Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies

Visiting Research Fellowships

2027 – 2028 Application Guidelines

The Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies promotes excellence in the study of Islam and Muslim societies. The Centre has developed an international network of personal and institutional contacts to enable liaison, dialogue and exchange between the Islamic and Western worlds of learning. Protocols of academic cooperation exist between the Centre and many institutions worldwide, facilitating the exchange of scholars and researchers. The Centre's programme of Visiting Fellowships and Scholarships plays a key role in these international activities. Since its inception in 1987 the programme has brought scholars and students from more than 50 countries in Asia, Africa, the Americas and Europe to Oxford.

Current research at the Centre is concentrated within five broad areas, but we welcome fellowship applications from scholars conducting research on a diverse range of topics: Muslim Societies Past and Present; Identity and Citizenship: Muslims in Britain and the West; Classical Islamic Sciences; Economic and Human Development and Islamic Finance; Science, Technology, Environment and Muslim Societies.

Applications invited for the academic year from October 2027 to June 2028. Non-stipendiary Visiting Research Fellowships are also available for shorter periods.

The applications window will open in November 2026 and close in January 2027 for stipendiary Visiting Research Fellowships.

Applications for non-stipendiary affiliation may also be made in a second round, which if available, will open from March to May 2027 for an October 2027 entry.

Application Round

- Two Visiting Research Fellowships are open to citizens of countries in Asia or Africa and are intended to encourage interaction among academics from different traditions of learning. Preference will be given to those studying classical Islamic sciences, although other areas in the humanities and social sciences will also be considered.

- Applicants should normally be at the postdoctoral or equivalent level. Each Visiting Research Fellow will be provided with a research allowance of £7,500 (with waiver of any hosting fees), working space, and membership of the Common Room.

Visiting Research Fellowships are intended as a supplementary award and may be held in conjunction with other research grants, stipends, or sabbatical salaries. Visiting Research Fellows are expected to devote their time to research and writing and to participate in the Centre's academic activities.

Applying for a Visiting Research Fellowship

A full application consists of the following documents uploaded to the Centre's website (items 1-4 by the applicant and item 5 by the applicant's referees):

(1) Completed application form (via the Centre's website at https://www.oxcis.ac.uk/visiting-fellowships)
(2) A brief description of proposed research (up to 1000 words)
(3) Samples of publications, if available (a maximum of two)
(4) A curriculum vitae
(5) Letters of recommendation (signed and dated) from two persons familiar with the applicant's work, should be uploaded by the applicant's referees to: https://www.oxcis.ac.uk/form/ref-letter-submission-form-vrf. Please note it is the responsibility of the applicant to share this URL with their referees.

It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that all application materials including recommendation letters are submitted by the closing date. Complete applications will be acknowledged.

Selection Process

All eligible applications will be considered by the Centre's Visiting Research Fellowships Selection Committee, through screening, shortlisting and selection stages. Outcomes are generally notified by early March.

The criteria for selection of Visiting Research Fellows are:

- evidence of academic excellence including quality of publications
- relevance of the proposed research to the overall aims and current research priorities of the Centre
- potential to contribute to and benefit from interdisciplinary interaction with other Centre Fellows and/or Visiting Research Fellows

At the shortlisting stage applicants may be contacted to verify that they are still interested in pursuing their application and that they have the financial means to take up their award if selected.

All applicants will be contacted with one of the following outcomes:

- An offer of a stipendiary award (if a stipendiary award is requested)
- An offer of a non-stipendiary award with a request for fees to contribute to Centre costs.
- An offer of a non-stipendiary award with no fee payable to the Centre
- A notification that no award has been offered.

Please note that failure to secure a visiting research fellowship does not necessarily reflect on the deemed quality of the application and therefore the Centre does not routinely provide feedback on applications. There are limited numbers of available spaces at the Centre and selection may mean that one high-quality application is favoured over another.

If an offer is made the applicant will receive a letter detailing the exact terms of the award including any stipend payable by the Centre or fee payable to the Centre, together with the proposed dates of the fellowship.

Terms & Conditions of Visiting Research Fellowships

Please note the following terms & conditions for taking up a Visiting Research Fellowship:

- All Visiting Research Fellows are expected to reside in Oxford during the tenure of their fellowship except for vacation periods. University of Oxford term dates can be found at: https://www.ox.ac.uk/about/the-university/facts-and-figures/dates-of-term. Though award holders are responsible for arranging their own accommodation in Oxford, the Academic Office will try to assist where possible. The Centre can offer some accommodation options which are managed by the Bursary.
- Award holders are responsible for obtaining any visas necessary to take up their visiting research fellowship, and for arranging their travel to and from Oxford. The Centre will provide supporting letters for visa applications, but visa and travel costs will not normally be reimbursed.
- Visiting Research Fellows are expected to play a full part in the life of the Centre during their stay. This normally includes attending seminars, delivering at least one Fellows' Seminar and attending lunches and Common Room activities.
- Visiting Research Fellows are expected to acknowledge the Centre in any research publications originating from their time at the Centre and to share copies of these with the Centre.