

Current Comments

Grants from ISI: Help for Small and Inadequately Financed Libraries

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It's been four years since I brought you up-to-date on ISI's Grant Program.¹ The Grant Program has been greatly expanded since that time. For example, the *Arts & Humanities Citation Index*[™] (*A&HCI*[™]) is now part of the program.² For those of you who are unfamiliar with ISI grants, let me restate their goals. The program makes it easier for many libraries to purchase the *Science Citation Index*[®] (*SCI*[®]), *Social Sciences Citation Index*[®] (*SSCI*[®]), and *A&HCI*. These are not just smaller libraries but also large libraries in countries with necessarily limited foreign currencies.

Approximately 700 libraries are recipients of ISI grants. The program is based on the assumption that every scientific, technical, and scholarly library—no matter how poor or how small—wants and needs the best reference tools available to support its organization's research or educational programs. This year ISI expects to award more than \$1.8 million in grants.

For those that qualify, the ISI Grant Program provides financial aid based on the library's ability to pay. This aid ranges from 25 percent to 75 percent of the normal purchase price of the index. Libraries with a greater need receive a greater amount of aid, based on already established guidelines. In this way, we are able to help small libraries function as effectively as large ones.

Libraries most likely to qualify for grants are those with budgets that are severely limited for a variety of reasons. The size of the grant is usually correlated with the size of the professional staff and journal holdings. Many libraries in academic institutions granting fewer than ten doctoral degrees per year qualify. So do most libraries in schools that award fewer than 125 master's degrees each year. Libraries in many community or other colleges that do not award graduate degrees are eligible for ISI grants, as are most libraries in schools and colleges of mining, veterinary medicine, dentistry, nursing, pharmacy, osteopathy, chiropractic, and podiatry.

Other institutions eligible for grants include certain seminaries; municipal, state, national, and public libraries; hospital libraries affiliated with medical schools; libraries at small, nonacademic research organizations; and libraries of a special nature often found in Europe such as teacher training colleges, two-year technical colleges, *Volkshochschulen*, *Berufsschulen*, *Handelschulen*, etc. Libraries in museums and independent schools and colleges of music, art, and the performing arts are especially eligible for grants to obtain the *A&HCI*.

Special grant rates of 50 percent of list price have been established for libraries in *developing nations*. If their gross national product is \$1,000 per

capita or less according to World Bank statistics, we automatically apply this rate to our indexes. In this way we know we are helping those nations that do not yet have the financial ability to pay more get the research tools they need to progress.

Oftentimes this means that a developing country may obtain two or more sets where they would otherwise depend on one. By the way, the People's Republic of China qualifies for developing nation grants under our criteria. Table 1 shows the principal categories of libraries eligible for ISI grants, with the grant rates available within each category.

Table 1: Principal categories of libraries eligible for ISI® grants and grant rates available within each category.

Libraries in developing nations (50% of list)
Two-year colleges and technical schools (25% of list)
Colleges and universities without graduate programs or with limited graduate programs (75%, 65%, 50%, 25% of list)
Specialized schools and colleges (50%, 25% of list)
Municipal, state, and public libraries (50% of list)
Hospital libraries (50%, 25% of list)
Museum libraries (50% of list)
Other small, nonacademic research organizations (50% of list)
Certain departmental libraries at schools where a full-rate subscription already exists (50% of list)

Some examples of libraries that receive the *SCI* under an ISI grant include the National Yang-Ming Medical College, Taipei, Taiwan; the National University of Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture, Ibadan, Nigeria; the Université de Dakar, Senegal; and Mahidol University, Bangkok, Thailand.

Many readers of *Current Contents*® (*CC*®) use our indexes at their institu-

tion's main library but are not aware that departmental or divisional libraries qualify for ISI grants. These are called second copy rates. Many institutions have more than one library located on the same campus. The main library may subscribe to the *SCI*, *SSCI*, or *A&HCI* at the full rate. One, or more, departmental libraries can obtain the indexes through the grant program. For example, a grant may help place the *SSCI* in a sociology library, the *SCI* in a chemistry library, or the *A&HCI* in a music library.

Regrettably we cannot extend this program to *CC*. The number of libraries involved and the administrative costs would be prohibitive. Indeed, one can say that there are very few libraries that can exist at all that cannot afford *CC*. The exception might be those libraries in countries where foreign currencies are so restricted that even a few journals may not be purchased.

To find out if your library is eligible for—or to obtain—an ISI grant, just write to the ISI grant administrator, whose address is given on the following page. We will immediately send you an application form and related information.

The application form is brief and uncomplicated. It allows you two options: you may indicate which years, past or present, of the indexes are desired and automatically place your order if the grant is approved, or you may determine your eligibility for an ISI grant for future use. Whichever option you take, the application is quickly reviewed by our grant committee. Most of our grant decisions are made within two weeks after the receipt of a properly completed application.

Skeptics might suspect that the ISI Grant Program is nothing more than a cleverly designed scheme to increase

the distribution of the *SCI*, *SSCI*, and *A&HCI*. Of course, they are right! The ISI Grant Program allows us to increase distribution and use without sacrificing the quality and comprehensiveness that our main customer base expects from our services.

Clearly, the main cost of producing indexes as comprehensive as the *A&HCI*, *SSCI*, and *SCI* is in the creation of the data base and not "merely" the printing. The world's major academic, industrial, and governmental libraries share this basic cost. It is *in fact a benefit to them* as well as to the smaller libraries if we can find means for extending the market for our services

because the larger subscription base helps to keep every subscriber's price down. The ultimate and completely fair pricing mechanism has yet to be found. I feel it is a supreme compliment to learn that recently the American Chemical Society adopted a policy not unlike ours. I applaud this because every chemistry library that spends less on *Chemical Abstracts* can better afford some other services.

If your library meets the criteria mentioned above, I urge you to write to the Grant Administrator, Institute for Scientific Information®, 3501 Market Street, University City Science Center, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19104, USA.

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REFERENCES

1. Garfield E. The ISI Grant Program. *Current Contents* (18):5-6, 2 May 1977.*
2. -----, Will ISI's *Arts & Humanities Citation Index* revolutionize scholarship? *Current Contents* (32):5-9, 8 August 1977.*

*Reprinted in: Garfield E. *Essays of an information scientist*. Philadelphia: ISI Press, 1980. 3 vols.