

# Request for Applications: Columbia Global Emerging Scholars Fellowship Program

**RFA issue date:** January 20, 2026

**Deadline for submissions:** March 19, 2026 at 11:59 PM EDT

## Overview

Columbia Global established the [Columbia Global Emerging Scholars Fellowship Program](#) in 2024, thanks to the generosity of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Through the program, year-long fellowships are awarded to support emerging displaced scholars working in the humanities and humanistic social sciences. The goal is to create opportunities for scholars to reintegrate into academia and resume their academic pursuits.

Eligible candidates are scholars in the humanities and humanistic social sciences who have been forcibly uprooted from their home countries and respective academic institutions. They could be postdoctoral scholars in the early stages of their careers or Ph.D. candidates who have had their education disrupted. **Creative writers, artists, curators, and scholars working on interdisciplinary projects are encouraged to apply.**

This year's program, which will begin in September 2026, will support approximately 10 scholars, each of whom will be hosted in one of three Columbia Global Centers: in Amman, Nairobi, or Santiago. **Scholars will apply to only one of the three Global Centers, based on the region in which they currently reside.**

Support mechanisms for fellows will include the following:

- Linking fellows to academics, practitioners, and experts across the Columbia Global Center network
- Matching each fellow with a Columbia University faculty member who will provide mentorship, advice, and support
- Providing access to online courses at Columbia University and customized training workshops to build the academic capacity of incoming fellows
- Facilitating hands-on learning opportunities in program planning and implementation
- Assisting fellows in convening roundtable discussions, conferences, and/or talks in their respective subject areas
- Enabling fellows to embark on their academic pursuits in a safe environment
- Highlighting fellows' publications and other intellectual endeavors by disseminating their work and facilitating exchange through the Global Center network and Columbia University at large

At the end of the program, fellows will be expected to make a public presentation of the work they have produced during their year-long fellowship.

## Eligibility Requirements

This Columbia Global Emerging Scholars Fellowship Program is intended for displaced scholars. To be considered for the program, applicants:

- **Must have a Ph.D. in the humanities;** i.e., any discipline that studies the human experience, such as literature, linguistics, philosophy, archaeology, cultural heritage and historical preservation, museum studies, religious studies, musicology, history, and criticism and theory of the arts. Social sciences that have humanistic content and employ humanistic methods—such as anthropology, sociology, gender, and ethnic studies—will also be considered.
  - Note: **In some cases, we will support candidates who have a non-terminal M.A. and/or were on track to get a Ph.D.** in the humanities when their education was disrupted.
- **Must have received their highest academic degree within the last 12 years.** Exceptions to this timeline will be considered to accommodate career-specific trajectories or other circumstances.
- **Must already be based in the region of the Global Center** to which they intend to apply. In other words, if applying to the Global Center in:
  - **Amman**, must currently reside or have resided in the **Middle East or North Africa**
  - **Nairobi**, must currently reside in **Sub-Saharan Africa** and possess either a passport or Conventional Travel Document
  - **Santiago**, must currently reside in **Latin America or the Caribbean**
- Must demonstrate at least an **intermediate level of English language proficiency**.
- Researchers working on **interdisciplinary** research projects are welcome to apply.

## Selection Criteria and Process

The fellowship is intended to support scholars whose research was interrupted due to displacement, and who have not yet had the opportunity to realize the scope and output of their intellectual interests. Key selection criteria include the following:

1. The overall substance and feasibility of the proposed academic research
2. The quality of the specific plan for accomplishing the proposed work in a one-year time frame
3. The candidate's academic trajectory prior to their displacement
4. The quality and depth of the applicant's previous work
5. The potential for research advancement

A review committee composed of Columbia University faculty and local/regional academics will review applicant materials and interview short-listed candidates.

**Note:** Threat to scholars' research and/or well-being per se will not be among the selection criteria, as the review committee is not able to fairly assess these and objectively compare applicants' circumstances.

## Benefits, Terms, and Conditions

**Fellows will receive a stipend** calibrated to the market of the particular Global Center. The gross amount, before local taxes and insurance deductions, is:

- \$30,000/year for Amman and Santiago
- \$25,000/year for Nairobi

**Note:**

- Airfare to and from the city where the Global Center is located will be covered as part of the program.
- Fellows are responsible for their housing, local transportation, and other living expenses incurred during the fellowship.
- A supplemental family stipend of \$5,000 may be offered, on a discretionary basis, for candidates with children.
- Fellows are expected to be free of their regular commitments (including employment and other posts) so that they may devote themselves to the work outlined in their proposal.
- Fellows are allowed 15 business days of paid annual leave during the 12-month fellowship.
- Fellows must have health insurance coverage for the duration of the fellowship; they may opt into and pay for health insurance locally, with guidance from the relevant Columbia Global Center.

