

**CAL Undergraduate Research Scholarships Scheme 2017  
Project Proposal Form**

<b>Project Proposer/s:</b>	<b>Alastair Wilson</b>
<b>School/Dept:</b>	<b>Philosophy</b>
<b>Project Title:</b>	<b>Metaphysics in Popular Conceptions of Time Travel</b>
<b>Project Summary</b>	
<p>The project is an investigation into the influence of theories from metaphysics in popular conceptions of time travel. Philosophers have written extensively on the potential possibility of time travel and its implications; some of this work has had an impact (both explicit and implicit) on the various pictures of time travel presented in the popular media. We know of no detailed investigation of the reception and influence of philosophical work on time travel, despite it being a good case study in the influence of philosophy on public understanding of nature. The project will explore and systematize the reception of work in metaphysics in presentations of time travel in popular culture, and produce a research resource documenting the results.</p>	
<b>What the researcher will do</b>	
<p>The researcher will seek out potential lines of influence of academic work in metaphysics on popular work on time travel, and will use online and Library resources to investigate these lines of influence. This will involve seeking both explicit evidence of such influence – for example, in interviews with authors or film-makers – as well as in plot elements of particular stories which highlight philosophical ideas for the audience to think about, such as eternalism or additional time dimensions. The researcher will use the results of these researchers to construct a report identifying clear cases of transfer of ideas between metaphysics and popular culture, with an eye to providing a useful resource for future researchers working on the nature and value of metaphysics.</p>	
<b>Skills required by the Scholarship holder</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- An active interest in, and a good understanding of, metaphysical questions raised by the possibility of time travel.</li> <li>- A demonstration of excellent general philosophical understanding, as evidenced by their previous academic record.</li> <li>- An imaginative approach to researching contemporary non-academic philosophy.</li> <li>- The ability to self-motivate and carry out tasks with minimal supervision, coupled with a willingness to seek appropriate direction when required.</li> </ul>	
<b>How will your Project benefit the Scholarship holder?</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Experience in research and dealing with an academic project.</li> <li>- Knowledge and understanding of a contemporary area in philosophy.</li> </ul>	
<b>How will the Scholarship benefit your Project?</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There exists very little systematic work on the reception of metaphysics in popular culture; such work would be of strong relevance to the meta-philosophical discussion concerning the value of metaphysics, in which I'm engaged.</li> </ul>	