Purpose
The purpose of this program is to make it possible for graduate students interested in Latin America and the Caribbean to carry out research in the field and to acquire key knowledge about the language, culture and geography; to gather field data; and to develop contacts with scholars and institutions in the field. A major priority of these grants is to provide graduate students with experience in developing independent research projects and conducting hands-on field research in Latin America or the Caribbean. It is expected that this pre-dissertation field research experience will make subsequent student dissertation proposals more competitive for external sources of funding. These grants are not a substitute for seeking dissertation funding from such external sources.

Eligibility
- You must be a doctoral or masters student in good standing. Preference is given to doctoral students in the early stages of their studies. Masters students are eligible to apply.
- You must travel abroad for at least two weeks (preferably one month), with travel completed before December 31, 2014.
- You are not a current Tinker grant recipient.

Amount of the Award - Grants will be limited to a maximum of $1,500. Proposed budgets should reflect the minimal amount required for travel and maintenance for at least 14 days in the field. The total travel time cannot exceed two months.

Application Deadline: March 31, 2014

Terms of the Award
- Awards will be based on travel costs to location. Students must travel to Latin America, where Latin America is defined as Spanish-and Portuguese-speaking countries of the Western Hemisphere. Excluded are projects focused on Spanish or Portuguese-speaking people within the United States (including Puerto Rico) and Canada.
- Funds may be used for airfare to an airport in the target country and for internal travel on public carriers (such as a bus to a city distant from the airport) to one’s final destination. An additional twenty-five percent of the ticket price may also be granted for maintenance and support. No awards will be made to support MSU study abroad programs or alternate spring break activities.
• Students must complete a brief report (no more than 5 pages) at the conclusion of their travel describing their project, activities, experiences, and achievement of objectives. Students must also present a copy of their airfare purchase prior to departure.
• Students are expected to present a brief oral report at the CLACS Seminar Series following travel.

Selection Criteria
• Evidence of academic preparation based on coursework performance and two letters of recommendation by MSU faculty, including the chairperson.
• A succinct pre-dissertation proposal (up to 5 pp) with evidence of a strong relationship between the proposed travel and the student’s graduate program of study.
• In cases of similar credentials, priority in selecting candidates will be given to applicants seeking a first experience in Latin America.

How to Apply
Applications can be downloaded at: http://latinamerica.isp.msu.edu/funding/tinker.htm
All materials should be sent electronically to the Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies at lewisd@msu.edu and clacs@msu.edu and should include:

1. One copy of the attached application filled out completely, accurately, and clearly. (Keep a second copy for reference.)
2. A five-page essay, double-spaced, or statement of purpose, describing your graduate program and how a Tinker Field Research Grant for pre-thesis/dissertation work will contribute to your educational program and a research plan that involves at least 2 weeks in the field, with travel completed by December 31, 2014.
3. Two letters of recommendation from professors in your program of study, including your major advisor (chair of committee).

Applications should be submitted electronically to lewisd@msu.edu and clacs@msu.edu by March 31, 2014. Please include TINKER GRANT APPLICATION in subject line.

For questions or more information contact:

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