

Frequently Asked Questions

APN Collaborative Working Group Research Grants

ELIGIBILITY

Who can be a member of an APN Collaborative Working Group?

Members of an APN Collaborative Working Group must be African citizens and resident in African countries. They should be based at regional/sub-regional organizations or civil society organizations as well as universities and research institutions.

Can the APN Collaborative Working Group Research Grant support individual research?

No. The Collaborative Working Group Research Grant cannot be used to support individual research. Applications for the Collaborative Working Group Research Grant have to be submitted on behalf of a research group/team by a senior academic/practitioner (of a professorial rank) based at or affiliated with an African university. The senior academic will put together and lead the research team, and is responsible for identifying an institution that will host the group's research activities and meetings.

If you are interested in an individual project, please consult the APN's [Individual Research Grant](#) program for more information.

What is the minimum/maximum size of a Collaborative Working Group?

Collaborative Working Groups should consist of a minimum of five and a maximum of six individual applicants, including the lead investigator.

Must the applicants have worked together on a project in the past (SSRC-related or otherwise)?

Not necessarily. The SSRC encourages applications from new, as well as already established, groups.

Is there an age limit?

While there is no age limit, Collaborative Working Group Research Grants are ideally meant for joint teams of mid-career and junior academics, practitioners, activists, and policymakers, and led by a senior academic/practitioner. Preference will be given to teams that reflect a range of professional, regional, disciplinary, generational, gender, and regional diversities, and are made up of Africans based at or affiliated with universities; regional organizations; government agencies; or nongovernmental, media, or civil society organizations on the continent. While the lead investigator must have a PhD, junior lecturers and practitioners are expected to hold at least a master's degree with two or more years of research or work experience.

Am I eligible if I do not hold a PhD?

The lead investigator must hold a PhD. However, junior lecturers or practitioners with a master's degree from an accredited university and research or work experience of at least two years, may be included in an application for a collaborative research grant. Junior academics who are currently enrolled in PhD programs are eligible and encouraged to be members of research groups.

How many PhD holders can belong to a group?

In addition to the lead investigator, each group is encouraged to include at least one PhD holder.

I am applying as the lead investigator, but I currently hold a faculty position at a university outside Africa. Am I eligible?

As a lead investigator, you must be based at or affiliated with an African university. If, however, you are currently temporarily stationed outside of Africa, you must include a note in your application that guarantees engagement with and return to your African university affiliation before the start of the Collaborative Working Group grant period.

How many members of the Collaborative Working Group are allowed to be based in institutions outside of Africa?

APN prefers that no more than one member of the Collaborative Working Group be based in an institution outside of Africa, and the rest based within institutions in the African continent. This member has to supply evidence to the APN of sustained engagement with African research institutions, universities, and/or organizations.

I am applying as part of a group and have full-time employment in Africa, but I am temporarily stationed outside Africa. Am I eligible?

Yes, you may be part of a group application. However you (or the lead investigator) must supply the APN with a letter of employment/affiliation to an Africa-based institution/university.

Will the program support my enrollment in a degree-awarding program at a university?

No. APN Collaborative Working Group Research Grants support only APN-specific research, including fieldwork and related networking activities..

What disciplines are eligible?

APN collaborative working group research grants are open to 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 an issue related to African peacebuilding.

I am a former APN grant recipient. Am I still eligible to apply?

Yes. The APN strongly encourages collaboration and group formation among its Alumni.

APPLICATION PROCESS

How do I apply for an APN Collaborative Working Group Research Grant?

The lead investigator is required to submit the required application materials through the SSRC's online portal: <http://soap.ssrc.org/>.

Guidelines and required materials are available on the competition page: <http://www.ssrc.org/fellowships/collaborative-working-group-grants/>.

The university-based lead investigator of the collaborative working group, who must also be a senior academic or senior practitioner with a strong research background in African peace and security studies, should submit an application, including a two-page letter of interest, on behalf of the group through the SSRC's Online Application Portal (SOAP). Required application materials include the following:

1. Completed Application Form
2. Letter of Interest (not exceeding two pages)
3. Lead Investigator's CV
4. Research Proposal & Bibliography
5. Proposed Research Timeline
6. Proposed Research Budget
7. List of All Team Members, including their names, affiliations, professional backgrounds, and highest degree levels attained
8. Two Reference Letters
9. Language evaluation(s) (if required)

All applications must be uploaded through our online portal and must be submitted in English, with the exception of reference letters, which must be accompanied by an English translation if not originally written in English.

If you have any questions, please contact APN staff at apn@ssrc.org, or by telephone at (+1) 718-517-3669.

