

Frequently Asked Questions

General Questions

What is the CRF?

The Conflict Research Fellowship (CRF) offers year-long support for experienced scholars (based at a university or NGO). The CRF is part of the Conflict Research Programme (CRP), a four year, UK Department of International Development funded research program based at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) that investigates the drivers of violent conflict in five cases: Somalia, South Sudan, DRC, Iraq, and Syria. The program focuses on ways in which the political economy of public authority helps to explain the persistence and spread of violence. Successful fellowship candidates will need to examine how different interventions affect violent conflict and/or the risk of renewed violent conflict; analyze ‘what works’ to counter drivers of conflict; and explore the contextual factors that affect the efficacy of such interventions, including the linkages among international, national, state, and local level dynamics. The [Understanding Violent Conflict](#) program at the Social Science Research Council hosts and manages the CRF.

What are the priority intervention areas?

Successful candidates will contribute to the overall analysis of their selected conflict by looking at external interventions in four areas prioritized by the CRP. Others examples of these four thematic areas, which are not listed below, will also be considered:

- Civil society support (including multi-scalar peacemaking and peacebuilding activities, support for reconciliation, and community-level dialogue and mediation)
- Security and Justice Sector reform (including DDR/RR, stabilization, regional security networks/arenas, transitional, formal and customary justice)
- Strengthening public authority and legitimacy, including at sub-national levels (the political marketplace, the effects of patronage networks on governance, governance promoting interventions, decentralization and anti-corruption activities)
- Resource management (including settlement of land and real estate disputes, governance frameworks, and the role of natural resource competition in shaping public authority)

Who can apply to the Conflict Research Fellowship (CRF)?

All applicants must be postdoctoral scholars with at least three years of field-based experience since the completion of the PhD (or researchers with equivalent experience who have published one book or two peer-reviewed academic articles) in or relating to the CRP's core research countries to be considered.

❖ (Somalia, South Sudan, DRC, Iraq, and Syria).

All applicants must be available to attend a preparatory workshop in New York within the first two months of their fellowship period, and a capstone workshop towards the end of the year-long fellowship. All research must be completed during the award year. At the end of the fellowship period, recipients must produce a research deliverable that is suitable for publication in a peer-reviewed academic journal (journal publication date may occur outside the award period).

What may the Conflict Research Fellowship (CRF) be used for?

Applications will be considered for the following purposes only:

- 1) To conduct operationally relevant, evidence-based fieldwork in 1 of the 5 core countries;
- 2) To fund a visiting fellowship or appointment at a US/European university, where you would be expected to write up your research findings for journal publication;
- 3) For a teaching buy-out to write a journal article, book chapter, or book.

Can I apply as part of a research group/team?

No. The Conflict Research Fellowship only welcomes proposals from individual applicants.

Is there an age limit?

No. The CRF encourages younger, mid-career academics to apply, as well as more experienced scholars and policy analysts. Successful applicants do not need to hold a Professor position or any specific minimum title in their research institution, NGO or university.

Am I eligible if I do not hold a PhD?

Yes. But, you must display a significant publication record equaling at least one published book or two peer-reviewed academic articles.

What disciplines are eligible?

The Conflict Research Fellowship is open to scholars and researchers from all disciplines and fields. However, successful proposals will demonstrate a solid grasp of social science literature, tools, and research methodologies, and be focused on the CRP's key research questions

Can I reapply for the fellowship if I have applied before but was unsuccessful?

Yes, unsuccessful application during the 2018 call are eligible to submit a new proposal during the 2019 call.

Application Process

How do I apply for a Conflict Research Fellowship?

Applications must be completed using our online portal by January 6th, 2019. You will be asked to create an online user account and password. We recommend that you fully review the guidelines, eligibility requirements, selection criteria, and application and award timeline before proceeding with an application.

What are the application requirements?

All applicants will be required to submit the following:

- 1) Completed Application Form
- 2) Completed Proposal & Bibliography
- 3) Two (2) Reference Letters
- 4) Language evaluation(s) (if required)
- 5) Updated CV

If you encounter any difficulties accessing the online portal, please contact UVC Program staff at uvc@ssrc.org, or by telephone at (+1) [718-517-3707].

How do I submit my application?

The CRF requires all applications to be uploaded through our online portal by the application deadline. Please ensure that all relevant information is included in your application, as all incomplete applications will be automatically disqualified.

Do I need to complete the application all at once?

No. You may return to and make as many visits to your application as necessary until the application deadline. You may revise any information in your application by returning to any one of the pages. Once you begin your application, be sure to save each page as you go, as any information not saved will be lost.

