The BioLogos Foundation offers grants supporting research and network building among scholars, church leaders, and parachurch organizations to address theological and philosophical concerns commonly voiced by Christians about evolutionary creation.\(^1\)

**Research Grant Announcement**

The BioLogos Foundation offers funds for supporting research which seeks to:

- Address theological and philosophical concerns which certain branches of Christianity have about evolutionary creation. This work might be done in a tradition- or even denomination-specific manner.

- Explore and increase appreciation for how an evolutionary view of creation enriches Christian experience (e.g. worship) and theology (e.g. through an enhanced understanding of God as Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer).

- Explore ways in which a Christian worldview adds new dimensions to our understanding of the evolutionary process. In other words, does evolutionary theory “look different” when examined through the lens of Christian commitments (e.g. altruism, human uniqueness, moral and religious cognition, directionality and purpose)?

- Address means of constructively engaging Christian communities on matters that concern them about the compatibility of evolution and theology.

Grant amounts vary from $30,000 to $300,000 over 34 months. Young scholars are especially encouraged to apply. Proposals from teams—especially those which are inter-disciplinary in nature or focused on translation from the academy to the church and parachurch—are enthusiastically welcomed. We also invite proposals from well-established scholars who wish to explore a particular topic in depth.

**Research Grant Description**

The BioLogos Foundation, with the support of a generous grant from The John Templeton Foundation, is pleased to announce a grants program, “Evolution and Christian Faith,” for 2012-2015. The BioLogos Foundation invites young and established scholars, as well as church leaders and parachurch organizations, to apply for funds in order to explore:

- Theological and philosophical challenges created by the theory of evolution.

- Whether the theory of evolution can enrich Christian theology and experience.

- Whether the Christian worldview provides new insights into the evolutionary process.

- Effective means of helping Christians appreciate the conclusions of mainstream science, while also respecting their own theological tradition.
Pre-proposals are due by June 15, 2012 through an electronic portal. The portal for the pre-proposal application can be accessed at EvolutionChristianFaith.org beginning in early April. Successful applicants will be notified by August 1, 2012, and asked to submit full proposals no later than October 1, 2012. Final award decisions will be issued in early December, 2012, for research to begin no later than May 15, 2013.

Project Director: Darrel Falk, President, The BioLogos Foundation

Program Overview

A number of different views fall into the “evolutionary creation” category, but they all share two important ideas considered incompatible by other perspectives on origins: first, that God originally created and continues to sustain all that we see around us; and second, that all life forms today—including humans—have descended, through the cluster of processes we call evolution, from a common ancestor around three billion years ago.

These two ideas are held together by the suggestion that God initially created a set of natural processes and has continued to create, in no small part, through them. Evolution is a real process of immense importance, but far from being meaningless and mechanical as it is typically depicted in popular culture, it is God’s process, the means by which God carries out his providential purposes in creation.

While many think this closely-related suite of ideas constitutes the only viable alternative either to creationism or to atheistic evolutionism, there are many others who do not believe it is viable at all, at least not for Christians who accept the Bible as the inspired Word of God. There is a third, perhaps much larger group, that may concede evolutionary creation as a theoretic possibility but who for one reason or another do not find it convincing or compatible with Christianity. Understanding and engaging this latter group is one of the chief aims of the activities proposed here.

Many Christians remain skeptical about evolutionary creation because significant theological and philosophical challenges have not been adequately addressed, or at least adequately communicated. Much scholarly activity is required here. Work is also needed to demonstrate how understanding evolution as God’s mechanism for creation can actually enrich Christian theology and practice. Finally, it will be important to examine evolutionary theory itself to see what new insights emerge in light of Christian theology and philosophy.

Purpose

BioLogos exists to serve the church, so first and foremost this project must not only promote excellent scholarship but address questions that are relevant to church leaders and parishioners. For this project to be successful, translational potential will be as important as theological and scientific integrity. Two distinct sets of purposes—theoretical and practical—will be interwoven.

Second, it is important to facilitate the development of the next generation of science/faith scholars. The program will seek out promising young scholars and provide opportunities for them to interact extensively to build strong, supportive relationships.

Third, since this work is inter-disciplinary (science/theology or science/philosophy, for example), it is important to foster a broader knowledge base that ensures that many of the scholars are conversant in
areas outside their own primary discipline. Track 1 (described below) will include a week-long interdisciplinary course focused on theology, philosophy, Christian ministry, and the sciences. There will be three such courses, one each summer, the expenses thereof will be covered by BioLogos. Those who choose Track 1 will be expected to attend at least two.

