

# MESA GLOBAL ACADEMY

## SPRING 2020 CALL FOR PROPOSALS

The MESA Global Academy is an interdisciplinary initiative of the Middle East Studies Association of North America designed to sustain essential research collaborations and knowledge production among MENA-focused academics by providing competitive fellowships to displaced scholars from the MENA region currently located in North America. MESA is collaborating on this project with a number of university partners as well as the Scholar Rescue Fund at IIE, the Scholar-at-Risk Network, the New School's University-in-Exile consortium, the Arab Studies Institute and other institutions. The Global Academy is generously supported by the Carnegie Corporation.

The MESA Global Academy, together with the Middle East Studies Centers at our partner universities, is thrilled to announce the following **calendar of Spring 2020 opportunities for funding** for displaced MENA scholars located in North America to participate in research activities, conferences, paper presentations and workshops.

**HOW TO APPLY:** The application can be accessed at this link: <https://forms.gle/CRrLByLPipFKM3VC7>. Most events will require you to submit the following materials tailored to the events' topic, and you will have to submit a separate application for each event. Please note that the **deadline to submit** all proposals or applications for these events, is **Monday, February 24, 2020 at 5pm ET**.

(1) **a statement of interest** for each event you apply for, briefly summarizing why you wish to participate in the particular activity or event (as a discussant or as a presenter), how your goals align with the objectives of the MESA Global Academy, and a general description of your research areas;

(2) **a provisional title and brief abstract** of the research paper/topic on which you will be presenting (per event). Each of the below listed events may have additional requirements beyond these three items, but these three are required in all cases. *\*\*Applicants are welcome to submit proposals for as many of the below events as applicable, provided that tailored materials will be required for each event.\*\**

(3) **a current CV.**

If you are accepted as a presenter or discussant at any of the below listed activities, MESA Global Academy will provide funding to reimburse you for the cost of your travel and accommodation expenses (including domestic flights up to \$500 and two nights' accommodation up to \$500). If you require additional funding beyond these limits for a particular event, your request will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Thank you for reading! We look forward to receiving your application(s).

**Submit your proposal(s) here!**

# SPRING 2020 EVENTS

The events for which [applications](#) are currently being accepted are at the following institutions (click below or read on to learn more):

## Regions/Events

### WASHINGTON DC METRO AREA

(Partners: American University, Georgetown University, George Mason University, George Washington University)

1. George Washington University: Middle East Studies Interdisciplinary Workshops
2. George Washington University: Book talk with Arbella Bet Shlimon, "City of Black Gold: Oil, Ethnicity, and the Making of Modern Kirkuk."
3. George Washington University: Institute for Middle East Studies **Annual Conference** (cosponsored by George Mason University)
4. George Washington University: Project on Middle East Political Science (POMEPS) Annual Conference
5. Georgetown University: The Gulf International Forum is co-sponsoring with the Georgetown Center for Contemporary Arab Studies a panel on the topic of "Aspirations of Youth in the GCC."
5. Georgetown University: The Center for Contemporary Arab Studies is planning to host a **series of speakers** on disability in the Middle East
7. George Mason University: Lecture on Syria by Lisa Wedeen to be joined by a second presenter on Syria or a discussant
8. George Mason University: Second Wave of Protests panels, co-sponsored with Georgetown
9. George Mason University: Panel on "Navigating anti-Authoritarianism and anti-Imperialism"
10. American University: Research Workshop on "Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency in the Kurdish Borderlands"

### CHICAGO METRO AREA

(Partners: University of Chicago, University of Illinois at Chicago, and Northwestern University)

11. University of Chicago: 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Middle East History and Theory (MEHAT) Conference
12. Northwestern University: Keyman Modern Turkish Studies Program 2020 Conference
13. Northwestern University: Middle East and North African Studies Program Workshop Series

### NEW YORK CITY

(Partners: City University of New York (CUNY)—Graduate Center, New York University)

14. CUNY Grad Center: The Middle East and Middle East American Center (MEMEAC) is sponsoring a **one-day workshop** on the history of medicine and knowledge in the modern Middle East and North Africa.
15. NYU: Mid-Atlantic Ottomanist Workshop
16. NYU Conference: Beyond Oil: How the Climate Crisis is Reshaping the Contemporary Middle East

### UPSTATE NEW YORK

(Partner: SUNY Binghamton)

17. SUNY Binghamton: Conference: Migration in the Middle East and North Africa
18. SUNY-Binghamton: One-day workshop: Comparative Eurasian Empires in the 19<sup>th</sup> century

## LOS ANGELES

(Partners: University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), University of Southern California(USC))

