



# 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 five grants of up to \$65,000, five grants of up to \$30,000, ten grants of up to \$15,000 and fifteen grants of up to \$5000 to individuals or research groups based at recognised 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. There will be two rounds of applications. Proposals submitted for the first round must be received by the IRC no later than **29 May 2020**. The second round of applications is expected to take place early in 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 by either senior or by early-career scholars. 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 the project email address, [cee.irc@theology.ox.ac.uk](mailto: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 <[www.cee.ianramseycentre.info](http://www.cee.ianramseycentre.info)>. Proposals with an interdisciplinary component are especially encouraged. Favourable consideration will be given to clear, focused research topics and 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](mailto: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.

Principal Investigators shall submit an interim report halfway through the duration of their projects, and a final report at the project's conclusion. Project activities should be finished by 30 September 2024. Normally, projects would not be expected to last more than two years.

Whilst research visits and translation work are also permitted as project activities, applicants should note that the IRC is also running **separate competitions** for research fellowships and major translation projects, details of which are available at the project website <[www.cee.ianramseycentre.info](http://www.cee.ianramseycentre.info)>. 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 first round must be submitted no later than **29 May 2020**. 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 Principal Investigator (the project leader).
- Short curricula vitae of other members of the team if applicable.
- Any other supporting materials (graphics, institutional media etc.)

Forms and budget template can be downloaded from the project website <[www.cee.ianramseycentre.info](http://www.cee.ianramseycentre.info)>.

All application materials should be submitted via email to [cee.irc@theology.ox.ac.uk](mailto: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 **31 July 2020**. 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](mailto:cee.irc@theology.ox.ac.uk).

## Frequently Asked Questions

### *Who can apply?*

Individual scholars, or existing or new research teams, based at research 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.

### *Is there a minimum duration for projects?*

There is no fixed minimum duration for project. 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 normally be complete by 30 September 2024.

### *Can the budget for my project be less than \$5000?*

Yes, although we encourage projects to benefit from the full amount available. In any case, you should prepare a grant budget which is appropriate to the length and proposed products and activities of the project.

### *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 be no means feel obliged to choose one of these questions: creative applications are encouraged. Projects may approach topics from the perspective of 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 project.

*When should the project begin and end?*

Projects can in principle begin as soon as a grant is announced on 31 July 2020, but you may want to leave yourself some time between the confirmation of the grant and the start of your project. The first instalment of grants will be disbursed as promptly as possible following announcements but administrative delays may apply. Project activities must normally be complete by 30 September 2024.

*How will the grant be disbursed?*

The host institution will normally receive 50% of the grant around a month before the commencement of the project, and the remaining 50% halfway through the project's duration, upon receipt of a short 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, we encourage institutions to collaborate in any other ways if they wish to do so. If your institution is prepared to collaborate further, you should state this in your application.