

Summary

I am requesting funds to travel to the International Long Term Ecological Research (ILTER) Network Meeting in Chile. My poster, “Effects of plant-microbe interactions on intra- and interspecific competition on desert grasses”, has been accepted. This study examined how interactions between plants and soil microbes affect plant performance and alter competition between two plant species. Plant-soil microbe interactions have been suggested to facilitate coexistence between plant species in theory. However, this requires that interactions have frequency-dependent negative effects, whereas past studies have focused on only frequency-independent effects. *Mine is the first to quantify frequency-dependent and –independent effects on intra-and interspecific competition, and show that plant-soil microbial interactions facilitate coexistence in the Chihuahuan Desert grassland ecosystem.* This study is chapter 1 of my dissertation, the manuscript of which is in prep and would benefit from feedback.

Scientists from LTER sites all over the world will present research from their respective sites and coordinate international cross-site efforts at the ILTER meeting. This year’s conference, hosted by the Fray Jorge National Park site in Chile, has great potential for collaboration due to the semiarid steppe ecosystem at that site, which has ecological similarities to the Sevilleta LTER (SEV) site here. The meeting includes field trips where I hope to establish collaborations with Chilean colleagues for a comparative study between Fray Jorge and the SEV. In addition, as the graduate representative of the SEV this year, I am well-placed to demonstrate to the international and US LTER community the quality of graduate research conducted at the SEV despite our curtailed funding situation from the NSF. Lastly, I will explore future collaborations with potential post-doc mentors for an NSF international postdoc fellowship.

Budget

Item	Cost	Funding Source	Status
Airfare	\$1396	POA travel grant & GPSA SRG	Pending
On-site Registration	\$300	GPSA SRG & BGSA GRAC	Pending
Local transportation	\$50	Personal funds	
Lodging	\$93	Personal funds	
Meals	\$70	Personal funds	
Total	\$1909		

Budget Justification

1. Airfare

Round trip Albuquerque to Santiago on Aeromexico and American Airlines (cheapest option); search performed on google.com/flights on 13 September 2014.

2. Registration

Due to difficulties with international money wires (which include services fees that will make the early bird registration discount irrelevant), I will be paying for registration to the ILTER meeting on-site. Please see attached page for description.

3. Local transportation

The first half of the meeting will be held in Valdivia, Chile, which is 850km south of Santiago, where I will arrive and depart. A standard bus seat for the trip between Valdivia and Santiago is estimated at \$25, which is \$50 round trip. Transportation between the two halves of the meeting (Valdivia and Chiloe Island) will be provided by the ILTER meeting.

4. Lodging

- a) 12/1-12/4 in Valdivia \$16/night for 3 nights in shared bunk room (Aires Buenos Hostel). Total= \$48
- b) 12/4-12/8 in Chiloe Island \$15/night for 4 nights in shared bunk room (Hostal Vista al Mar). Total= \$45

5. Meals

All dinners are covered by the meeting. I estimate \$10 per diem max for the remainder of the expenses.

6. Funding Sources

I have applied to the Partners of the Americas (POA) travel grant from the ILTER (\$1000, submitted 5 Sep 2014), and will also apply to the UNM Graduate and Professional Students Association Student Research Grant (GPSA SRG, \$500, will submit by 3 Oct 2014). **I am requesting \$150 from the BGSA to help cover registration costs.** Requested and pending awards total \$1650 which will cover airfare and registration. The remaining deficiencies will come from researcher's personal funds.