19. UCLA Speaker Series (Discussant Role): Monday, April 6: Sam Helfont, "State Policies towards Religious Institutions under Ba'athist Iraq"
20. UCLA Speaker Series (Discussant Role): Thursday, April 16: Christiane Gruber, "The Masonic Muhammad: Modern Franco-Iranian Visual Encounters in Prophetic Iconography"
21. UCLA Speaker Series (Discussant Role): Thursday, April 16: Marc David Baer, "Sultanic Saviors and Tolerant Turks: Writing Ottoman Jewish History, Denying the Armenian Genocide"
22. UCLA Speaker Series (Discussant Role): Wednesday, May 20: Maya Shatzmiller, Nora Berend and Mattia Guidetti, "Juridical framework and legal principles and regulations of minorities in Islamic Law and Islamic societies."
23. UCLA: Speaker series on "Minorities in the Middle East."

## WASHINGTON DC METRO AREA

(Partners: American University, Georgetown University, George Mason University, George Washington University)

1. George Washington University: Middle East Studies Interdisciplinary Workshops
  - a. Date: ongoing (Wednesdays at lunchtime)
  - b. The Institute for Middle East Studies hosts a monthly interdisciplinary workshop series for faculty and PhD students to get feedback on a work-in-progress. The workshops are an opportunity for faculty and students to engage critically with one another's research projects and build our intellectual community. Submissions can be in various stages of completion (i.e. working papers, R&R's, grant proposals, a draft article, a conference paper, a detailed research design, a 'think-piece,' blog entry, etc). All attendees are asked to review the work before the event and a specific discussant is designated in advance to provide structured remarks on the paper.
  - c. Materials required: CV; abstract of paper to be submitted for workshop; 3-4 possible dates in March, April or May that work for the scholar to present (these must be Wednesdays)
2. George Washington University: Book talk with Arbella Bet Shlimon, "City of Black Gold: Oil, Ethnicity, and the Making of Modern Kirkuk."
  - a. Date: March 26<sup>th</sup>
  - b. We could make space for a discussant/moderator if there is a scholar with similar research background/interests that would be willing to read the book and provide some introductory commentary
  - c. Materials required: CV; must also agree to read the relevant text
3. George Washington University: Institute for Middle East Studies **Annual Conference** (cosponsored by George Mason University)
  - a. Date: April 17<sup>th</sup>
  - b. IMES Annual Conference: *Producing the Middle East: New Directions in Middle East Media and Politics*
  - c. The media landscape of the Middle East is changing rapidly. There are strong trends toward the localization of media production, with Turkish entertainment series globalizing visions of the region and Netflix commissioning original content in Arabic. Alongside localization are displaced populations from wars in Iraq, Yemen and Syria creating new digital diasporas, where fractured expressions of nostalgia and

witnessing to extreme violence circulate through multiple mediums. While the genealogy of the idea of the 'Middle East' is rightly criticized as an external imposition that geographically centers the West, there is a viable contemporary current of belonging that makes the Middle East a lived region of shared and contested meaning. The role of media production, along with an array of actually existing policies, institutions and other infrastructures of regionality, in making the Middle East meaningful as an analytical framework will be the central animating issue of this year's annual conference. This interdisciplinary event will feature cutting-edge research by media scholars who represent a breadth of theoretical interests and methodological approaches.

- d. Full Day Conference with 3 thematic panels
  - e. Materials required: CV; abstract of paper/presentation to be submitted for conference
4. George Washington University: Project on Middle East Political Science (POMEPS) Annual Conference
    - a. Date: May 21 and 22
    - b. The POMEPS conference is more of a **workshop format**; with two days of plenary sessions and breakout groups. Subject matter covers a broad range of central topics in Middle East political science: militaries in politics; resistance/opposition movements; religion and politics; regional conflicts; gender and sexuality; urban politics; ecology & environmental politics; human rights; political economy; etc. During the breakout sessions, small groups of scholars will meet to discuss a paper/article draft/manuscript submitted in advance. The scholars that are submitting works have already been identified, however, there are spots for discussants and/or plenary panel participants open to MESA Global Academy scholars that are political scientists.
    - c. Materials required: must be a political scientist; CV; short (half-page) synopsis of current research project/interests
  5. Georgetown University: The Gulf International Forum is co-sponsoring with the Georgetown Center for Contemporary Arab Studies a panel on the topic of "Aspirations of Youth in the GCC."
    - a. Date: March 6, 2020
    - b. Nature of event: panel
    - c. Materials required: CV, statement of interest, abstract of presentation
  5. Georgetown University: The Center for Contemporary Arab Studies is planning to host a **series of speakers** on disability in the Middle East
    - a. Nature of event if we receive applicants interested in addressing this topic we will organize an event around their research paper and ensure that the presentation will be attended by other scholars working on disability.
    - b. Date: Open
    - c. Materials required: CV, statement of interest, abstract of talk
  7. George Mason University: Lecture on Syria by Lisa Wedeen to be joined by a second presenter on Syria or a discussant
    - a. Date: April 29<sup>th</sup>
    - b. Nature of event: We could make space for a discussant or an additional scholar working on contemporary Syria if there is a scholar with similar research background/interests that is interested in serving as a presenter or would be willing to read the book and provide some introductory commentary
    - c. Materials required: CV; must also agree to read the relevant text
  8. George Mason University: Second Wave of Protests panels, co-sponsored with Georgetown
    - a. Nature of event: We intend to host a set of co-sponsored panels, together with Georgetown, on the current Second Wave of Protests in the Arab world including Sudan, Algeria, Lebanon and Iraq, as well as

