Nation, Identity and History: Towards New Agendas

Small Grants Program | Cycle 7

" Nation, Identity and History: Towards New Agendas"

Cycle 1

2024

Applications open on June 5, 2024

Application deadline on August 5, 2024

Introduction

The Arab Council for the Social Sciences (ACSS) is pleased to launch the seventh cycle of its Small Grants Program and the first on the theme of "Nation, Identity and History."

This grant, with a duration of 2-3 months, supports individual researchers up to three years out of the PhD and PhD students in advanced stages of their studies, in the social sciences and humanities, to conduct a research project on the Arab region on the theme of “Nation, Identity and History.”

A grant of up to USD3,000 is available for individual researchers; two to three grantees will be selected to benefit from the grant this first cycle.

This program supports research proposals based on new or ongoing projects, including:

- Initial or "pilot" phase of a new project,
- Specific phase of ongoing projects combining fieldwork and analysis, and
- Proposals to develop previous projects, for example seeking new cases and field sites.

This program is funded through a grant provided to the Arab Council for the Social Sciences by the Constantine Zurayk Cultural Foundation for a program entitled “Nation, Identity and History: Towards New Agendas”.

Program Description

The program aims at promoting research that is inspired by the seminal work of Dr. Constantine Zurayk (1909-2000). The program encourages young scholars to explore and build on Zurayk’s scholarship, revolving around questions of nation, identity, and history.

Zurayk’s writings included historical studies as well as theoretical reflections on history writing and making. They were inspired by the dramatic events that he witnessed, from the Nakba of 1948 and the defeat of 1967 up to the wars and civil wars of the region. Zurayk’s work was characterized by intellectual rigor as well as moral probity and courage, engaging the realities of the region and addressing the concerns of the moment. He advocated an Arab nationalism that was humanistic and non-essentialist and rejected all forms of determinisms. His humanist and interdisciplinary work speaks to our times and inspires new reflections on nation, identity and history.

In November 2011, Zurayk’s daughters Drs. Huda, Afaf, and Hanan Zurayk donated his papers to the American University of Beirut Library and the description of the archive can be found now under the title “Constantine Zurayk Collection, 1909-2000”:
https://www.aub.edu.lb/Libraries/asc/Collections/Documents/FindingAids/ConstantineZuraykCollectionFA.pdf

Suggested Approaches

The ACSS Constantine Zurayk program supports research on his legacy: this could be work on the archived collection mentioned above or the study of some aspects of his work. The program encourages as well, new explorations of the notions of nation, identity and history broadly construed. In the past fifty years, scholars have used feminist, transnational, postcolonial cultural, and indigenous theory and methods (among others) to push our conceptions of nation, identity, and history. Through their scholarship, they have questioned both the significance of these categories, the power they carry, and their meanings both on a global and intimate levels. The program is particularly interested in scholars whose research pushes the bounds of these themes both theoretically and methodologically. Candidates are encouraged to utilize a broad range of scholarly methods and approaches in their projects, and should not be limited to disciplinary or national boundaries.

The program encourages applicants who wish to work on the Constantine Zurayk Archive housed at the American University of Beirut's library. However, using the archive is not a requirement for proposal acceptance.

Eligibility Criteria

Nationality and Citizenship

This call is open to:

1) Citizens of an Arab country (defined as a country belonging to the League of Arab States),

2) Refugees and/or stateless individuals from Arab countries residing in the Arab region,

3) Researchers residing outside the Arab region who hold Arab citizenship or are refugees and/or stateless individuals from the Arab region, and

4) Applicants residing outside the Arab region who carry a non-Arab passport but are originally from an Arab country.

Junior Scholars:

This program targets only:

1. Scholars who are 0-3 years out of a PhD program in the social sciences or humanities (obtained from within or outside the Arab region). Applicants should have obtained their PhDs at the time of application. Applicants who received their PhD **before the year 2021** are not eligible to apply to this program.
2. PhD students at advanced stages of their studies in the social sciences or humanities (dissertation write up stage) enrolled at universities within or outside the Arab region.

Required Documents

Applicants are required to create an account and a Profile Page on the ACSS Applications Platform, then apply to the grant using the online application form for the Small Grants Program, and provide the following supporting documents:

- Detailed CV including academic qualifications and publications (with links if publications are available online)
- One-page cover letter explaining the purpose of the application
- Proof of nationality (copy of a valid passport or identification card). Applicants who are originally from an Arab state, but carry a non-Arab passport, should provide evidence of their Arab origin.
- Project proposal (four to six double spaced pages) detailing the activities that the applicant intends to undertake during the grant period. *Please note that all submitted proposals will be checked on a plagiarism detection software.*
- Copy of the PhD degree or proof of enrollment in a PhD program and stage of studies. PhD students should provide evidence that they have finished their course-work, their thesis topic has been approved and they are advanced in writing their dissertation.
- Completed Project Timeline and Outputs Form. Outputs must be realistically aligned with the grant timeline.
- Completed Project Budget Request Form . The budget may include fieldwork expenses (field accommodation, travel and transportation related to the research, and living expenses), consultations to develop the project, purchase of research equipment and other supplies as well as stipend for principal investigator and/or research assistance (maximum of 25% of the proposed budget).

