



Call for Research Project Proposals

New Horizons for Science and Religion in Central and Eastern Europe

The Ian Ramsey Centre for Science and Religion
University of Oxford

Summary

The Ian Ramsey Centre for Science and Religion (IRC) at the University of Oxford is pleased to offer up to four grants of up to \$65,000, four grants of up to \$30,000, eight grants of up to \$15,000 and eight grants of up to \$5000 to individuals or research groups based at Central and Eastern European (CEE) institutions to conduct interdisciplinary research on questions at the intersection of science and religion. Grants will be awarded by competitive evaluation on the basis of project proposals. Proposals must be received by the IRC no later than **30 November 2022**.

Eligibility

Applicants will normally be individual scholars or research teams based at CEE research institutions, including universities, research academies and seminaries. Proposed projects must fall under the project themes, which are outlined below. It is expected that most applications will come from natural scientists, theologians and philosophers, but there are no disciplinary restrictions and applicants with academic backgrounds in other areas are also welcome. The IRC is happy to accept applications led scholars at any stage of their careers. Applications are welcome from researchers working in any religious tradition, and from researchers working in no religious tradition. Prospective applicants unsure of their eligibility are encouraged to get in touch with the IRC at cee.irc@theology.ox.ac.uk.

For the purposes of the project, **CEE is defined as:** Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czechia, the former East Germany, Estonia, Georgia, Hungary, Kosovo, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia and Ukraine.

Themes

Research proposals should focus on Big Questions at the interface of science, theology, and/or philosophy. The Project encourages applications that fall within three broad themes:

science and religion in the CEE context; reason and faith; and persons, mind and cosmos. Suitable topics include:

- The significance of theological traditions for scientific practice today;
- The relations of brains, minds and human persons;
- Whether physical cosmology can explain the origin of the cosmos;
- The role of religion in the historical development of science;
- The place of values in the natural world;
- How the history of CEE has influenced views on science and religion;
- Free will and scientific determinism and/or divine foreknowledge;
- Empirical psychology and the second person perspective;
- Phenomenological approaches to religion;
- Understanding notions of God, good and evil in a scientific age.

For further example areas, applicants are strongly encouraged to visit the [Ian Ramsey Centre's website](#). Proposals with an interdisciplinary component are especially encouraged. Favourable consideration will be given to clear, focused research questions, with the potential for broader implications.

Activities

Research projects may include conferences, colloquia, research leave, visiting speakers, research assistantships, fieldwork, publication, editing, programme development, laboratory work and public engagement. Other activities may be included if a good justification is given for them. The IRC **cannot** fund student scholarships or normal running costs of institutions. If you are in doubt about whether a possible activity would be appropriate, please contact the IRC at cee.irc@theology.ox.ac.uk. We encourage projects to allocate some resources to media documentation, e.g. a website, posters, photography and/or filming at events. These should be included in the final report.

Project leaders shall submit an interim report halfway through the duration of their projects, and a final report at the project's conclusion. Project activities must be finished by 31 August 2024.

Whilst research visits and translation work are permitted as project activities, applicants should note that the IRC also runs **separate competitions** for research fellowships and major translation projects, details of which are [available here](#). It is likely that project proposals that centre on a research visit or translation work will be more appropriate to the competitions dedicated to those purposes.

Application process

Applications for project grants in the second round must be submitted by **30 November 2022**. Applications must be written in English and will include the following documents:

- A completed **proposal form**, including the amount requested, the start and end dates of the project, and an outline of the project's themes and activities;
- A completed **institutional support form**;
- A completed **budget template**;
- A full curriculum vitae of the project leader;

- Short curricula vitae of other members of the team if applicable;
- Any other supporting materials (graphics, institutional media etc.).

All application materials should be submitted via email to cee.irc@theology.ox.ac.uk with the subject line: “Research Project Proposal: New Horizons in CEE”. The IRC will announce the results of the competition by **28 February 2023**. Should you require further information about the application process, please refer to the Frequently Asked Questions below. If your question is not answered, please contact cee.irc@theology.ox.ac.uk.

Frequently Asked Questions

Who can apply?

Individual researchers or groups of researchers based at institutions in Central and Eastern Europe. These institutions will generally be universities but applications from e.g. academies of science, seminaries, research institutes etc. are also welcome and will be in no way disadvantaged. If in doubt about eligibility, please contact cee.irc@theology.ox.ac.uk.

Is there a minimum duration for projects?

There is no fixed minimum duration for projects. Naturally however the IRC seeks to maximise the impact of its grants, and larger projects are expected to normally be of substantial duration.

Is there a maximum duration for projects?

There is no fixed maximum duration for projects, except inasmuch as all project activities must be complete by 31 August 2024.

Do I have to apply for exactly \$5000, \$15,000, \$30,000 or \$65,000?

Applications can be for less than the maximum in any grant bracket, i.e. for any sum up to \$65,000. In general however we encourage projects to benefit from the full amount available within any grant bracket, i.e. to apply for \$5000, \$15,000, \$30,000 or \$65,000.

Which grant bracket should I apply for?

This depends on the scale of the proposed activities, and potential applicants should write to cee.irc@theology.ox.ac.uk for guidance about the budget appropriate to the activities they are proposing. We stress however that there tends to be exceptionally intense competition for \$65,000 grants, and applications for smaller sums are much more likely to be successful.

Who should provide the institutional support?

The proposal form should be signed either by the head of the institution where the host individual or research group is based, or by the head of the relevant faculty/department of that institution.

Which topics are acceptable?

The IRC is focused on three broad areas, ‘Science and Religion in a CEE Context’, ‘Reason and Faith’ and ‘Persons, Mind and Cosmos’. Illustrative lists of questions falling under these areas are available above and [on the IRC website](#), but applicants should by no means feel

obliged to choose one of these questions: creative applications are encouraged. Projects may approach topics within a particular religious tradition, but do not need to do so. Favourable consideration will be given to clear, focused research topics and questions, with the potential for broader implications.

Can I submit a project proposal if I have received other grants from the IRC or if I have participated in other activities of the New Horizons project?

Yes. There are no restrictions arising from participation in other activities of the IRC.

When should the project begin and end?

Project activities can in principle begin as soon as a grant is announced on 28 February 2023, but grants are unlikely to be processed before the end of May. Project activities must be complete by 31 August 2024. It is expected that many projects will run over the 2023/24 academic year, but this is not obligatory.

How will the grant be disbursed?

The host institution will normally receive 50% of the grant after the signature of a project contract with Oxford University, and the remaining 50% halfway through the project's duration, upon receipt of an interim report.

Should my institution contribute to the project in any way?

Host institutions are not expected to incur any extra expense to run the project besides providing work space and facilities to the project team members. However, institutions are welcome to collaborate in other ways if they wish to do so. If your institution is prepared to collaborate further, you should state this in your application.