ISRF Mid-Career Research Fellowships (MCF3)
Providing Research Support in Interdisciplinary Social Science

Please read these details carefully before commencing an application or contacting the Independent Social Research Foundation (ISRF) with a query.

Section A - General Details

1. **Aim:** The Independent Social Research Foundation wishes to support independent-minded researchers to do interdisciplinary work which is unlikely to be funded by existing funding bodies. It is interested in original research ideas which take new approaches, and suggest new solutions, to real world social problems.

2. **Eligible Applicants**: Scholars from within Europe are eligible to apply. Applicants will normally hold a salaried position at an Institution of Higher Education and Research. Candidates should be 10 years or more from the year of their PhD award. However, a shorter time from PhD award may exceptionally be considered, if the candidate has other qualifications to be considered as mid-career (these might include: length of appointment to permanent post, seniority, teaching responsibilities). Career breaks may also be taken into account. The awards are intended as providing full relief from all teaching duties and all associated academic administration for a period of (up to) one year; applications may be made by those whose sole or principal post is a part-time equivalent.

3. **Eligible Research**: Innovative research which breaks with existing explanatory frameworks so as to address afresh empirical problems with no currently adequate theory or investigative methodology. Innovation may also come from controversial theoretical approaches motivated by critical challenge of incumbent theories. Interdisciplinarity in the generation of new investigative initiatives may be achieved by combining, cross-fertilising, and so transforming empirical methods and theoretical insights from the social sciences. Projects ranging across the breadth of the social scientific disciplines and interdisciplinary research fields are welcome, and relevant applications from scholars working within the humanities are also encouraged.

4. **Duration and Timing:** The awards are intended as providing full relief from all teaching duties and all associated academic administration for a period of up to one year, and must be taken up no later than end of December 2017.

5. **Value:** The amount of an award depends on the nature of the work proposed and individual circumstances – the ISRF expects applications for grants up to a maximum of £60,000 to buy-out the cost of all teaching and associated administration in the applicant's home institution for up to 12 months. Within that sum, reasonable support for research expenses may be considered on a matched-funding basis with the host Institution.

6. **Terms and Conditions:** The ISRF reserves the right to extend the deadline for the competition. A short final report will be required. Award holders may be invited to present their findings in person to the Foundation's academic representatives. ISRF's support to be acknowledged in all public presentation of research. Full Terms & Conditions governing awards will be provided to successful applicants in their formal offer, based on the draft

general terms and conditions available on the ISRF website. **Formal acceptance of the award must be completed by the end of December 2016.**

Section B - The Application

1. **Joint/Group Applications:** The competition is open to individuals who wish to undertake a piece of original research. Where more than one researcher wishes to seek funds for the same project, each person should submit a separate application and clearly demonstrate what his or her specific contribution to the project will be. Each application will be treated on its own merits, and applicants should be aware that the Committee may decide not to fund either or all individuals seeking funds for the same project.

2. **Applications to Other Funding Bodies:** Applicants may apply without prejudice to other funding bodies. If applications for identical projects were successful it would be expected that only one award (i.e. either the ISRF or another) would be accepted. If applications for either wholly or partly different projects are successful there should be no duplication in the budget headings funded by the ISRF and another body.

3. **The Research Proposal:** All applicants will be expected to provide the following details as part of their proposal (maximum of 1750 words total; 250 words per section):

    *   **The Research Idea:** The innovative thesis of the project.
    *   **Background:** Current research reference points and their limitations.
    *   **The Focus:** How the research provides a fresh approach to real-life problems.
    *   **Theoretical novelty:** What conceptual innovation the research is aiming at.
    *   **Methodology:** How different disciplinary inputs will interact in empirical inquiry.
    *   **Work Plan:** How the work will be organised over the award period and what outputs are intended.
    *   **Outcome:** What further steps and what longer-term outcome are envisaged.

4. **The Submitted Application:** This will be read by academic evaluators who are social scientists but not necessarily in the applicant's own field; applicants should bear this in mind when writing their application.

    In order to be considered for the award, all applications must comprise the following:

    *   A completed Application Form, which will include:

        -   An Abstract (300 words) of the research's aims, methods, contribution to knowledge, and value in realising the goals of ISRF.
        -   A completed Research Project Proposal form (1750 words total; 250 words per section)
        -   A Budget comprising a full outline of employment costs. If matched-funded research expenses are included for consideration, an explanation should be given as to why these are deemed necessary.

London Office: 62 Bayswater Road, London, W2 3PS | **Tel:** +44 (0) 20 7262 0196 | **Email:** admin@isrf.org

Head Office: Heiligkreuz 6, P.O. Box 129, Vaduz 9490, Liechtenstein | **Registered in Liechtenstein:** FL-0002.269.506-8

- A Curriculum Vitae – including list of publications

- A Letter of Support from a recognised scholar in the applicant's field of interest, covering:

  - The applicant's status (personal academic reference).
  - The research proposed (brief comment on how this meets the ISRF criteria).
  - Why the research would not be funded by existing resources.

  This must be sent **from the nominated scholar** direct to ISRF.

5. **Institutional Approval:** Applicants must confirm that their home institution is aware of their application, and should provide the contact details for the relevant Administrative Officer. Should your application progress, this Officer (Institutional Approver) will be asked to confirm, on behalf of your department and institution that:

   - You will be granted the period and proportion of time requested in the Duration and Timing section;
   - If replacement costs are requested, you will be in receipt of your normal salary during tenure of the award and the institution will provide cover;
   - If research expenses are sought, this request has the support of the head of department/ school and institution, who will confirm that these will be matched.

   Therefore, it is advisable that you ensure that your Head of Department is in agreement with the content of your application before you submit.

6. **Application Procedure:** Applicants are expected to submit their complete application electronically via the online application system, in English. Alternative methods of application (i.e. postal applications) are available in certain circumstances – please contact the ISRF to discuss this.

   Completed applications must arrive no later than **4:00pm on 19th February 2016**. Letters of Support must arrive, by email to the address below, direct from the supporter, no later than 26th February 2016.

   A candidate may submit only **one** application. Applicants can expect to be informed of the result of their applications by email by the end of July 2016.

   Application Queries: Telephone +44 (0) 20 7262 0196 or email **applications2016@isrf.org**

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