



SEA Launches a New Graduate Student Collective!

Society for Economic Anthropology

Hannah Marshall, Emma McDonell, and Stefanie Berganini

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At their annual meeting in Iowa this April, the Society for Economic Anthropology (SEA) will launch a new graduate student collective, SEA GRADS. This online collaborative platform will enable graduate students with an interest in economic anthropology to discuss ideas, establish research collaborations, network with peers and others, learn about grant and job opportunities, and develop and share resources.

The general aim of SEA GRADS is to help to advance the careers of graduate students working within economic anthropology, by providing a useful and dynamic platform for collaborative engagement within the subdiscipline.

“In January we sent out a short survey to see if any graduate students working in economic anthropology were interested in starting an online collective to share resources and collaborate in research,” says Hannah Marshall, the SEA’s student representative for 2016–18, “within 48 hours we had had over 60 responses. There is a real appetite for connection and collaboration within the economic anthropology student community. Our goal is that the collective provides opportunities for the personal advancement of our members, and provides a space where students can work together to advance theory, method, and application in economic anthropology.”

When the website launches in early April, the online platform will include discussion spaces where users can share project plans, debate ideas, and pair up with mentors or collaborators, as well as pages with information about the latest relevant teaching resources, grant opportunities, calls for papers, and job opportunities. Supported by its social media accounts, the collective will also run live online Q&As, interviews with graduate students and renowned scholars, and networking events.

The collective is currently run by a group of grad student leaders based in universities across the US and Europe, and is looking to recruit additional leaders, in particular from Africa, Asia, and South America. At the moment, a team of graduate students: Layla Zaglul, University of Sussex; Deniz Seebacher, University of Vienna; Sarah-Jane Phelan, University of Sussex; Stefanie Berganini, Colorado State University; Emma McDonell, Indiana University; and Hannah Marshall, Brown University, are each taking responsibility for different elements of the platform in the run up to the launch. However, as the collective continues to grow they are looking for more graduate students to help continue to shape how the collective is run and the content and services that it offers.

“As a student working within the tradition of economic anthropology in a department with few peers engaging with the sub-field, I saw working with SEA GRADS as a great opportunity to engage with an intellectual community working on related issues. Moreover, I’m excited by the prospect of working with other graduate students as I see it as a chance to be at the forefront some of the emerging, innovative directions the field will take in coming years,” explains Emma McDonell, one of the media and content production coordinators for the collective. “I’m looking for a space to bounce ideas and share resources with a new generation of economic anthropologists.”

“I’m very excited to join such a talented team to help launch SEA GRADS,” says Stefanie Berganini, the second member of the media and content production leadership team. “Economic anthropologists are sometimes few and far between in university departments, and this collective will provide an accessible online home for graduate students to explore common interests. We’re planting the seed with our launch in April, and our members will help us grow SEA GRADS into a robust and valuable resource for networking, academic collaboration, and professional development. I can’t wait to see what we build together!”

As a virtual community, SEA GRADS aims to provide an environment that is accessible for students from a wide range of backgrounds. SEA student representative Hannah Marshall says, “SEA GRADS is not an exclusive club, we’re not affiliated with any particular university, and everyone is welcome to participate. We want to make sure that the collective is a welcoming and inclusive space for grad students from across the world, and our content will aim to explore, and remain conscious of, the existence of intersectional inequalities in all elements of the sub-discipline, from teaching practice to publishing.”

SEA GRADS is also strongly orientated towards thinking about how economic anthropology can contribute to social justice. In 2017, the SEA’s journal *Economic Anthropology* published a series of essays under the heading “[How can economic anthropology contribute to a more just world?](#)” in which renowned scholars including Jane Guyer, Gillian Tett, and Richard Wilk discussed economic

anthropology's unique relevance beyond the academy, and also the corresponding responsibility for economic anthropologists to contribute beyond the Ivory Tower. Responding to this call to action, the collective seeks to provide a space where connections between economic anthropology and "real world" issues can be made and students can find like-minded collaborators for unorthodox economic anthropology projects.

To be added to the "SEA GRADS" mailing list, and receive all the latest news (including the website address once it launches) and opportunities please email seagrads@gmail.com. If you are interested in joining the SEA GRADS leadership group, please indicate this in your email and we will be in touch.

Hannah Marshall is a graduate student at Brown University, **Emma McDonell** is a graduate student at Indiana University, **Stefanie Berganini** is a graduate student at Colorado State University.

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