perhaps others. We encourage interested prospective MESA Global Academy fellows to submit materials if they would be interested in joining such a panel.

- b. Date: Open
  - c. Nature of event: Speaker on a panel addressing one or more of the recent protests that began in 2019 and are continuing in the Arab world.
  - d. Materials required: CV, statement of interest, abstract of talk
9. George Mason University: Panel on “Navigating anti-Authoritarianism and anti-Imperialism”
- a. Date: June 6<sup>th</sup>
  - b. Nature of event: Speaker on a panel addressing the topic of how to navigate anti-authoritarianism and anti-imperialism in the contemporary Middle East.
  - c. Materials required: CV, statement of interest, abstract of talk
10. American University: Research Workshop on “Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency in the Kurdish Borderlands”
- a. Date: May 2-3, 2020
  - b. This event is a workshop including scholars from within the U.S. and those who will be joining from overseas. We would welcome applicants to serve as presenters or discussants on the topic working on the Kurdish regions of Turkey, Syria, Iraq or Iran.
  - c. Materials required: CV, statement of interest in acting as a discussant and/or abstract for a proposed paper

## CHICAGO METRO AREA

(Partners: University of Chicago, University of Illinois at Chicago, and Northwestern University)

11. University of Chicago: 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Middle East History and Theory (MEHAT) Conference
- a. Date: May 1-3, 2020
  - b. Nature of event: The University of Chicago is hosting the thirty-fifth annual Middle East History and Theory **conference** this spring. The theme of this year’s conference is *Theorizing Gender and Sexuality in the Historic and Contemporary Middle East*. Submissions related to this theme are encouraged, with particular questions of interest including: contemporary revolutionary politics as they encompass gender and sexual emancipation; theorizing the intersections of gender and sexuality with novel forms of global governance and security infrastructures; and feminist struggles in the Middle East as a means of challenging or complementing understandings of rights-oriented political movements. For more detailed information about the conference, please see the call for papers [here](#).
  - c. Materials required: CV, statement of interest describing relevance of scholarly interests to conference theme, 250-word abstract with tentative paper title (The best abstracts will summarize the paper’s topic, its relationship and contribution to existing scholarship and specific conclusions).
12. Northwestern University: Keyman Modern Turkish Studies Program 2020 Conference
- a. Date: May 29-30, 2020
  - b. Nature of event: Northwestern University’s Keyman Modern Turkish Studies Program is hosting its 2020 Conference this May on the topic of *Queer Conditions/Kuir Haller: Social and Political Change in an Age of Authoritarianism*. The conference theme focuses on queer and gender studies with the goal of engaging with the global debate on intersectionality. Submissions related to this theme are encouraged, with particular topics of interest including: the role of gender identity and dynamics in facilitating the reproduction of power structures; the mobilization of historically marginalized groups seeking to expose, challenge and dismantle such power structures; and the conditions facing queer, feminist and other sexed subjects under conditions of graduated authoritarianism in Turkey. For more detailed information about the conference, please see the call for papers [here](#).

- c. Materials required: CV, statement of interest (no more than 800 words) describing relevance of scholarly interests to conference theme, 150-word abstract with tentative paper title.

13. Northwestern University: Middle East and North African Studies Program Workshop Series

- a. Date: Open
- b. Nature of event: The Middle East and North African Studies Program hosts a periodic interdisciplinary workshop series for faculty and PhD students to get feedback on a work-in-progress. The workshops are an opportunity for faculty and students to engage critically with one another's research projects and build our intellectual community. Submissions on topics related to Islamic Law are particularly welcome and scholars in this area would also be invited to visit the Islamic Law seminar being offered in the spring quarter by the MENA program,.
- c. Materials required: CV; statement of research area and interest in presenting at Northwestern; abstract of paper to be submitted for workshop; 3-4 possible dates in March or April that work for the scholar to present.

