

Program Announcement and Call for Proposals

**Sustaining Minority Languages in Europe (SMiLE)
Collaborative Research Awards**

Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage

Program Description

Languages are integral to our identity, our heritage, and our humanity. With most of the world's languages severely threatened, thousands of language communities have committed to revitalization efforts, from documentation and renewal, to revitalization and maintenance. These efforts respond to the urgency of the situation in the absence of robust comparative research, and with varying degrees of support from local and national governments and NGOs. Many language revitalization efforts began decades ago, some tracing their roots to the 19th century. In much of Europe the contemporary community-driven efforts, either by grass-roots activism or by pressure on authorities, date from the 1970s and were often well underway by the 1980s. Scholarly attention to language revitalization has largely focused on language documentation and description, the social and cultural milieu within which language shift occurs, and the mechanics of language loss. Research has also taken on challenging issues of ideological and attitudinal factors that impede or enable language revitalization, including factors of low prestige, authority, purity, and intergenerational trauma. Another thread of contemporary research focuses on studying language revitalization itself as a social movement and the discourse of language endangerment and revitalization and its societal effects.

In the 2005 Annual Review of Anthropology article "Will Indigenous Languages Survive?" Michael Walsh concludes that what is needed is frank examination and discussion of problems and 'good clear statements of advice' (p. 308). Since revitalization is community driven and responsive to local social and cultural constructs and concerns, much literature has focused on creating rich case studies and ethnographies of individual endangered language communities. Insights into localized revitalization efforts are seldom formulated in a manner that contributes directly to the needs of others. At the Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage (CFCH), we believe that sustained efforts in language revitalization and the accumulated literature on these efforts are at a point where larger-scaled comparative

analysis and synthesis is possible. To address this need, CFCH has developed an interdisciplinary research program, Sustaining Minority Languages in Europe (SMiLE), that seeks to examine endangered or minoritized language revitalization initiatives in Europe in a more systematic manner.

SMiLE will fund ethnographic and sociolinguistic research to examine a series of research questions addressing how revitalization efforts respond to cultural, social, political, and economic factors in ways that contribute to both community and language vitality. Each SMiLE Research Award will fund syntheses of past or ongoing research, original fieldwork, and archival research to produce a structured case study of language revitalization programs and efforts in an autochthonous or minoritized language community in Europe. SMiLE seeks proposals for community-situated ethnographic and sociolinguistics case studies in any such community.

Over a three-year period, a total of six Collaborative Research Awards will be granted. The recipients of the six awards will include teams of two or more academic researchers, community-based scholars, language advocates, policy experts, and others. Collectively, their research will generate a set of six comparable, in-depth case studies that reveal how minority language revitalization programs respond to a variety of internal and external factors and how they sustain their revitalization efforts and accomplishments over time.

Applicants should be able to demonstrate significant previous scholarly or professional involvement in the chosen community(ies) as well as their ability to conduct sustained participant observation in multiple social contexts and language domains. SMiLE is particularly interested in funding research projects that

- reveal the trajectory of a community's language revitalization initiatives and efforts at various stages of their life cycles;
- analyze how the programs respond to internal and external social, economic, and political factors; and
- explore relationships among language revitalization, cultural heritage, and traditional cultural transmission—areas of particular interest to CFCH.

In contrast to prevalent research that seeks to assess the vitality of endangered language speaker communities in order to identify needs or develop resources, SMiLE will examine how language revitalization programs navigate the social forces and cultural factors that enable or constrain their collective interests, motivations, and efforts, thereby providing insight into processes which may be applicable to revitalization practices elsewhere.

To facilitate comparison among the six language speaker communities selected for this study, each SMiLE research team will be responsible for answering the Research Questions developed by the SMiLE Advisory Board. The Research Questions were formulated with a wide range of stakeholders in mind, including language learners, teachers, family members, policy makers, culture bearers, administrators, and others. They include questions designed to:

- explore the use of the minority language in new domains, with new modes of transmission, with new and emerging speakers;
- reveal patterns in community responses to internal and external influences regarding their use of their languages;
- explore the interplay between social processes and individual motivations for the maintenance of a minoritized language;
- provide a diachronic perspective on their language revitalization program or initiative;
- provide comparable data from different language communities;
- reveal new or changing patterns in the interactions of language vitality indicators; and
- frame and facilitate analysis and final reporting.

