

MTBC Antoniya Hubancheva Award

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Overview

Our mission at Merlin Tuttle's Bat Conservation is to inspire bat conservation worldwide. As such, MTBC is dedicated to sponsoring individuals aspiring to conserve bats. The Antoniya Hubancheva Award is made annually in the amount of \$5,000. MTBC is committed to increasing diversity in STEM and people of color, persons with disabilities, women, and LGBTQIA applicants are encouraged to apply. Requests for proposals (RFPs) will open October 1st and close November 1st of each year. Scholarships will be awarded in April of the following year and projects must begin within one year of award distribution. Awardees will be featured in MTBC's Newsletter, showcasing MTBC's commitment to supporting talented individuals in bat conservation.

Objective

The program supports individuals who will contribute to bat conservation through sound science or creative initiatives, cultivating emerging leaders who align with MTBC's mission and values. We aim to increase and improve bat conservation efforts worldwide and amplify their impact.

Eligibility Requirements

Applicants must utilize funds for a project that advances bat conservation, under one of the approved priorities. Projects must be under the guidance of a mentor or PI with a background relevant to bat conservation.

Conservation Funding Priorities

Merlin Tuttle's Bat Conservation proudly supports projects that directly promote conservation of bats across multiple disciplines. Funding is unavailable for travel or conference meetings. Examples of fundable research projects include, but are not limited to, documentation of the following:

- Knowledge of bat roosting or feeding habitat requirements
- Improving public perception of bats
- Crop protection
- Seed dispersal or pollination of ecologically or economically important plants
- Ecosystem roles that promote biodiversity
- Economic values of bat ecotourism
- Key factors influencing bat use of caves (i.e., air flow/temperature, entrance size, vegetational overgrowth/predation risk, human disturbance)

Application Procedures

All applications must be sent via [Google Form](#) by November 1st. A two-page proposal, CV, and three letters of recommendation must be included with the application. Successful proposals will outline the project background, location, objectives and research questions, methods, timeline, budget, expected outcomes and contribution to conservation, and plan for tracking project success. Additional materials, such as examples of previous work may be accepted to enhance an application. All submitted materials must be in English. Late or incomplete submissions, or ones that fail to meet MTBC's conservation objectives, will not be accepted.

All inquiries must be emailed to scholarships@merlintuttle.org with the subject line "Antoniya Hubancheva Award Inquiry". **Any communications outside this email, including social media, is strictly prohibited and will not be considered.** Violation of this policy may cause your application to be dismissed.

Funds will not be transferred to a personal bank account, only **Institutional Bank Account** (University, NGO, etc.). that does not charge more than 0% overhead. A US bank account is not required, but it will help reduce international fees. If the **Institutional Bank Account** is not provided by, April 10, the scholarship will be rescinded and voided.

Successful applicants will be notified via email by April of the following year. All recipients will be required to sign a standard reporting and completion agreement and a liability waiver. Upon signing the agreement, MTBC will write a check for 70 percent of the awarded amount, made payable to the sponsoring college, university, or conservation organization. Payment of the remaining 30 percent of the award will be granted upon timely submission of photographs of project activities, and a final report and/or thesis summarizing project achievements. In addition, successful applicants must agree to acknowledge the support of MTBC in publications or public presentations related to the project.

Assessment of Applications

All applications will be reviewed by MTBC's Science Team. Applications that meet MTBC's qualifications will be additionally reviewed by an outside, two-member panel of relevant experts. MTBC reserves the final right to accept or reject any applicant.

Applications will be scored on the following criteria:

1. Advancement and importance to MTBC's bat conservation goals
2. Appropriateness of methodology (project design and approach)
3. Feasibility (time, funding, logistics, and relevant experience)
4. Anticipated impact
5. Preference will be given to individuals of special conservation dedication from developing countries