

MESA/ACSS/OIB Call for applications
Why Location Matters: Doctoral Research in the Arab World
Deadline for Submissions: February 20, 2025

The Middle East Studies Association, the Arab Council for the Social Sciences and the Orient-Institute Beirut are organizing a five-day workshop at the American University in Cairo, June 29-July 3. The workshop, which is co-sponsored by AUC, will bring together a select group of doctoral students from North American, German and Arab universities to discuss the possibilities, critical approaches, epistemological and practical challenges of undertaking archival and/or ethnographic research for their dissertation projects in the Arab region.

The aim of the organizers is to foster a transnational interdisciplinary community of emerging scholars. Two questions inform the workshop: How do different locations of research in the North and Global South, in our case the Arab world, frame epistemic postulations and research methodologies? How does knowledge production and the theories and methodologies that undergird interpretive communities change when young scholars from the Atlantic North and those from the Global South meet to discuss their research in an Arab capital of learning/higher education? Academic mentors – independent and university-based scholars in the Arab world and North America – will lead sessions of small groups of participants drawn from different disciplines and countries.

Workshop sessions will be conducted in Arabic and English. Participants will present their work written in either English or Arabic, but all participants need to be proficient in both languages to ensure they can participate fully in discussions and read one another's work.

Eligibility

Applicants from disciplines in the social sciences and humanities are encouraged to apply. Preference will be given to scholars in the early stages of their research whose dissertation projects have been approved by their advisors and institutions.

Application requirements for students enrolled in a PhD. Program in Germany.

All German applications should be sent to the OIB-Secretariat <sek@orient-institut.org> in an email entitled "MESA/ACSS/OIB PhD-Workshop". MESA and ACSS have their own application portals.

1. Applicants must be enrolled at a German university.
2. Submit a 1000-word description of their project and provide a short paragraph (250 words) on how location has informed or might form their epistemic and research methodologies. All materials should be submitted in English.
3. Have letters of recommendation from the advisor and from an Arabic language instructor sent to sek@orient-institut.org, in an email entitled "MESA/ACSS/OIB PhD-Workshop".

Successful applicants are encouraged to seek partial funding from their universities for the cost of air travel to Cairo. Registered members of the OIB-Friends & Alumni Association may receive support, too. Hotel accommodation near AUC's downtown campus will be covered.

Successful candidates will be responsible for obtaining their visas. Upon request, the OIB can provide a letter indicating that the student is partaking in a workshop at AUC.