

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Civil Society Scholar Awards 2017 -2018

Open Society Scholarship Programs

When will the results of the competition be announced?

All applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application via email by the end of June 2017.

My research will be conducted in a local community, rural area or outside of an institution or educational establishment. From whom should I request a letter of invitation?

In the case that you intend to conduct community-based fieldwork or research which is not based at an institution, you do not have to submit a letter of invitation. There is a designated space on the application for you to briefly explain this omission.

I am unsure of the exact location(s) of my research at this point. May I change the location(s) after I submit my application?

CSSA grants are awarded by an independent selection committee based on the information you provide. A key part of that assessment is your clear justification for international travel and the suitability of the location. Requests to change the location of the grant activity after the grant has been awarded are not possible. Please be as accurate as possible with the location and timing of the grant activities when applying.

At this point, I am unable to provide a budget, detailed work timeline, and clear explanation of when and how I plan to use the requested funds. Will my application still be competitive?

No. All successful applications will have a detailed budget, work timeline, and explanation of how and when the requested funds will be used. We understand that research projects are always in flex and that timelines often change, but an application that does not contain a very clear overview of the project and a realistic (although of course, projected) timeline for its completion will not be competitive.

Do I have to provide English language translations of official documents such as degree certificates or transcripts?

Please ensure that any documents you submit that are not in English are accompanied by a notarized English language translation. If you cannot provide a notarized translation by the submission date, please provide the original documents and a cover note explaining your situation. Should your application be successful, you will then be obliged to submit translations at a later date as a condition of your award.

I am required to submit an official letter from my institution confirming my enrolment status, department, and expected completion date. My enrolment has not yet taken place.

If you are unable to provide an enrolment letter, please provide a letter confirming your offer or provisional place. Please make a note in your application of when your enrolment takes place. Should your application be successful, you will be asked to submit your enrolment letter as a condition of your award.

The application form mentions a current official school transcript. As a PhD student I am not enrolled in any assessed/graded courses and as such do not have a transcript.

Please provide a transcript of your most recently completed degree, such as a Master's degree.

I am unable to submit the application online. What should I do?

Online applications are strongly encouraged, but if for any reason you are unable to submit your application online you can download a paper application instead. Paper applications should be sent to OSF in New York or London. In certain countries they may be sent to a local educational advising center. Paper applications should be sent via email or post by March 31, 2017. Please see the Guidelines for further instructions and a list of countries with participating educational advising centers.

I would like to submit my application online, but one of my supporting documents is not yet available. What should I do?

You are expected to submit a full set of documents with your online application before the deadline. In exceptional circumstances it may be possible for you to submit your application form without one missing document if this document will become available within 2 weeks after the deadline. To stop your application from being rejected automatically please make sure you use the relevant field to upload a brief note (doc., docx., or pdf.) explaining the reasons for omission. You will then have to submit the missing document to cssa@infoscholar.org by April 14, 2017, and failure to do so will result in your application being rejected.

One of my referees would prefer to send the recommendation letter to CSSA program staff directly. Is there a way to do that?

Please ask your referee to send the recommendation letter to cssa@infoscholar.org before March 31, 2017. Your surname has to be mentioned in the subject line of the email, and the recommendation letter must include full name, email address and contact number of the person giving the reference.

Can I include expenses for conference participation?

Requests for conference attendance are permissible if the conference is clearly part of a coherent series of research activities. Conference participation alone will not be considered. Please ensure you describe how the conference relates to your research project.

Can I include expenses for hiring a third-party or sub-contractor (such as a hired researcher)?

In general, you may not request funds that you plan to use to pay honoraria or third parties, such as hired researchers. In exceptional cases a small percentage of the award, not exceeding 15% of the total award, may be considered for this purpose if you make a very strong case as to why it is necessary.

How flexible can I be with the time period of my grant activity? Is it possible to alter it if I am awarded the grant?

The dates of the activity should stay as close to the original dates and time period as possible. Successful grantees will however have the opportunity to reconfirm their project dates and grant activity time period in June 2017 when grant notifications will be sent. All proposed research projects must start and end between September 1, 2017 and August 31, 2018 and be between 2-9 months long. If your project does not fall

within these dates, it will not be eligible.

I am a current CSSA grant holder or have had a CSSA or other OSF grant in the past. May I still apply, and, if so, how many times?

Current or former grantees who have been awarded a CSSA grant once may apply for a new grant but must delineate how their proposed project is a continuation of / is closely related to their original project. Current grantees applying for the award for the second time must also confirm that they are on schedule with their current grant's work timeline. CSSA grant cannot be awarded to the same person more than twice.

Applicants who have or have had other, non-CSSA scholarships from OSF are eligible to apply if they meet the CSSA eligibility requirements, but only if a successful application would not result in their holding two OSF scholarships at the same time.

Can I be guaranteed to receive the full amount I request if I am successful?

The selection committee will make a decision on the amount awarded to successful candidates based on a variety of factors, including the availability of funds and the justification of the budget items requested. In this respect, the full amount of the grant may not be awarded.

I am a PhD student at my home university, but I also teach courses there. Should I apply as a doctoral student or as a full-time faculty member?

PhD students, including those teaching at their home or other universities, must apply as doctoral students. Applicants applying as full-time faculty members must have a minimum of a master's degree, be teaching at their home institutions, and cannot be enrolled in a doctoral program.

Some of my activities will take place in the country I live in. Are these expenses eligible?

CSSA grants enable international academic research activities, and are therefore tenable for projects which take place outside of the place of current study or work only. In this respect, expenses for any activity within the same country where you are studying or teaching are ineligible.

In order to successfully complete my project, I would need to travel to more than one international location. Can I get funding for that?

We may be able to support a project that involves travel to more than one international location if the need for travel to additional locations is clearly justified in the proposal and this travel is vital for the success of the project. Applicants are strongly advised to include a breakdown of costs per country in their application.

I am not starting the first year of doctoral studies. Can I still apply for coverage of my tuition fees while I conduct my research abroad to make up a shortfall?

Only students **going into their first year** of doctoral studies may request funding for tuition/academic fees. Requests for tuition/fees for later years of study will **not** be considered.

Can I submit an application to travel for fieldwork if my research is yet to receive IRB/ethics committee approval?

You can submit an application based on your plans for fieldwork before you have the necessary approvals. Please have your supervisor note when you expect to receive approvals in the letter of reference they will be submitting for you. We advise you to choose grant dates which are realistic to accommodate for the

expected date of approval.

Do CSSA staff provide any support for obtaining a visa for travel to the country of activity?

If necessary, we can provide a letter to help you obtain a visa prior to your grant letter being issued. We cannot offer any further assistance for obtaining a visa. Grantees are expected to make the necessary arrangements themselves.