To respond to the Research Questions, research teams will synthesize extant knowledge generated through long-term engagement with communities, publications, and fieldwork. However, in order to create the fullest case study, they will also need to generate new ethnographic and sociolinguistic data with a variety of stakeholders and observation and documentation of new language domains, public events, and/or policy meetings.

In addition to receiving research funding, SMiLE award recipients will participate in a series of workshops intended to foster discussion and collaboration among the six research teams and the SMiLE Advisory Board. We anticipate that our collective research will result in individual and collaborative conference papers and research publications; an edited volume in which each case study forms the basis of a chapter; and a public symposium at the conclusion of the broader research program. We also hope to identify community research needs and target future funding for these projects.

Award Information

The SMiLE Collaborative Research Awards fund community-situated ethnographic and sociolinguistic research in Europe conducted by teams of two or more researchers, full-time or part-time, for periods up to 18 months. Support is available for various combinations of fieldwork, consultation, project-related travel, and archival research. Each research team will be eligible for up to \$120,800.

SMiLE Research Awards are sponsored by the Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage with funding from Ferring Pharmaceuticals Inc.

Requirements

Research Teams Proposed projects will bring together two Principal Investigators (PIs). The PIs must develop the proposal together and apply as a team. At least one PI must have strong ties with the community or program of the research site; ideally, one PI or supplementary partner or collaborator will be a community member. Preference will be given to applicants whose proposal demonstrates sustained scholarly or professional engagement in the relevant language community. Preference will be given to interdisciplinary teams. Applicants must also demonstrate completion of applicable research ethics requirements before funding is awarded.

Preference will be given to proposed research teams with at least one Principal Investigator who holds a Ph.D. (or other terminal degree) related to the study of language in society in one of the social sciences or humanities; a degree in linguistics or a linguistics subfield is not required. With or without a Ph.D. or other terminal degree, all applicants must demonstrate their ability to conduct ethnographic and sociolinguistic research and writing.

Award recipients will be expected to participate in at least three semi-annual workshops. These workshops will be timed to coincide with the start of SMiLE award cycles, at least one midpoint to share research-in-progress, and one at the end. The workshops are intended to foster communication and collaboration between research teams and with the SMiLE Advisory Board. All workshops will be held in Europe. Travel and per diem expenses for workshop participants will be paid by the Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage and need not be included in the application budget.

Nationals of any country may apply.

Minority Language Speaker Communities Proposed research must be in collaboration with a European autochthonous or minoritized language community whose members are currently engaged in language revitalization or maintenance efforts. (For the purposes of this award, linguistic minorities do not include non-European immigrant languages or majority European languages in immigrant communities, such as Polish speakers in London.) Applicants are welcome to propose research with a language revitalization and maintenance initiative of any scale, within communities of any size. The language initiative may be embedded in a community as large as a state or county, or as small as a town or village. The language program, efforts, or initiative may be state sponsored (e.g., primary school programs) or adapted and controlled locally in a town or village; other programs may be initiated at the grassroots by a smaller group of concerned individuals. Finally, because SMiLE seeks to understand how endangered language speaker communities adapt and respond to internal and external forces over time, preference will be given to applicants whose proposed research focuses on a language revitalization and/or maintenance program or initiative of relatively long duration.

Proposal Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated according to the requirements given above as well as the following criteria:

- The intellectual significance of the proposed project vis-à-vis the goals of the SMiLE research program and Research Questions, including its potential to promote comparative research and learning within the field of language revitalization and maintenance.
- The qualifications, expertise, and commitment of the Principal Investigators and key project staff or contributors. Are there clear roles for all project participants? Do one or both of the PIs have significant research experience and support in the community? Does the proposal make a compelling case for their collaboration as a single project?
- The feasibility of the proposed plan of work and the appropriateness of the project's methods. Can the project be successfully completed in the proposed time period (not to exceed 18 months from receipt of funding) and with the proposed resources?
- The reasonableness of the proposed budget in relation to anticipated results.