All materials must be submitted **no later than 11:59pm (EST) on January 5, 2018**.

What does the letter of interest entail?

The letter of interest should include the title of the project, research questions/hypotheses; objectives; methodology; research activities; potential contribution to existing knowledge and practice; feasibility of the research project being proposed; and the names of additional team members. A description of the expected host institution, specifying how it will contribute to the capacities and work of other members of the team, is also encouraged.

Do I need to submit my application in English?

Yes, applications materials must be in English.

How many grants will be awarded?

Up to two APN Collaborative Working Group Research Grants will be awarded.

What is the amount of the grant?

Each grant will be supported by a maximum amount of USD \$60,000.

How much research time does the grant support?

Each grant supports a Collaborative Working Group for a period of eighteen months.

Do you have samples of previous proposals that have been awarded grants?

No. Applicants can, however, consult the SSRC publication “On The Art of Writing Proposals” for advice on writing proposals and preparing project statements (free download available at <http://www.ssrc.org/publications/view/7A9CB4F4-815F-DE11-BD80-001CC477EC70/>).

You may also refer to the list of past recipients and project titles on our website:

<https://www.ssrc.org/search/?t=fellows&sort=year&fellowship%5B%5D=APN%20Collaborative%20Working%20Group%20Research%20Grants>.

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

Yes, but they should fall within the stipulated page limits for the research proposal.

AWARDING OF GRANTS

When will the research grant awards be announced?

All applicants will be informed about the outcome of the competition no later than May 2018. Grantees will be expected to commence their projects no later than June 1, 2018.

What are the selection procedures?

APN Collaborative Working Group Research Grant applications are reviewed by a selection committee drawn from the APN Advisory Board. Grants are awarded based on established peer-review procedures and standards. The APN Advisory Board is made up of internationally distinguished scholars, policymakers, and practitioners.

What do I do if my group's application is selected for an APN Collaborative Working Group Research Grant?

Once a team has been notified of its nomination, the following documents are required to finalize award processing:

1. An official letter from the Collaborative Working Group's host institution or organization indicating the acceptance of the terms of the grant award and support for the group's research project, which must be written on institutional stationery, signed and dated by the relevant head of administration;
2. A photocopy of all members' highest university degree;
3. Copies of all group members' CVs/resumes;
4. A signed statement by each group member (including the lead investigator) 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. All signatures must be on one document; and,
5. Copies of the biodata page of each member's passport.

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

Do Collaborative Working Group Research Grants go directly to grantees, or are they channeled through the recipient's university or organization?

APN Collaborative Working Group Research Grants are paid in three installments to the host institution or university. More information will be provided upon nomination of the award.

What do APN research grants cover?

APN Collaborative Working Group Research Grants cover relevant books and articles, project design and development support, necessary equipment (within reason), research/fieldwork-related travel, editorial and professional/institutional support for publications, and conference costs and related travel for dissemination activities.

What do APN research grants NOT cover?

Grants will not fully cover university overhead or institutional contributions exceeding five (5) percent of the total budget, nor will they cover individual salary support, social security, or other insurance programs. They cannot be used for payment on loans, mortgages, other personal indebtedness, or the storage of personal or household effects.

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

No. While APN research grants cover visa costs, grantees are responsible for obtaining their own visas, official documentation, and research clearances. Grantees will be responsible for consulting an Institutional Review Board (IRB) on their own and having their proposed research approved before any involvement of human subjects may begin.

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

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

- Books
- Policy briefs
- Articles/essays
- Occasional/Working papers
- Newsletters

Are Collaborative Working Groups expected to publish during and/or after the completion of their research projects?

Yes. Collaborative Working Groups and their members are expected to publish their findings during the course of the project as well as after its completion. They are strongly encouraged to hold policy-engagement activities, and to publish their findings or outputs with the APN and other reputable publishers and platforms.

Are individual group members allowed to apply simultaneously for an APN Individual Research Grant?

No. Applicants must decide before the deadline whether to apply for an Individual Research Grant, or as part of a Collaborative Working Group. Individuals may not hold both grants simultaneously.

Some group members are currently applying for several outside research grants/fellowships. Should our group be awarded an APN Collaborative Working Group Research Grant, can individual members also accept funding from other sources?

Yes. However, if the person is a current beneficiary of an SSRC fellowship/grant, they will not be eligible to apply for another SSRC grant at the same time, unless their current award will be completed by the time the APN grant commences in June 2018.

Please note that no awardee may hold two concurrent SSRC fellowships/grants at the same time. Should a grantee receive two different SSRC fellowships/grants simultaneously, they will be asked to forego one of their own choosing.