will be required to:

- purchase the proposed collection of volumes described in their proposal;
- prepare a brief statement in English for the IRC project website;
- publicise in their university newspapers the grant to acquire the new collection;
- submit a mid-term progress report;
- submit a final report.

Application process milestones

1. Applicants inform their intention to apply before 20 November 2016;
2. Applicants prepare documents for application;
3. Applicants submit documents before **15 December 2016**;
4. Assessment of applications;
5. IRC announces successful applications by 28 February 2017;
6. Grants are disbursed and collections purchased before September 2017.

Should you require further information about the application process, please refer to the Frequently Asked Questions below. If your question is not answered, please contact the IRC.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Who can apply?

Latin American university libraries may apply for these grants, providing that a faculty, centre, or institute of the same university supports the application. Applications must be made by the university libraries that will receive the books, not by individual scholars or research groups.

2. When is the deadline?

*The deadline for submissions is **15 December 2016**.*

3. Who should provide the supporting statement of the university library?

The institutional support should be made in the form of a scanned, signed letter by the relevant authority of the library that will receive the books.

4. Who should provide the supporting statement of the faculty, centre, or institute?

The institutional support should be made in the form of a scanned, signed letter by the relevant authority of the faculty, centre, or institute.

5. Which topics are acceptable?

The key topics and themes of the books purchased should fall within the broad scope of the IRC project as a whole, and thus involve some interdisciplinary component. The detailed list of volumes will be determined by the applicants in dialogue with their libraries, closely following, but not limiting to, the suggestions expressed by the IRC in the list [available on the website](#). The final collection must fit the John Templeton Foundation's mission, avoiding volumes supporting 'creationism' or ID, and excluding books focussed principally on environmental questions and issues.

6. Can my University library apply if I have received other grants from the IRC or have participated in other of the IRC project's activities?

Yes. There are no restrictions arising from participation in other IRC activities.

7. When would the grant begin?

Grants will begin by 1 March 2017 and must finish no later than 1 September 2017.

8. How will the grant be disbursed?

The host institution will receive a substantial portion of the grant after signing the contract with Oxford, and the balance before August 2017, upon reception of a short progress report.

9. Should the university library contribute to the collection in any way?

University libraries are not expected to incur any extra expense to purchase the collection, besides providing the facilities to keep the books publicly available. Nevertheless, the IRC encourages university libraries to collaborate in any other ways they see fit, and applicants should express this collaboration in the justification statement of the application.