



# WCS Graduate Scholarship Program

As part of a WCS strategy to invest in developing individual conservation leaders, the Graduate Scholarship Program provides access to international standard graduate education opportunities (masters or doctoral programs) to exceptional conservationists from Asia/Pacific, Africa, Latin America, and North American indigenous groups with interests in terrestrial or marine conservation issues at the local, regional, or national level. Scholars will be selected based on their exceptional abilities and potential to become leaders of the conservation movement in their home country.

**Depending on funding availability in any given year, the WCS Graduate Scholarship Program (GSP) offers the following awards:**

- 1) ***Christensen Conservation Leaders Scholarship*** – for applicants from Asia/Pacific, Africa, Latin America, and North American indigenous groups.
- 2) ***C.V. Starr Tiger Conservation Fellowship*** – for applicants from a tiger range country in Asia working on tiger conservation and/or who will study tigers.
- 3) ***Robertson Big Cat Conservation Fellowship*** – for applicants from a big cat range country in Asia, Africa or Latin America, or from a North American indigenous group, working on big cat conservation and/or who will study big cats.
- 4) ***Beinecke African Conservation Scholarship*** – for applicants from Africa.
- 5) ***Clive Marsh Conservation Scholarships*** – for applicants from Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam.
- 6) ***Tellus Leadership Scholarships*** – for applicants from Asia/Pacific, Africa, Latin America, and North American indigenous groups.

For information on scholarships available in any given year please see the contact information below.

## **Funding and Other Support**

Following the award of a scholarship, WCS initially assists each scholar in identifying appropriate institutions of study. Both the scholar's nominator (or another designated WCS field person) and the WCS Training & Capacity Building Program will provide advice and guidance to the scholar.

A WCS GSP scholarship covers the following (funding limits apply within certain categories):

- Graduate school application fees.
- Preparation and sitting fees for exams such as the GRE and TOEFL.
- Visa processing fees.
- English language training as needed.
- One round trip airfare.
- A textbook allowance.

- Laptop computer and printer.
- Settling in allowance.
- Health insurance as required.
- \$30,000 towards tuition, room, board and a stipend (GSP staff negotiate the exact arrangement, which is dependent upon the institution the scholar chooses to attend. Depending on the choice of university, a WCS scholar may need to secure additional funding in order to cover all their financial needs.).

### **Nominations and Eligibility**

Only nominated applicants will be considered. No unsolicited applications are reviewed or acknowledged.

WCS country program directors, or other agreed and designated nominators, may nominate two applicants per year per country using the nomination guidelines provided separately. WCS staff should coordinate with their NY Regional Program Director and/or Assistant Director(s) in selecting their nominees.

- Nominees must be a citizen of the country from which they are nominated.
- Affiliation of the nominee with WCS is not required; it is the responsibility of WCS field staff to identify and nominate the best candidates, regardless of the candidates' organizational affiliation.
- Nominees do not need to have been accepted on any graduate program in order to be eligible but should plan to begin studies no later than the fall of the year following their award. We do not fund scholars who have already begun their graduate program.

Completed nominations/applications should be submitted electronically to [wbanham@wcs.org](mailto:wbanham@wcs.org) unless prior permission for alternate submission is granted. For information on application deadlines in any given year, please see the contact information below. Each applicant will be considered for every award for which s/he is eligible; a single application to the WCS Graduate Scholarship Program is all that is required.

### **Selection and Scholarship Timeline**

A WCS Graduate Scholarship Program Committee will convene to review nominations/applications and select recipients for each available award. Notification of decisions will occur as soon as possible after the application deadline, usually no later than June.

The selected scholars are expected to immediately begin preparation for the graduate school application process, including the identification of appropriate graduate programs, registration for the required admissions tests, and completion of the required

applications for admission to programs of interest with a start date no later than the fall of the following year (under special circumstances a GSP scholarship can be used to start a graduate program sooner).

The first step in the process is often to prepare for and register for the TOEFL examination in early autumn, as needed. Students who plan to apply to institutions in the U.S. must also take the Graduate Record Exam (GRE) prior to the end of the year. Students whose first language is not English may need to take an English language course (at GSP's expense) prior to signing up for the TOEFL and GRE exams.

Any scholar wishing to extend their scholarship to start a graduate program after the fall of the following year will need permission from WCS.

\*Please direct all questions regarding the program to: Dr. Will Banham, Associate Director for Capacity Building at [wbanham@wcs.org](mailto:wbanham@wcs.org)