Fourth, the program will encourage the synergy which flows from regular community interaction. All grantees will meet together at least twice, not only to allow them to interact directly with leaders in the field, but to provide opportunity for informal discussions with one another about their projects. As is the case with the week-long summer courses described above, BioLogos will cover the costs for grantees to attend these meetings as well.

Finally, the program is designed to deepen our understanding of answers to discipline-specific questions. Projects that seek to relate evolutionary creation to biblical studies, theology, philosophy, biology, history, sociology, Christian ministry, psychology, neuroscience and other areas, will be considered.

### Possible Topics

The number and diversity of possible topics for theoretical and practical scholarship is enormous. Below is a non-exhaustive list of topics that fall within the scope of the program:

**Biblical Theology**

- Theology of Creation (*creatio ex nihilo* and *creatio continua*)
- First humans / Adam and Eve
- The Fall and original sin
- The Fall and structure of nature
- Use of the Genesis narrative in the Pauline corpus as it relates to human evolution
- Nature of the *Imago Dei*
- Human uniqueness (distinct from above)
- Historicity of Genesis
- Evolutionary accounts of sexuality and biblical sexual ethics
- The theological implications of an ancient universe
- Development of new interpretive frameworks and hermeneutical models

**Philosophical Theology and Biology**

- Evolution and natural evil
- Design arguments / natural theology
- Trinitarian Theology and evolution
- Divine purpose and evolutionary history
- Divine action and evolutionary mechanisms
- Evolution and eschatology
- Evolution and love (e.g. parental attachment and conflict, social attachment, altruism)
- Evolutionary debunking arguments:
  - Evolution and moral realism
  - Evolutionary accounts of religion and the question of warranted belief
- Disentangling evolution from scientism/naturalism/materialism/reductionism
- Evolution and epistemology
**Ecclesiological Issues**

- Identifying tradition-specific theological barriers to accepting evolution
- Identifying concerns specific to church leaders related to evolution
- Identifying ways in which evolution enriches worship
- Communicating evolution to youth groups and/or children
- Preparing pastors to become better equipped to communicate the richness of evolutionary creation
- Preparing pastors for communicating with parishioners who seem hostile to evolution
- Seminary training about evolution
- Overcoming communication barriers
- Encouraging the Church to engage the life of the mind (in this case, specifically the science of evolution)

**History and Sociology**

- History of pro- and anti-evolution movements within Evangelicalism
- Reviewing different positions within the evolutionary creation umbrella and how they relate to other views (e.g. Intelligent Design)
- Anti-evolution as a social phenomenon
- Impact of evolution on the faith of science students
- Christian critique of sociobiology

**Psychology and Neuroscience**

- Various topics related to evolutionary psychology and behavior

**Approach**

We anticipate funding projects that explore consonance between evolution and Christian faith. Proposals will not be considered if they reject (or at least do not helpfully inform) historic, creedal Christianity (e.g. historical Resurrection, high view of Scripture, etc.) or if they reject the conclusions of mainstream science (e.g. old earth, common descent, etc.). Please note that this does not mean all grantees must be ardent supporters of evolutionary creation. Church leaders, for example, may be interested in exploring the ramifications for their tradition if evolution were true, even though they personally remain unsure. Also, teams may represent a variety of viewpoints.

**Program Tracks**

Applicants are invited to apply under one of the following three tracks:

**Track 1. Inter-disciplinary Scholarship**

This track focuses on both the collaboration between individuals in different disciplines and the development of projects at the interface of different content areas.
Each grantee (or team) will focus on a particular research question or project that spans two or more disciplines.

Each grantee (or team) will work towards the completion of one or more publishable peer-reviewed papers (or a book) at the conclusion of the program.

Each grantee (or team) will submit a minimum of one article (about 5000 words) suitable for a general audience per year for posting on the BioLogos website.

Each grantee (or team) will commit to attending at least two of three summer workshops aimed at developing a community of scholars and leaders interested in seriously addressing concerns related to evolutionary creation.

**Track 2. Intra-disciplinary Scholarship**

This track focuses on work done within a specific discipline.

- Scholarship will focus on one of three specific program objectives:
  - Exploring the implications of evolution for a discipline-specific question.
  - Exploring how evolution enriches Christian theology and practice.
  - Exploring how a Christian worldview leads to new biological insights.

- Each grantee (or team) will work towards the completion of one or more publishable peer-reviewed paper (or a book) at the conclusion of the program.

- Each grantee (or team) will submit a minimum of one article (about 5000 words) suitable for a general audience per year for posting on the BioLogos website.

- Each grantee (or team) will commit to attending at least two of three summer workshops aimed at developing a community of scholars and leaders interested in seriously addressing concerns related to evolutionary creation.

**Track 3. Translational Projects**

This track focuses on projects that encourage Christians, especially those within more conservative traditions to engage in meaningful and productive dialogue to reduce tensions between mainstream science and the Christian faith.