How to Apply

Prospective applicants are asked to access the Research Questions on the website: <http://www.folklife.si.edu/smile>. Each research team will be expected to respond to the questions and issues in this document.

Applicants are encouraged to seek the Program Director's advice about the program and in preparing their proposal. The Program Director can also review draft proposals (which are optional). Applicants should seek advice from the Program Director before submitting a draft. The Program Director's comments on draft proposals are not part of the formal review process and have no bearing on the final outcome of the proposal. Draft proposals must be submitted no later than six weeks before the submission deadline and will be returned no later than three weeks after submission. Draft proposals should be submitted by e-mail attachment to CFCH-Smile@si.edu.

Proposals should consist of the following nine elements.

- 1. TABLE OF CONTENTS** List all parts of the proposal and corresponding page numbers.
- 2. ABSTRACT** (200 words max.) Provide a project statement, written for a non-specialist audience, summarizing the proposed research and its contribution to scholarship in the field of language revitalization and maintenance.
- 3. LIST OF RESEARCH TEAM MEMBERS** On a separate page, list all researchers, staff, and supplementary partners or collaborators and their institutional affiliations, if any. The names on this list should match the names mentioned in the staff section of the project's narrative description. The list should also include the names and institutional affiliations of any experts and community members who have provided letters of support. (The list is used to ensure that prospective reviewers have no conflict of interest with the projects that they will evaluate.)
- 4. PROJECT NARRATIVE** (10 pages max. single space) Applicants should write their proposals with the evaluation criteria in mind. The narrative should clearly define technical terms so that they are comprehensible to a non-specialist audience. All pages should have one-inch margins, and the font size should be no smaller than eleven point. Use the citation style of your choice consistently throughout the document.

The narrative should address the following five points:

- **Project Scope and Impact** Provide a clear and concise explanation of the proposed project activities that will enable you to answer the Research

Questions and create the targeted case study. Include how your case study of this community and its efforts will contribute to comparative research and greater understanding of language revitalization. Identify one or two of the issues in the Research Questions and propose a component of your research plan that addresses them in greater depth. Propose any other issues or questions that you would need to address with this community. Describe how addressing these questions can advance your own research, the community's revitalization efforts, and the field of language revitalization and maintenance beyond the scope of this project. If there are existing projects that are similar in nature to your project, describe them and how they relate to this project.

- **Speaker Community/Research Site** Describe the language community and the language revitalization or maintenance initiatives that you propose to study. Describe your previous engagement with the community, including any previous ethnographic fieldwork or related research, and any publications produced. Describe how your earlier research contributes to the goals of the current project.
- **Methodology and Work Plan** Describe the specific tasks that will be accomplished during the grant period. Provide a schedule that includes your ideal start date (an ideal start date may be outside of target January 1, 2018 date given in the Project Timeline below), important milestones for the duration of the project, and locations where your work will take place. In addition to the response to the Research Questions that is common to all SMiLE research awards/sites, describe any other research methodologies that will be employed. Identify any risks that might keep you from completing your project on time (i.e., within 18 months from receipt of funding) and within budget, and describe your strategy for mitigating those risks.
- **Research Team** Describe the responsibilities of the two PIs, as well as any additional researchers, staff, or supplementary collaborators who will work on the project during the proposed grant period. Explain how their qualifications will enable them to fulfill these responsibilities. List all persons directly involved in the conduct of the proposed project (whether or not their salaries are paid from grant funds), indicate their anticipated commitments of time, and explain the reasons for and nature of their collaboration.
- **Final Product and Dissemination** SMiLE Award recipients will be invited to contribute to a final symposium and an edited volume of case studies and

project results. In addition, please describe any plans to disseminate your research findings through other venues and media (printed articles or books, presentations at meetings, webinars or training sessions, electronic media, or some combination of these).

5. BIOGRAPHIES Provide a one-paragraph biography for each Principal Investigator and project participant.

6. CURRICULUM VITAE (3 page max.) Each PI and Project Collaborator must include a cv or resume of no more than three pages that includes their email and mailing addresses and specifies the highest degree earned, the name of the institution awarding the degree, professional positions held, institutional affiliations, and major publications.