Each fellow will be based at the Columbia Global Center in Amman, Nairobi, or Santiago and will be provided with:

- Office space with internet connectivity
- Access to meeting rooms and conference facilities
- A laptop to use for the duration of the fellowship
- Access to a printer and IT technical assistance (as needed)
- Access to Columbia University's online library resources, as well as online courses on specialized research skills
- Support from a Columbia University faculty mentor member who will guide them throughout the fellowship year
- Travel and visa assistance (where possible)

**Note:** While it is preferred that fellows remain in-person at the relevant Columbia Global Center for the duration of the fellowship, there is a **minimum in-person requirement of six months** if it is not feasible for the fellow to remain in-person due to immigration, family-related, or other circumstances.

## How to Apply

Applications will be received via the [Submittable](#) platform. Applicants for the fellowship program starting in September 2026 must submit the following via Submittable by March 19, 2026 at 11:59 PM EDT:

- A **curriculum vitae** that includes academic credentials and professional experience
- A **personal statement (500 words maximum)** that describes the applicant's motivation for applying to this program, intellectual trajectory and career goals, and the reason for and impact of displacement on the applicant's career
- A **proposal (600 words maximum)** describing the applicant's field of interest; a detailed plan that describes the academic work (by month or quarter) that will be undertaken during the 12-month fellowship; and the broader potential significance of the applicant's work
- **One writing sample/publication**
- **Letter of recommendation** from an academic colleague who is familiar with the applicant's previous work
  - o Please note that this letter must be submitted by the recommender via the Submittable platform.
- Copies of academic **transcripts**

To corroborate your displaced status, applicants are encouraged to provide one of these documents:

- **Asylees:** Applicant's Asylum Approval Letter or Asylum Application Receipt
- **Refugee Status:** Applicants with refugee status may corroborate their status by providing a copy of their UNHCR ID card.
- **Temporary Protection Status (TPS):** Applicants with TPS status may submit their Application for Temporary Protected Status.

We understand that, in some instances, displaced persons and refugees are unable to replace personal documentation that was left behind, lost, destroyed, or confiscated during conflict, disaster, or during fleeing home. As such, we will consider accepting various forms of civil documentation to verify displacement, such as state or local documents, recognition by non-governmental organizations or international education agencies, and other supplemental documentation from recognized entities.

Scholars who are unable to complete their applications for reasons beyond their control, such as difficulty in contacting recommenders, retrieving lost transcripts, and/or lack of access to computers, are welcome to contact the relevant Columbia Global Center for assistance via the following points of contact:

- **Amman:** [Ahmad Al-Moussa](#)
- **Nairobi:** [Sandra Mikal Masira](#)
- **Santiago:** [Chris Molinari](#)

For general information or questions, please contact [cgc@columbia.edu](mailto:cgc@columbia.edu).

## About Columbia University, Columbia Global, and the Columbia Global Centers

Among the world's leading research universities, [Columbia University](#) in the City of New York seeks to advance the frontiers of scholarship and foster a community deeply engaged in the complex issues of our time through teaching, research, patient care and public service. The University is composed of 17 undergraduate, graduate, and professional schools, and four affiliated colleges and seminaries in Manhattan, and a wide array of research institutes and Global Centers around the world. More than 40,000 students, award-winning faculty, and professional staff define the University's underlying values and commitment to pursuing new knowledge and educating informed, engaged citizens.

[Columbia Global](#) was established in 2022 to bring together major global initiatives from across Columbia University to advance knowledge and foster global engagement. These initiatives include the Columbia Global Centers, Columbia World Projects, the Committee on Global Thought, the Center for Undergraduate Global Engagement, and the Institute for Ideas and Imagination. Columbia Global's vision is to reimagine the university's role in society as not only a nexus for learning and intellectual exploration but also as a catalyst for creativity and impact locally, regionally, and globally.

The [Columbia Global Centers](#) serve as Columbia University's physical and intellectual gateway to the world. Located in 11 cities across four continents, the Global Centers are a manifestation of Columbia's commitment to leverage the remarkable scholarship, expertise, and resources of the university to help address the world's most complex challenges while fostering intellectual endeavors in ways that inspire, surprise, and challenge.