- Grantees may be pastors, denominational leaders, seminary administrators, leaders of parachurch organizations, or scholars, either well-established or early in their career. They may be individuals or teams of individuals with complementary interests and expertise.

- Grants may address issues specific to a particular theological tradition or they may address issues relevant to Christianity in general.

- Grantees may propose a project addressing specific practical concerns such as the following:
  - How might the discovery that God has created through an evolutionary mechanism enrich corporate worship?
  - What are the pastoral challenges associated with accepting the reality of evolution?
- How can evolution as God’s creative mechanism be most effectively communicated to children? To youth?
- How do certain ways of understanding science or the Bible contribute to a reluctance to accept evolution? What can be done to improve understanding?

- Grantees may produce sermons; lectures and presentations; church curricula; articles for journals, magazines, websites, and other church-related venues, including Christian radio and television; courses or curricula for seminaries, denominations, and campus ministries; and worship materials.

- Each grantee (or team) will submit a minimum of one article (about 5000 words) suitable for a general audience per year for posting on the BioLogos website.

- Each grantee (or team) will commit to attending at least two of three summer workshops aimed at developing a community of scholars and leaders interested in seriously addressing concerns related to evolutionary creation.

**ECF Summer Workshops**

Establishing a community of interacting scholars and church leaders is of critical importance to the success of the program. To that end, grantees will meet together for a series of summer workshops.

Each grantee will be asked to attend at least two of the three summer workshops. Beyond this, Track 1 grantees will meet together for an additional week at least twice. This extended program will be designed to foster an enhanced cross-disciplinary skill set.

The third summer will also include a large International Conference (open to all academics and church leaders, not just grantees).

In summary, all grantees will attend at least two of the summers (Track 1 grantees for 8-11 days; Track 2 and 3 grantees for 2-5 days):

**Summer 2013 Workshop** (date/location TBD)
- 2 days, all grantees
- 6 days, Track 1 grantees only

**Summer 2014 Workshop** (date/location TBD)
- 2 days, all grantees
- 6 days, Track 1 grantees only

**Summer 2015 Workshop** (date/location TBD)
- 2 days, all grantees
- 3 days, International Conference
- 6 days, Track 1 grantees only

**Number, Size, and Nature of Projects**

We will seek two different sorts of applicants—scholars and church leaders. In the former category, we will seek individuals with doctorates and faculty positions who have already established themselves as
scholars or who have letters of recommendation attesting to their potential. Successful applicants will have a track record for innovation and the ability to speak to the church. In the latter category, we will seek pastors, denominational leaders, or university and seminary administrators who have demonstrated an interest in scholarship and capacity for fruitful dialogue with scholars.

Scholars will be able to request grants between $30,000 and $100,000 for individual writing projects (time off from teaching in most cases). In some cases, major interdisciplinary team projects might be funded up to $300,000. The amount awarded at each level will depend on the applications received, but one possible breakdown would be:

- **40 grants @ $30,000 - $50,000 (~$1,500,000)**
  Although we want to reserve judgment as to how the funds will be allocated between Tracks 1-3, grants for young scholars will likely be around $35,000 each. These may cover summer salary totaling $21,000 over three summers, books, and general expenses. For established scholars and church leaders, smaller grants might include publication costs and release time for several courses or an annual one month sabbatical, respectively.

- **15 grants @ $50,000 - 100,000 (~$1,200,000)**
  These mid-size grants would include for individual applicants, for example, a sabbatical semester (~$50,000 to $70,000), summer salaries for three years (~$21,000 ), and publication costs. Alternatively small-scale collaborative projects would likely apply for this level of funding.

- **4 grants @ $100,000 - $300,000 (~$800,000)**
  These grants, reserved for interdisciplinary teams, would include, for example, a sabbatical, summer salary, or release time for 2-5 individuals, plus publication costs.

### Eligibility

Three types of individuals or teams may submit proposals:

- Young or established scholars with a PhD, an academic appointment in a college, university, or seminary, and a record of scholarly or popular publications

- Pastors and parachurch leaders (including seminary and denominational administrators) who have at least a Masters degree and who are interested in exploring how to reconcile mainstream science and Christianity

- Church or parachurch organizations which want to explore consonance between evolution and Christian faith

Although the program focuses on issues raised within the conservative Protestant tradition of Christianity, work from within other traditions (e.g. Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, and Judaism) will add to the conversation in important ways. Hence, we encourage scholars representing other theistic traditions to consider submitting proposals also.

Please note that for-profit companies are not eligible to apply. However, individuals who are part of a company may still apply if they can affiliate and have their grant administered by an academic institution,
church, or parachurch organization. Applicants may include work by companies as line items in their budgets.