7. PROJECT BUDGET and JUSTIFICATION (5 pages max.) Complete the budget in MS Excel format. The budget template is available on the website: <http://www.folklife.si.edu/smile>. Eligible expenses include replacement teaching; research or technical staff; student stipend costs; consultant fees; equipment; travel and subsistence; and consumables (recording media, telephone, internet, paper, batteries, fuel for vehicles) directly associated with the project. SMiLE does not support the following costs: overheads, direct central administration, indirect costs, renting office accommodation, moving expenses, personal travel, support of accompanying family members, attendance at meetings, conferences or symposia, tuition, professional memberships, nor may SMiLE Awards be used for equipment costing \$2,500 or more. **Please convert the amounts into US dollars.**

Include a *Budget Justification* that clearly explains how the funding and budget items requested will support the goals of the project. Note all existing or pending funds that will directly support the project.

8. APPENDICES (6 pages max.) If applicable, include an expanded work plan, a bibliography or list of works cited, maps, or other project plans. Materials in this section may not exceed six pages.

9. LETTERS OF COMMITMENT AND SUPPORT Include letters of commitment from cooperating programs and institutions. A letter of commitment is typically written by a person or organization that is committing something to your project, for example, providing access to meetings or classes, contributing their time, etc. You may also include up to two letters of support from experts who are not directly involved in the proposed project but can speak to its value to the field or to the appropriateness of

the proposed methodology or the technical plan.

10. ARCHIVING PLAN At the end of the research award period, PIs must submit copies of their research materials (notes, recordings, transcriptions, etc.) to be archived at the Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage. Describe the specific materials your team is likely to archive and any anticipated access restrictions. We foresee that some teams will want to embargo their research materials for a few years. We will work with PIs to determine final scope of materials, accessibility, and embargoes.

A checklist for the application package is available on the website: <http://www.folklife.si.edu/smile>.

Submitting Your Proposal

Email the proposal as a single Adobe Acrobat PDF file to **CFCH-Smile@si.edu** by midnight GMT on September 1, 2017.

Proposal Review Process

A Selection Committee consisting of SMiLE Advisory Board Members (listed below) will review proposals against the requirements and evaluation criteria established within these guidelines. The Selection Committee may also solicit evaluations from outside advisors in applicable academic disciplines, as necessary. Through peer review, the Selection Committee will rank proposals and provide recommendations to the SMiLE Program, which will make final funding decisions.

Application and Project Timeline

April-August 2017	Contact the Program Officer with questions (optional)
July 15, 2017	Submit draft application by this date (optional)
September 1, 2017	Submit proposal as PDF to CFCH-Smile@si.edu
Sept.-October, 2017	Peer Review panel reviews applications
November 1, 2017	Applicants are notified of the funding decisions
January 1, 2018	Successful applicants may begin work on their projects
June 1, 2019	Completion date for funded projects

Reporting Requirements

Principal Investigators must jointly submit a mid-award report as well as a final project report no later than 120 days following expiration of their grant. Failure to provide the required interim reports will delay SMiLE review and processing of any subsequent funding.

Contact Information

General inquiries about the SMiLE Research Award Program and/or Sustaining Minority Languages in Europe may be addressed to CFCH-Smile@si.edu. Applicants are strongly encouraged to speak with the Program Director about their prospective project before submitting their proposal. Applicants wishing to speak to the Program Director by telephone should provide in an e-mail message a telephone number and a preferred time to call.

Program Director

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About the Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage

The Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage promotes the understanding and sustainability of intangible cultural heritage across the United States and around the world. The Center conducts ethnographic and cultural heritage policy oriented research; maintains the Ralph Rinzler Folklife Archives and Collections; and provides educational and research opportunities through fellowships, internships, and training programs. The Center's activities are funded by US federal government appropriations, Smithsonian trust funds, gifts and grants, and revenue from the Smithsonian Folklife Festival and Folkways Recordings. The Center joins high-quality scholarship with strong community participation and engaging educational outreach. This has led to activities that have affected cultural heritage policies and practices at local, national, and international levels.

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