Request for Proposals

Transregional Collaboratory on the Indian Ocean

OVERVIEW

The Social Science Research Council’s Transregional Collaboratory on the Indian Ocean was established in 2019, with generous support from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, to catalyze research into the intersections of social and environmental change in the region. Drawing together scholars and institutions from across the globe, the program funds cutting-edge social inquiry about the Indian Ocean region. It also supports the development of new models of international research partnerships, grounded in principles of ethical collaboration and equity in the production and dissemination of knowledge in and about the Global South. The Collaboratory’s inaugural funding phase, in 2020, focused on the collaborative research planning process, and supported the work of eight interdisciplinary research teams through the Transregional Planning Grants initiative.

This year, the Collaboratory invites proposals for 12-month collaborative research grants to conduct fully conceptualized research projects that deepen understanding of the effects of political, economic, and social processes in contexts of profound climate and environmental change in and across Indian Ocean countries. This competition is open to research teams intending to embark on new research projects or to expand research in progress in novel directions.

Collaborative research grant funds may be used for field research or other data collection, networking and communications, or other activities beneficial to the conducting and dissemination of collaborative research. In addition to their funded proposals, researchers will participate in workshops organized by the program, focusing on themes such as the modes of collaborative knowledge production, the advancement of ethical practices related to research collaboration and transregional inquiry, and others that emerge from the grant cohorts themselves. Teams will receive up to $50,000 for research-related costs. We expect applicants’ research plans, methodologies, and budgets to reflect the realities of our current global context—for instance, through the creative use of virtual methods for meeting, collaboration, or data collection, and emphasizing limited, intraregional travel. Applicants are encouraged to apply only for the amount of funding their teams will realistically need in a 12-month period, which may fall below the maximum grant amount.

ELIGIBILITY

We strongly encourage applications that bridge disciplinary and geographic boundaries, and propose fresh approaches to the study of the Indian Ocean and its subregions. Grants are open to scholars and professionals working in the social sciences, humanities, and allied disciplines, including the physical and natural sciences where relevant. Research teams should consist of three to six core members, including a principal investigator (PI) and up to two co-PIs. Team members should be able to demonstrate some previous experience working together, in either planning or executing research-informed projects. The lead PI should hold an earned doctoral degree in a relevant field and must be based at an institution located in an Indian Ocean country. Preference may be given to teams led by researchers based in countries where fewer funding resources have historically been available. Co-PIs and other team members may hold or be working toward a postgraduate degree, or have attained a relevant professional qualification. These individuals may not necessarily be based in the Indian Ocean but should demonstrate professional experience relevant to the region. Finally, the project should be transregional in its geographic focus and/or in the composition of the research team.
TO APPLY

The deadline for applications is April 26, 2021, at 12:00 p.m. Eastern time. All applications must be submitted using the online application portal at http://apply.ssrc.org. The principal investigator must complete the online form and upload all required documents on behalf, and with the consent, of the research team.

A complete application includes:
* Online application form
* Research proposal (no more than 12 pages). Click here to view proposal requirements.
* Current CV summary of the lead PI and up to two Co-PIs, where relevant (two to three pages each). CVs should include the following details: education and employment history, relevant research experience, honors and awards, professional affiliations, language skills, and a list of no more than five relevant publications.
* Proposed budget (two pages)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Selection Criteria
In addition to the strength of the proposal with regard to innovative ideas, research plan, and methods, the selection panel will consider elements such as interdisciplinarity, the transregional nature of the project, and diversity and composition of the proposed research teams. Demonstrated commitment to the ethics of collaborative research will also serve as an important factor in the selection process.

Research Themes
We seek to support research that examines the social dimensions of environmental change in and across Indian Ocean countries. We particularly welcome proposals that incorporate Southeast Asia or small island societies.

Social dimensions of your research might include (but are not limited to) the broad themes of political organization or conflict, religious or other cultural components of livelihoods and adaptation, historical events or processes relevant to contemporary issues, gender dimensions of adaptation, commercial and economic policies or practices, migration or other movements of people, and interregional connections or comparisons.

Environmental dynamics that applicants may address include (but are not limited to) natural resource management and use, infrastructural development, spatial transformation in island and coastal contexts, rising sea levels, changing weather patterns, and natural disasters.

For details about application requirements and other useful information, visit our Frequently Asked Questions page.

Please contact program staff at icollaboratory@ssrc.org if you have additional questions or for further guidance in preparing your application.