The Grants and Fellowships Unit at the Arab Council for the Social Sciences will review each budget on a case-by-case basis. Please note that the total and detailed approved budget may not necessarily correspond to the one requested.

Disciplinary Focus

The Small Grants Program is open to any discipline in the social sciences and humanities and allied and interdisciplinary fields. Core disciplines include anthropology, demography, economics, history, political science, psychology, sociology, philosophy, literary studies and art history. Allied and interdisciplinary fields include architecture, geography, education, law, public health, gender studies, cultural studies, media studies, development studies and urban studies.

Proposal Writing Guidelines

Suggested proposals can be based on fieldwork or archival research. Support can be provided for write -up or analysis of already collected data.

Proposals should include the following components:

- Background and significance of the research
- Research problem and research questions
- Theoretical framework
- Literature review
- Methodology and ethical considerations.

For more information on proposal writing guidelines, click here.

Proposed Outputs

Outputs may include, but are not limited to, research papers and/or articles for publication, archival studies, book manuscript, blog or e-zine essay, proposal for funding a new project, chapter in a dissertation, pedagogical resources and digital archives or databases. In addition, the ACSS requires grantees to produce a working paper within the ACSS Working Papers Series.

Selection Process

A multidisciplinary Selection Committee composed of distinguished Arab scholars with established research and publication records and experience in regional research and teaching will review and select proposals for funding. The selection procedures abide by the highest standards of academic and ethical judgment.

The committee evaluates proposals based on the following evaluation criteria:

- Research proposal's contribution to knowledge (significance, quality, and originality)
- Feasibility and clarity of the proposed research plan (realistic timeframe and appropriate research methods)
- Applicant's competence (academic credentials, existing and potential publications)
- Expected outputs and planned publications.

Two to three grantees will be selected to benefit from the grant this first cycle.

By submitting the electronic application, applicants affirm that they agree, without any objections, to the evaluation and selection results as decided and announced by the Selection Committee and the Arab Council for the Social Sciences. Applicants who are unsuccessful will not be informed of the specific reasons for rejection.

Results will be communicated to applicants during the second week of September 2024.

Terms of the Grant

Successful applicants are expected to comply with the following project requirements:

- Respond to requests for clarification or elaboration put forward by the Selection Committee in its preliminary acceptance decision; submit a revised proposal, timeline and budget.
- Specify grant duration: from two to three months between October 2024 and March 2025.
- Sign a contract specifying the budget, timeline, outputs, and researcher's obligations.
- Attend and present research project at the Seventh Conference of the Arab Council for the Social Sciences, that will be held in Spring 2025. The cost of attending this event should not be budgeted for. It will be covered directly by the ACSS.

- Submit a narrative and financial report, including original receipts for all project expenses.
- Produce the outputs specified in the contract and submit a working paper within the ACSS Working Paper Series, which is a peer-reviewed publication.(Please see the guidelines for the Working Paper Series here.)

The budget

The budget should not exceed USD3000 and cannot include: travel expenses for conference participation or registration fees and participation in workshops.

- Top of Form

The budget should clearly indicate whether other sources of funding are already available or have been applied for and which items would be fully or partially covered by other sources. The Selection Committee and the ACSS staff will review each budget on a case-by-case basis. Please note that the total and detailed budget may not necessarily correspond to the one requested.

Timeline

June 5, 2024: Application forms are available online.

August 5, 2024: Deadline for submissions.

Second week of September 2024: Decisions are communicated to applicants.

End of September 2024: Accepted applicants sign their contracts.

October 2024 to March 2025: Grant duration of 2-3 months within this period.

December 2024 to June 2025: Submission of final reports and grant outputs.

Spring 2025: Attend and present research results during at the Seventh ACSS Conference which will be held in Lebanon.

Applicants are advised to consult the Frequently Asked Questions and the checklist prior to submitting their application.

For inquiries about the grant, please direct your questions to the Grants and Fellowships Unit on the following email address: grants@theacss.org

For questions related to the online application process and technical issues, please contact the IT Officer, Wassim Alam, on the following email address: alam@theacss.org