However, once the application is submitted, you will no longer be able to modify or change it.

Should all application materials be submitted at once?

Yes. The application form, proposal and bibliography, and CV must all be submitted at the same time. Reference letters and language evaluation(s) may be submitted separately, but are required before the deadline. All incomplete applications will be automatically disqualified.

Do I need to submit my application in English?

No, applications may be submitted in English or French. Outputs may also be written in either English or French. However, all candidates must have conversational proficiency in English.

Applicants will also need to submit a language evaluation to do field work in particular areas:

- ❖ (French, Swahili, Lingala in DRC; Arabic for Syria, Iraq, etc.)

When is the deadline for the Conflict Research Fellowship?

All applications, reference letters, and language evaluations are due by 11:59 pm (EST) on January 6th, 2019. However, we recommend encouraging the external language evaluations and references to be submitted at least week in advance of the deadline to ensure they were submitted properly.

How will I know that my application is complete?

After you have successfully submitted your application, you will receive a confirmation e-mail from the SSRC. You may continue to check the status of your references and be able to submit a language evaluation(s) after your application has been submitted. You may send reminder requests through the Track References section of the application portal.

Application Components

How many letters of reference do I need, and whom should I ask to write them?

You will need two (2) letters of reference. One may be written by your department head or by an administrative supervisor of similar standing, while the other could be written by a senior academic practitioner who is very familiar with your research or work. Like all other application materials, the CRF will accept reference letters written in either English or French.

Should my references send in their letters on their own, or can I submit their reference letters in the application that I submit to the CRF?

References must submit their letters on their own directly to the CRF through the referee portal. Confirm the e-mail addresses of your two references and then add them to the “References” section of your application through the online application portal. **Please make sure these emails are correct. It is your responsibility to notify your referees of the deadline date and request.** Your references will be notified via e-mail that you have requested a reference letter and given

instructions for submitting their letter online. Materials submitted by your references will then be automatically added to your application. Please note that since letters of reference are to be submitted on their own, kindly encourage those writing your reference letters to submit them by the application deadline. The UVC is not responsible for late submissions.

Do I need to submit a language evaluation?

Only those applicants conducting research in an officially recognized national language that is different from their own are required to submit a language evaluation. Such an evaluation should be conducted by a qualified evaluator and must test and clearly state the applicant's level of language proficiency. If you are conducting research in your own native language, you are not required to submit a language evaluation.

Should the language evaluator send in the report of my level of language proficiency, or can I include it in the application that I submit to the CRF?

Language evaluators must submit their evaluations on their own directly to the CRF through the relevant portal. Confirm the e-mail address of your language evaluator and then add the evaluator to the "Language Evaluations" section of your CRF online application portal. The evaluator will be notified by e-mail that you have requested an evaluation and given instructions to complete the evaluation report online. Materials submitted by your language evaluator will be automatically added to your application. Since language evaluations are to be submitted separately from your online application, please encourage the language evaluator to submit their evaluation by the CRF deadline. The UVC is not responsible for late submissions.

Do reference letters and language evaluations need to be submitted in English?

All application materials must be in either English or French?

Can I send in my application even if my reference letters and language evaluation have not been received?

Yes. You are strongly advised to upload your completed application well in advance of the deadline. Do not wait for your reference letters and language evaluation to be received by the UVC before you submit your completed application.

Incoming items will be automatically added to your application upon receipt.

Can my language evaluator(s) be written and tested by my referee?

No, your reference letters and language evaluators may not be written by the same person.

Are there formatting requirements for the research proposal?

Yes. The research proposal, including the bibliography and budget outline, should not exceed ten (10) pages and must be collated as a single document. Proposals must use Times New Roman

12-point font, be double-spaced, and have one-inch margins. All pages must be numbered and have the applicant's name in the upper right-hand corner. Proposals must be uploaded in Adobe Portable Document Format (.PDF).

Can photographs, charts, and graphs be included in the research proposal?

Yes, but these must appear within the ten pages allowed for the entire proposal.

Do I need to submit academic transcripts with my application?

No, academic transcripts are not required for your application. However, if nominated, the program will request a photocopy of the applicant's highest university degree.

Awarding of Grants

When will the research grant awards be announced?

All nominees and waitlisted candidates will be informed about their outcome by approximately the end of February 2019.

What are the selection procedures?