Individuals who are not affiliated with a grant-administering institution (e.g. academic institution, church, non-profit) may not apply. We encourage interested individuals in this position to partner with others who are eligible.

BioLogos employees are ineligible for ECF funds, whether as project leader or as a consultant on another project.

Criteria of Merit

The following considerations will influence the award decision depending on the nature of the proposal. Please note that while Track 3 projects will naturally lend themselves to translation of ideas to the Christian community, all applicants, regardless of track, should strive to communicate the ecclesial relevance of their findings to the church in some way.

- Relevance and importance of the project topic
- Specificity of project design
- Clarity of assessment measures
- Extent to which the project addresses a need in the church
- Extent to which the project fills a significant void in our theoretical understanding
- Creativity and uniqueness of approach
- Long-term impact potential
- Track record of applicant(s)
- Potential for significant publication(s) or other project deliverables

Use of Grant Funds

Below are possible uses for grant funds. Please note that no more than 10% of a grant may be devoted to institutional overhead.

- Assistance in publishing books or generating other media
- Support for speaker series, courses, workshops, conferences, curriculum development, and/or website development
- Summer salary
- Release time during the academic year
- Support for a sabbatical
- Continuing education courses. Modest allowance for justifiable equipment, computers, and other supplies
- Modest travel allowance, including travel to access resources unavailable at the applicants’ home institutions, and travel for interdisciplinary teams to meet together in person (grantees need not include travel to required BioLogos workshops in their budget)
- Registration fees for meetings other than required BioLogos workshops
- If your project-related support needs are not listed here, please contact the grant administrator at ECF@biologos.org
Application Process

Award recipients will be chosen from applicants in a worldwide open competition administered by The BioLogos Foundation. Applicants first submit a pre-proposal and, if selected, then submit a full proposal. Below is the program schedule:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 15, 2012</td>
<td>Deadline for pre-proposal submission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 1, 2012</td>
<td>Invitations for full proposals issued</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 1, 2012</td>
<td>Deadline for invited full proposals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early December, 2012</td>
<td>Award announcements issued</td>
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<tr>
<td>Summer 2013</td>
<td>Workshop 1</td>
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<td>Summer 2014</td>
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<td>Summer 2015</td>
<td>Workshop 3 + International Conference</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 31, 2015</td>
<td>Research concludes</td>
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All proposal materials should be submitted through the grant portal, which for the pre-proposal stage can be accessed at EvolutionChristianFatih.org. Questions about the application process may be sent to ECF@biologos.org.

Pre-Proposal Stage
The following materials must be submitted no later than June 15, 2012 on the grant portal:

- Online application form indicating preferred track
- Curriculum vitae of the Project Leader and any team members (max three pages each)
- Narrative, not to exceed 1,500 words, including title, project summary, rationale, methodology, and outputs
- Budget (may be modified in full proposal)

Successful applicants will be notified by August 1, 2012, and invited to submit a full proposal.

Full Proposal Stage
If invited, the following materials must be submitted via the portal no later than October 1, 2012:

- Project summary, not to exceed 500 words, explaining the work and its significance to non-professionals, suitable for publishing on the web or inclusion in press releases should the proposal be funded
- Project narrative for the proposed research, not to exceed 6,500 words. The narrative should include the title, project summary, rationale, methodology, expected outputs (e.g. publications, presentations, and other approaches to dissemination of research findings), and expected outcomes
- Summary of previous work and related publications
- Detailed timeline including proposed outcomes
- Detailed budget over the life of the award, with justification for line items
- Two letters of recommendation sent directly from the recommender to the grant portal
- If seeking a sabbatical, a letter from a university administrator or church/parachurch organization addressing the likelihood that a sabbatical will be awarded is preferred but not required
Awards will be announced by early December 2012.

**Review Process**

The review process will be overseen by a panel of eight highly respected scholars and church leaders with expertise in diverse disciplines. Based on reviews, the panel will score and prioritize proposals and pass along recommendations to The BioLogos Foundation for notification and administration of the awards. For a description of the review process, please click [here](#).

**Notes**

1 “Evolutionary creation” is also sometimes called “theistic evolution.” On the BioLogos website, it is often also called “the BioLogos view” (See this [Question](#), for example.) BioLogos prefers the term “evolutionary creation” over “theistic evolution” because it rightly puts the emphasis on creation as the noun, using “evolutionary” as an adjective that describes the means of creating. (After all, we don’t talk about “theistic immunology” or “theistic physics.”) Furthermore, “theistic evolution” has historically been used in ways that sound almost deistic; as a newer term, “evolutionary creation” does not have this connotation.