

Call for Applications



LATAM Bridges in The Epistemology of Religion <http://www.uh.edu/class/philosophy/latam/>

*Research Grants
September 2020 – September 2021*

The purpose of this research grant is to provide Latin American philosophers with an opportunity to complete an on-going project in the epistemology of religion. Applicants must be capable of reading and writing in English and are expected to complete their project during the one-year length of the Grant. Grantees will not be required to travel.

Research Topics

Science and Religion: the differences and/or similarities between religious beliefs and theoretical beliefs, the differences and/or similarities between the epistemic standards for the evaluation of these beliefs, the epistemic significance of the cognitive science of religion, evolutionary debunking, etc.

Evidence and Religious Belief: arguments for and against religious belief, the evidential balance resulting from arguments for and against religious belief, non-evidential reasons for rational belief or disbelief, how to take seriously the higher-order evidence of our epistemic limitations and fallibility, etc.

Epistemic Virtue and Belief: the epistemic virtues of religious belief and/or disbelief, the relation between virtues and religious rationality, the virtues or vices behind the transformative experience of conversion, the proper connection between epistemic humility and theism, atheism, or agnosticism, etc.

Social Epistemology and Belief: the epistemic value of religious testimony (e.g. about miracles or mystic experiences), the epistemic significance of religious diversity and peer disagreement, the proper role of epistemic authorities and/or exemplars, the nature of epistemic communities, etc.

Application Process

MA and PhD students can request *up to* U\$4K. Post-Docs can request *up to* U\$7K. Professors can request *up to* \$10K. Applicants may request personal funding for continuing their own research and/or funding for projects with broader activities and events. Either way, a full application will include the following:

1. A *Cover Letter* describing your project, your plans for completion in one year, and your expenses.
2. A *Reference Letter* from a professor or academic advisor endorsing your qualifications.
3. A *Writing Sample* of previous work (in either English, Portuguese, or Spanish).
4. CV and *Proof* of current enrolment or employment at a Latin American university.

In order to be given full consideration, all of these documents must be received **no later than July 31st**, at the following address: labridge@central.uh.edu. The subject of all emails should read: “[Applicant’s Last Name] - Research Grant”. Inquiries should be sent to that address as well.

Application Instructions

Applicant Profile: Applicants must be Latin American MA students, PhD students, post-docs, or early-to-mid career scholars (within 15 years of having received their PhDs), who are currently working in, or interested in starting to do work in, the epistemology of religion. Applicants must be based in Latin American institutions. Applicants must be able to read and write in English. The project completed during their grant year should lead to the production of at least one paper intended for publication in English.

Funding: Applicants may request funding for continuing their own research (the money could be used as personal support during the year) and/or funding for projects with broader activities and events. In both cases, a tangible academic product must be produced by the end. The committee may or may not award the full amount requested, and leftover funds need not be returned. Applicants will receive the money directly from the University of Houston and are expected to show evidence of the appropriate use of their funds at the end of their grant year.

Cover Letter: Cover letters should be no longer than 2 pages and should be saved as PDF documents. They should at least include comments on (a) the project the applicant plans on completing during the research grant, (b) a timeline of how the applicant plans on completing that project within a year, (c) an explanation of how the funds will be used, (d) the applicant's familiarity (if any) with analytic philosophy of religion, or analytic philosophy in general, and (e) the applicant's experience and competence with the English language. Cover letters should be sent by the applicant themselves, by July 31st, to the following address: labridge@central.uh.edu. The subject should read: "[Applicant's Last Name] - Research Grant".

Reference Letter: Reference letters should be no longer than 2 pages (single spaced) and should be saved as PDF documents. Reference letters should be requested from former professors, colleagues, or anyone who has had an academic relation to the applicant. Letters from relatives, friends, or non-academic acquaintances will not be accepted. Reference letters must at least answer the following questions: (a) For how long have you known the applicant? (b) In which capacity did you interact with the applicant? (c) What are the main positive research qualities you find in the applicant? (d) How would receiving this research grant help with the applicant's work? Reference letters should be sent by the letter writers themselves (*not by the applicant*), by July 31st, to the following address: labridge@central.uh.edu. The subject should read: "[Applicant's Last Name] - Research Grant".

Writing Sample: The writing sample should be a published or unpublished paper that is no longer than 25 pages (double spaced). A paper in the topics above is preferred, but not required.

Proofs: Proof of enrolment consists in a dated transcript (official or unofficial) from the home university. Proof of employment consists in a dated and signed letter from the department chair, in letterhead.

Selection Criteria: Applications will be judged by the project leader (Dr. Luis Oliveira), by the three local co-organizers (Dr. Agnaldo Portugal, Dr. Ignacio Silva, Dr. José Tomás Alvarado), and by the directors of the Rutgers Center for the Philosophy of Religion (Dr. Dean Zimmerman and Dr. Brian Leftow). They will judge according to the following criteria:

- Evidence of a serious and feasible project in one of the approved topics.
- A reasonable budget.
- Evidence of high-quality work in the past.
- Record of academic achievements.
- Familiarity with analytic philosophy and the epistemology of religion.

Applicants should explain how they meet these criteria in their cover letter. All inquiries about the seminars (or the project in general) should be sent to: labridge@central.uh.edu.