CRF research grant applications are reviewed by a selection committee nominated by the CRP's research directorate to serve on the CRF Selection Committee. Grants are awarded based on established peer-review procedures and standards. The CRF Selection Committee is made up of internationally distinguished scholars, policymakers, and practitioners.

How many grants are awarded?

Approximately 7-9 CRF research grants may be offered in a given year. The final number will be based on the quality of proposals and by the prerogative of the selection committee.

What must I submit if my application is selected for a CRF research grant?

1. An official letter from the grantee's home institution or organization indicating the acceptance of the terms of the grant award and support for the applicant's research project, which must be written on institutional stationery, signed and dated by the relevant head of administration.
2. A photocopy of the grantee's highest university degree.
3. A signed statement by the grantee declaring that all grant research will be completed within the time stipulated and that the grant funding will be used only for research activities proposed in the grant application.
4. Copy of the biodata page of grantee's passport.

Once these documents have been received and approved by the program, an award letter will be sent confirming award status.

Please note that all selected grantees will be required to submit a detailed budget itemizing the funds needed to complete the proposed research, which is taken into consideration in determining the final grant amount.

You will also be asked to confirm your availability to attend the preparatory and capstone workshops respectively.

When can I begin my research, if my proposal is selected for funding?

Grantees are expected to commence research as soon as amounts and budgets are finalized with the UVC.

What is the grant amount?

CRF research grant awards vary depending on the research activities supported but will likely not exceed the £17,000 allotted amount for individual research projects. We expect the inclusion of a brief, but feasible budget outline to fit appropriately within the page limit required.

What do CRF research grants cover?

CRF research grants cover necessary equipment (within reason), books and articles, research/fieldwork-related travel, project design and development support, and editorial and professional/institutional support, which entail costs related to the dissemination and presentation of the fellow's research. Teaching buy-outs and visiting fellowships will support a fellow's time for up to a 6-month period and the funding amount will cover a fraction of his or her teaching salary. Applicants should price out the cost of the total number of days needed to conduct their online desk research and finish writing the output designated for the CRF.

What do CRF research grants NOT cover?

Grants do not cover university overhead, individual or institutional contributions, social security, or other insurance programs. They cannot be used for payment on loans, mortgages, or other personal indebtedness or storage of personal or household effects.

Does the CRF offer administrative support for travel visas and research clearance?

No. While CRF research grants cover visa costs, grantees are responsible for obtaining their own visas, official documentation, and research clearances. Grantees may wish to consult an Institutional Review Board (IRB) on their own for ethical approval of their research plan.

If I receive a CRF research grant, is it compulsory that I attend the two grantee workshops?

Yes. Attendance at the CRF workshops, for which you will be asked to prepare specific materials and presentations linked to your research, is mandatory. Failure to attend can lead to the termination of your award. By applying you understand that, if selected, your presence will be required.

Do I have to pay my way to attend and participate in the workshops?

No. The SSRC will make all necessary arrangements and cover your travel, accommodation and living expenses related to workshop attendance, and these need not be included in the project budgets. In special circumstances, grantees will be reimbursed for the full costs of independently arranged travel.

What kinds of outputs or products are expected from CRF grantees at the conclusion of their projects?

Research outputs/products may include, but are not limited to, the following:

Books

Policy briefs

Edited Volume Chapters

Articles/essays

Occasional/Working papers

Can I take time off from the fellowship to take classes, teach or generally work?

Ideally, the fellowship should be completed within a continuous block of time. However, the program is willing to work with candidates who need to separate the research and write-up periods due to other previous commitments such as teaching and course obligations. Fellows may not work on other projects during the research portion of their fellowship, but concomitant work during the write-up period will be assessed by the program on a case by case basis.

May I do the write-up portion of my fellowship in a different country than the one where I conducted my research?

Yes, but you need to clearly explain and justify why this would be necessary.

Do research grants go directly to grantees or are they channeled through the recipient's university or organization?

CRF research grants are paid directly to the grantees in separate installments, pending submission and approval of required progress reports at the beginning and towards the end of the project. In addition to the Interim and Final progress reports, grantees are expected to submit a draft publication before the second workshop.

I am currently applying for several research grants/fellowships. Should I be awarded an CRF research grant, can I also accept funding from other sources?

Yes. However, please note that no awardee may hold two concurrent SSRC fellowships/grants at the same time. Should you receive two different SSRC fellowships/grants simultaneously, you will be asked to forego one of your own choosing.

Current beneficiaries of an SSRC fellowship/grant may apply for a CRF grant only if their current award will be completed by the time the CRF 2019 grant commences.