

Selection Criteria for Kerr-Fry Awards

The following principles should be kept in mind when considering applications:

1. Candidates should fulfil the 4 criteria stated in the bequest, ie
 - be of Scottish descent or birth
 - be over 25 years of age
 - be an ex pupil of George Watson's college (of at least 3 years standing)
 - be a graduate of the University of Edinburgh
2. The Committee should note the intention of the bequest "to help people who in later life wish to develop in various fields ... and who because of their circumstances are unable to give up their usual work in order to devote time, perhaps several years, to developing ideas, or for research or work or study" and the preference of such cases over "people who had a few months previously obtained a degree".
3. The Committee have expressed discomfort in the past over awarding monies to support a candidate undertaking a second degree, since it is not in a position to make good comparative judgements as would a body such as a Research Council. The Committee has preferred to support an element of a course such as a project or to support a student undertaking a different but parallel short course to enhance skills or understanding.
4. Where support is offered to a candidate undertaking a course or project with expenditure going beyond a year, the Committee recognise that renewal requests would need to be submitted and considered in the light of progress reports. However, it was also felt that a "moral responsibility to continue" was apt to develop and that this should be taken into account when the initial decision to fund was being taken.
5. Caution should be exercised in funding equipment of broad utility such as computers, cameras, etc. Appropriate contributions can be considered, reflecting the anticipated usage of the equipment directly on the project.
6. Likewise caution should be exercised in funding living costs for lengthy commitments, e.g. to degree programmes. Appropriate contributions can be considered for living costs during shorter training courses or periods of research in the field.
7. The committee would not normally consider awarding monies to a 'professional' researcher for work in his or her professional research area on more than two occasions. A 'professional' researcher is defined as someone who undertakes research as part of his or her main employment.