Call for Applications
DeepFin Student Exchange Program

DeepFin is a research coordination network (RCN) of systematic ichthyologists and biologists with expertise in the analysis of fish biodiversity, seeking to integrate knowledge of morphology, paleontology, molecular biology, and bioinformatics (www.deepfin.org). The ultimate goal of the RCN is **to decipher the evolutionary relationships of all fishes and establish their phylogenetic tree**. One way to accomplish this goal is by providing new opportunities for undergraduate, graduate and post-doctoral training in systematic ichthyology. DeepFin seeks to facilitate student training through an exchange program where students will visit participating ichthyology laboratories to learn new molecular techniques, fish morphology, fish development, or other aspects directly related to DeepFin's ultimate goal.

The student exchange program is designed to facilitate communication between traditionally isolated research groups and to foster broader educational opportunities to students. Undergraduate and graduate students and postdocs with research activities under the supervision of DeepFin participants will be able to experience new research environments, not available to them at their home institutions. For example, a student working in a molecular systematics lab could acquire hands-on experience in morphological analysis of living or fossil fishes (and vice versa). The goal is to help lower existing barriers between traditionally isolated disciplines by raising a new generation of scientists with broad academic training experiences. Preference will be given to students exchanging across disciplines, but applications for exchanges within disciplines also are encouraged (e.g., to learn a different molecular technique or to gain familiarity with different markers).

Stipends of up to $4,000 will be given to participating students to cover travel and room and board.

Eligibility: participants have to be affiliated to an accredited United States institution of research and/or education. International students (from outside the U.S.) may not be supported by this program.

To apply for the student exchange program please provide the following information via email to Terry Grande at tgrande@luc.edu or Carol Stepien carol.stepien@utoledo.edu (or both). Electronic submissions are required either as a single .pdf or a .doc file containing the following sections.

1. Cover sheet with your name, education (undergrad, grad, postdoc), institutional affiliation and research supervisor, the proposed host laboratory and hosting advisor,

dates of proposed exchange, title of the project, and a summary (100 word maximum) describing the goals of the exchange experience, the type of training that you will gain via the laboratory exchange, and why this is important to your research project.

2. A brief description (1 page maximum) of your research project, its goals, and an indication of where you are in your research time line. Include information to make it clear how the project will contribute to our knowledge of the tree of life for fishes. Please provide some details of the type of training that you already have experience with (e.g., morphological, paleontology, molecular) and how the new training sought will enrich your education.

3. A curriculum vitae no longer than 2 pages listing educational background, work experience, publications, and presentations.

Additionally, two letter of recommendation are required from the academic advisors, one from the current advisor and one from the hosting advisor. These should be sent directly by the advisors to Terry or Carol via email. The letters should include statements concerning the following:
- The competence of the applicant
- The significance of the new training sought for the applicant's education and the project goal's
- The need for the funds being requested by the applicant and the availability of matching funds for the project that could supplement DeepFin stipends and extend the duration of the training period.

Proposal Deadline: Applications should be received by **15 November 2006**; pre-application inquiries are welcomed.

To ensure that applications are not lost in electronic transfer, confirmation e-mail will be sent to the applicants. If you do not receive this confirmation within three days of your submission, please re-contact Terry Grande or Guillermo Orti (gorti1@unl.edu). Funding decisions will be made within 30 days of the deadline.

Reporting Requirement: Recipients will be expected to provide a **report to DeepFin** (1 page) describing the accomplishments and value of the exchange experience, and any product (such as publication or thesis that might result from this work) within three months of the end of their exchange. This report should be sent via email to Terry Grande (tgrande@luc.edu). Recipients might also be invited to contribute Tree of Life pages (http://tolweb.org/tree/phylogeny.html) with the phylogeny for the focal group of their project.