## NEW YORK CITY

(Partners: City University of New York (CUNY)—Graduate Center, New York University)

14. CUNY Grad Center: The Middle East and Middle East American Center (MEMEAC) is sponsoring a **one-day workshop** on the history of medicine and knowledge in the modern Middle East and North Africa.

- a. Date: May 15, 2020
- b. Event: “**New Trends in the History of Medicine in the Middle East.**” This event is a workshop considering the history of medicine in the Middle East with a focus on the period from the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the present. Historians, anthropologists, sociologists and others in the social sciences and/or humanities working on the history of medicine in the region are welcome to apply to serve as paper presenters (full papers are due May 1) or discussants.
- c. Materials required: CV, statement of interest in acting as a discussant and/or paper presenter, abstract for a proposed paper (if applicable)

15. NYU: Mid-Atlantic Ottomanist Workshop

- a. Date: March 27-29
- b. Nature of event: Three-day workshop at NYU’s Kevorkian Center where applicants are invited to apply to serve as discussants, which would require reading as many as three short (2500 word maximum) overview essays of participants’ research agendas and provide 10-15 minutes of feedback. Any scholar whose work focuses on the Ottoman Empire from its founding through the 1920s in any aspect would be eligible. The workshop will feature keynote speeches by four senior scholars in the field and meals during the workshop will be provided.
- c. Materials required: CV; statement of interest to serve as discussant, must also agree to read the relevant materials for the workshop.

16. NYU Conference: Beyond Oil: How the Climate Crisis is Reshaping the Contemporary Middle East

- a. Date: April 30-May 1
- b. Nature of event: This one-day conference is being organized by the Kevorkian Center and will feature a Keynote Address on the evening of April 30th. The conference will examine the ways in which climate change is shifting the region’s views on oil, bridging disciplines, regions and fields. Applicants are invited to submit proposals to serve as panelists or discussants for panels on the following topics: “Vision 2030—Economics, Energy Policy and Human Rights in Saudi Arabia”; and “Climate Warfare—Climate and Conflict in the Contemporary Middle East”. The conference will also include a networking reception and will be open to an audience of generalists with panels comprised of academics, practitioners and journalists.

- c. Materials required: CV, statement of interest in serving as a panelist or discussant, abstract of planned presentation (if applicable).

## UPSTATE NEW YORK

(Partner: SUNY Binghamton)

17. SUNY Binghamton: Conference: Migration in the Middle East and North Africa
  - a. Date: April 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>
  - b. Nature of event: mini-conference on *Migration in the Middle East and North Africa*
  - c. This event will invite local and regional scholars to present work related to Middle East migrations from the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the present. The mini-conference will also feature graduate students presenting work related to this theme. Applicants will have the opportunity to address an undergraduate course this semester on the Middle East Refugee Crisis if they so wish and their proposed topic fits the course themes.
  - d. Two Day Conference with multiple panels
  - e. Materials required: CV; abstract of paper related to the theme of Migration in the MENA from the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the present.
18. SUNY-Binghamton: One-day workshop: Comparative Eurasian Empires in the 19<sup>th</sup> century
  - f. Date: May 22<sup>nd</sup>
  - g. Nature of event: Workshop on comparative Eurasian empires (particularly Ottoman, Qajar, Russian, Habsburg, Qing) in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The themes for the workshop are within the broad scope of comparative empire and open to different theoretical and methodological approaches including cultural, social, economic, political, etc.
  - h. One-day research workshop requiring paper submission.
  - i. Materials required: CV and abstract of paper required for acceptance; full paper must be submitted for circulation among participants by May 1<sup>st</sup>.

## LOS ANGELES

(Partners: University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), University of Southern California(USC))

19. UCLA Speaker Series (Discussant Role): Monday, April 6: Sam Helfont, "State Policies towards Religious Institutions under Ba'athist Iraq"
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22. UCLA Speaker Series (Discussant Role): Wednesday, May 20: Maya Shatzmiller, Nora Berend and Mattia Guidetti, "Juridical framework and legal principles and regulations of minorities in Islamic Law and Islamic societies.
23. UCLA: Speaker series on "Minorities in the Middle East."
  - a. Date: Open
  - b. Nature of event: This speaker series features research in the humanities and social sciences on the topic of minority communities in the Middle East. Applicants are encouraged to submit proposed paper topics

and abstracts for consideration to be invited to present your research as a speaker in the series to a university audience.

- c. Materials required: CV, statement of interest featuring research agenda concerning minorities in the Middle East and abstract of paper proposed.