

## Women Researchers Fellowship

*The Asia Foundation is announcing a fellowship program targeting women researchers from the Global South with an interest in researching conflict dynamics in border regions. The one-year initiative combines a research grant with opportunities for skills development and professional networking. The fellowship will be based remotely and is supported by a \$25,000 stipend.*

### Background

In Asia, the Middle East and Africa, conflict and instability endure in contested border regions where local tensions connect with regional and global dynamics. The Asia Foundation, the Malcolm H. Kerr Carnegie Middle East Center, the Rift Valley Institute and their local research partners established the X-Border Local Research Network in 2018 to develop a better global understanding of political, economic and social dynamics in conflict-affected borderlands. The X-Border Local Research Network produces research to inform more effective policymaking and programming. It is a component of the UK government-funded [Cross-border Conflict Evidence, Policy and Trends \(XCEPT\)](#) research program.


The X-Border Local Research Network emphasizes partnering with local researchers and research institutions based in the regions that they study. It builds, maintains and expands research networks in remote and difficult-to-reach conflict-affected regions such as the Afghanistan–Pakistan borderlands, Iraq, Syria and Yemen, Sudan and South Sudan. Finally, it supports improvements in local research methods and capacity. Through this fellowship, The Asia Foundation and its partners seek to extend opportunities for female professional researchers to build their skills and networks in an often male-dominated field.

### About the fellowship

This program will support six early career female researchers for a period of 12 months between 20 March 2024 and 20 March 2025. As well as providing a grant for undertaking original research, a key aspect of the fellowship will be participation in joint skills-building and networking activities, as well as peer learning and individual mentoring with experienced researchers working within the X-Border Local Research Network. Fellows will be supervised by a dedicated coordinator through regular remote meetings.

An indicative overview of the program schedule is as follows:

MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR
Start	Proposal development		Data collection, analysis			Writing, editing and peer review			Publication and presentation			

 Expected in-person event or activity, subject to possibility of travel

Through this program, fellows will be supported to:

1. **Develop knowledge and skills** in conducting research in complex conflict-affected border regions through formal training and one-to-one mentoring with senior researchers and experts;
2. **Grow new professional networks** with individuals and organisations from the Global South working on development interventions and policy solutions for contexts of protracted conflict;
3. **Produce original research** with institutional support from the X-Border Local Research Network partners.

## Requirements and qualifications

This fellowship is open to female researchers who are nationals of the following countries, reflecting the XCEPT program's geographical focus areas:

- |                |              |                  |
|----------------|--------------|------------------|
| 1. Afghanistan | 8. Lebanon   | 15. Saudi Arabia |
| 2. Algeria     | 9. Kenya     | 16. Somalia      |
| 3. Bangladesh  | 10. Morocco  | 17. South Sudan  |
| 4. Egypt       | 11. Libya    | 18. Sudan        |
| 5. Ethiopia    | 12. Tunisia  | 19. Syria        |
| 6. Iraq        | 13. Myanmar  | 20. Yemen        |
| 7. Iran        | 14. Pakistan |                  |

Applicants should meet the following criteria:

- Recent completion of a master's degree or PhD in Political Science, International Relations, Development Studies, or a similar relevant topic area **or** equivalent professional research expertise, including completion of at least one report or journal article of similar length and rigour to a master's thesis.
- Demonstrable interest in issues related to conflict prevention and peacebuilding, and/or development initiatives in unstable or conflict-affected contexts.
- Sufficient command of written and spoken English to enable participation in training and networking activities, and to produce.
- Availability to dedicate, on average, at least two to three days flexibly per week for the duration of the fellowship, to activities associated with the program, as well as participation in regular online meetings (at least one per week) and several in-person events throughout the year (see the indicative schedule above).

Proposed research conducted through the fellowship must contribute to a better understanding of conflict-affected borderlands, and/or how conflicts connect across borders, with the aim of providing analysis that can inform development policy and programming. Research produced through this fellowship will be required to focus on the follow core themes of the XCEPT program:

1. Gender and conflict, or women, peace and security in border regions
2. Governance in unstable border regions
3. Geostrategic dimensions of transnational conflict



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4. Climate change and insecurity
5. Economic drivers of conflict

### Application process

Application deadline	15 January 2024
Shortlisted candidates invited for interview	22 January 2024
Interviews	5–9 February 2024
Fellowships awarded to successful candidates	16 February 2024

To apply for the Fellowship, submit the following items to Naruemol Tuenpakdee, [naruemol.tuenpakdee@asiafoundation.org](mailto:naruemol.tuenpakdee@asiafoundation.org) before 15 January 2024:

1. **Curriculum vitae** (no longer than two pages).
2. **Cover letter** outlining why you believe you would be a good candidate for this fellowship, what you hope to gain from the experience, and how this experience would enable you to serve the interests of your community and networks in the future.
3. **Initial proposal** of up to five pages describing the research you would like to undertake within the scope of this program, including proposed research questions and methodology. The proposal should clearly state which geographic region and which overall theme from those listed above you will focus on.
4. **Contact information for two references** (email preferred, referees will only be contacted for candidates who have reached the final stage of the selection process).

Shortlisted candidates may also be requested to provide a recent writing sample.