The purpose of the SSEAC Cluster Research Grants is to provide a pathway for new academic projects in/about Southeast Asia or for scholars who are engaging in the region for the first time. In addition to supporting new research initiatives, these grants offer an opportunity for experimenting with new research ideas and eliciting feedback on them from the SSEAC community. The program provides grants of up to $10,000 for use in 2016-17. Five Cluster Research Grants (one for each of SSEAC’s clusters) will be awarded in Round One, 2016. For the purposes of the grant, Southeast Asia is defined as Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste and Vietnam.

Eligibility and Conditions

Applicants may only submit one application to the SSEAC Cluster Research Grants Scheme per funding round. Members of the SSEAC Executive Committee are not eligible to apply. Current Cluster Research Grant holders are also ineligible to apply.

Applications must:

- involve one or more full academic member(s) of SSEAC employed at the University of Sydney in a continuing position or a contract that continues until at least 31 December 2018. Academics on recurring annual research contracts will need to provide a letter of intent of employment signed by the head of their academic unit indicating they expect the applicant will continue to be employed until 31 December 2018.
- not be for projects which have previously been funded from any source (new projects that build on existing research are eligible)
- relate to one of the following cluster themes:
  - Economic and Social Development
  - Environment and Resources
  - Health
  - Heritage and the Arts
  - State and Society

Grant recipients will be expected to:

- provide six monthly progress reports
- have given an academic seminar within SSEAC on their project
- have written at least one op-ed piece based on their research for newspaper or online publication (SSEAC can assist with this process)
- provide evidence of submission of a manuscript in a quality academic journal or similar by December 2018

In cases where these requirements are not fully met, applicants will be ineligible to apply for any future financial support from SSEAC.
Criteria for Award

The applications will be assessed using the following criteria:

- research excellence of the project and feasibility within the scheme timeframe
- strength of track record relative to opportunity
- prospects for definite outcomes that will lead to ERA eligible publications and external funding applications (specifically, but not limited to ARC DECRA, Discovery, Linkage and/or Fellowship schemes)

Preference may be given to projects that involve collaboration.

Budget and Timeframe

The program provides grants of up to AU $10,000 for use in 2016-17. Funding may be used for travel for primary research and research assistance.

The following items cannot be funded by the SSEAC Cluster Research Grant:

- items of recurrent funding (continuing positions, PhD scholarships)
- equipment
- costs to fund the participation of academics from other institutions (aside from locally hired assistants when undertaking field research in Southeast Asia)
- conference attendance

In the case of estimates for travel accommodation etc., please attach quotes found on the internet (or otherwise) as evidence of estimates.

Funds will be accessible in June 2016 and must be spent by December 2017.

All grant recipients will be required to submit a final report by December 2017.

Submission and deadlines

Applications should be submitted to electronically sseac@sydney.edu.au by 5pm Friday 8 April, 2016.

We do not require paper copies of applications. The SSEAC Executive Committee reserves the right to specify how awards may be used.