



المركز العربي للأبحاث ودراسة السياسات  
Arab Center for Research & Policy Studies

# **ACRPS Conference for Graduate Students in Western Universities**

**Fourth Round: 2 - 4 March 2024**

**Background Paper**



The Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies (ACRPS) will convene the fourth round of the Arab Graduate Students in Western Universities (AGSC) for advanced graduate students who are currently undertaking doctoral studies within the social sciences and humanities. Early-career researchers (recent PhD graduates within 2 years of attaining their PhD) are also invited to participate. Participants will present papers based on their PhD theses and receive critical feedback from a specialist within their topic in order to enrich their research. The event builds on the success of the previous rounds of the AGSC, which established an unprecedented academic tradition in the Arab region.

The conference will allow participants to enhance and develop their work through constructive engagement with both established academics and fellow graduate students. Hosting the conference in an Arab country allows participating scholars to become familiar with an Arab research agenda within their own disciplines. Participants whose research would normally have been authored in the languages of their host countries will also have the chance to publish their work in Arabic. This will help disseminate their research to Arab audiences, impacting Arab academic discourse and Arab societies more broadly. For participating doctoral students and postdoc researchers who opt to remain in their host countries, the conference is also an opportunity to build lasting collegial, professional networks with their counterparts in the region.

The upcoming conference will continue the ACRPS tradition, dating back to its founding in 2011, of advancing research culture and academic standards within the social sciences and humanities in Arabic. These efforts are all the more significant because of the marginalization of the social sciences and humanities within the Arab region. The meeting will further the Center's commitment to interdisciplinary approaches to history, philosophy, sociology, political science, and international relations. In furtherance of its aims, the Center has held academic conferences and symposia devoted to many of the pressing issues facing Arab scholars. The proceedings of these conferences have been published as edited volumes and have formed an important part of the Center's publishing activities.

Overall, the Center has published over 500 books covering a wide range of topics in social sciences and humanities, thereby advancing Arabic academic publishing. The ACRPS additionally publishes seven peer reviewed journals covering the fields of history; sociology and other social sciences; critical theory and philosophy; political science and international relations; and forecasting and future studies. The Center empowered aspiring Arab scholars through the Arab Prize for Social Sciences and Humanities. Intended to incentivize academic research across a range of disciplines, the Arab Prize has so far been awarded to around 50 scholars who represent the diversity of the Arab academy. Through these activities, the ACRPS has contributed to the creation of an Arab research agenda, forming a collaborative, symbiotic community of scholars who are committed to academic integrity and openness.

The upcoming conference will uphold this commitment by providing an academic environment that allows for the free exchange of ideas between Arab doctoral students based in the West and established researchers based in universities in the Arab region. The conference objectives include:



1. Providing a platform that brings together Arab doctoral students based in Western institutions with their counterparts in the Arab region. This will foster the creation of joint research projects as well as personal-professional networks that tie early-career researchers to the Arab academy. With participants coming from a wide range of professional backgrounds, this will foster interdisciplinary cooperation.
2. Giving participants the opportunity to benefit from constructive engagement with both established academics and their fellow graduate students, allowing them to enhance and develop their own research.
3. Serving to better acquaint Arab doctoral students and recent doctoral graduates based in the West with the research agendas of the social sciences and humanities in the Arab region, enabling them to contribute to and shape that agenda.
4. Affording doctoral students the opportunity to disseminate their work through Arabic language channels. The Arab Center will provide participants with the option to publish Arabic language versions of the research presented at the conference either in book format or in one of the peer reviewed journals that it publishes, pursuant to the ACRPS' academic standards.
5. Introducing Arab PhD candidates and recent PhD graduates to Arab academic institutions, and to the needs and orientation of the Arab academic employment market. This has the added benefit of enhancing their employability in Arab academic institutions.

## Conference Topics

Participants from across the social sciences and humanities are encouraged to apply (see details below on eligibility). While applications are open from any of the disciplines in the social sciences and humanities, we would particularly encourage prospective participants from the following fields to apply:

- Political Science and International Relations
- History
- Anthropology
- Sociology
- Philosophy
- Economics
- Development Studies
- Media Studies and Cultural Studies
- Law and International Law



- Psychology
- Interdisciplinary specializations and approaches which combine the above fields within the social sciences and humanities

## Conference Structure

Participants will be sharing their work-in-progress based on their PhD dissertations through individual workshops in which each participant will have the opportunity to present their work and get feedback from established academics and their peers through open discussion. In detail:

- The conference organizing committee will divide participating scholars into individual workshops.
- Each workshop will be chaired by academics noted for their extensive experience in the relevant field.
- Each participant will be given 15 minutes to present their research.
- Participant presentations will be followed by a designated discussant given 30 minutes to provide commentary on the written paper, offering any suggestions for its improvement, followed by a 30-minute open discussion with participants and the audience.

## Application Guidelines

Prospective applicants must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- Be a currently registered PhD student at an advanced stage of their dissertation at a Western university (based in Europe, North America, or Oceania).
- Be a recent graduate within two years of attaining the PhD from a Western university (based in Europe, North America, or Oceania).
- A demonstrable connection to a member-state of the Arab League.

All applications must be submitted no later than **1 August 2023**. Please ensure that the following materials are included:

1. The online application form (can be found on the announcement page).
2. The research proposal (no more than 500 words in Arabic or English), including the main research topic, methodology, and data/fieldwork on which it is based. Once the proposal is approved, successful participants must prepare their research papers in accordance with the writing and publication standards of the Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies.
3. An up-to-date CV.



4. Academic references: An attached form should be completed by at least one academic referee who will fill out the form and return it directly to the conference committee by email. The reference form can be found on the announcement page.
5. Optional: a writing sample (a previous research paper or published articles).

The conference committee will review the applications and the research proposals on a competitive basis.

- All applicants will be notified about the status of their applications by email. Successful candidates' participation in the conference will be contingent upon the submission of final research papers (6,000 and 9000 words, including footnotes and references) no later than 15 January 2024.
- In addition to the draft paper, participants are required to submit an extended abstract (maximum of 1000 words), by 31 January 2024, for pre-circulation among attendees, who will include fellow Arab graduate students and established academics and researchers from the Arab region.

## Fees

Registration is free.

The Center will provide meals and accommodation in Doha for all participants throughout the duration of the conference.

We encourage accepted applicants to seek funding for their travel expenses from their universities or institutions, as the Arab Center will cover a limited number of participants' travel expenses on a competitive basis. In case applicants are unable to find other source of funding, they can apply for the ACRPS travel grant. The organizing committee will send the travel grant application form along with the acceptance letters.

## Notes

**Conference dates:** 2 - 4 March 2024

**Venue:** Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies (Doha, Qatar)

**Conference languages:** Arabic and English

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