



INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH NETWORK
FOR THE STUDY OF SCIENCE & BELIEF IN SOCIETY

Regional Networks for the study of Science and Belief in Society Grant Scheme 2021-2023

Guidance for Applicants

The **International Research Network for the Study of Science and Belief in Society (INSBS)** supports the growth of high-quality international research examining the relationship between science and belief, in the context of cutting-edge social issues and individuals' lived experiences.

This round of funding is aimed at supporting the development of local and regional research networks. Grants will be given for events and networking activities that share the aims of the overall network and can evidence a contribution to development of the field at a national or regional level. For more details see 'Summary of key information' overleaf.

This scheme is part of a wider funding programme offered by the International Research Network for the Study of Science and Belief in Society. For further details on other grant schemes and when they will be open, please visit our main [grants page](#). Please note, this scheme has been amended in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, primarily to support online activities instead of face-to-face activities.

If you have any other questions about the scheme, or the application process, please contact Paula Brikci (p.e.brikci@bham.ac.uk)

Summary of key information	
What is the focus of the fund?	The Regional Networks Fund supports the development of national and regional research networks. These could be for stand-alone networking activities that run at a regional level (including participants from more than two countries that are in the same geographical region) or a series

	of networking activities involving participants from more than one institution at a national level.
Who can apply?	Researchers at any career stage who work on the study of science and religion, non-religion or belief in society. You must be employed by, or affiliated to, a University in order to apply. If you are not currently affiliated to a university, or other institution set-up to receive research grants, you must contact us before submitting an application. Lead Applicants must hold a PhD or have equivalent academic experience in a relevant discipline.
How do I apply?	See the "How do you apply" section below. Firstly you must complete an Expression of Interest Form.
How many application stages are there?	Two. An Expression of Interest followed by an invited Full Application.
When is the deadline for applications?	The deadline for Expression of Interest is 15 March 2021 . The deadline for Full Applications is 4 May 2021 .
How much can be applied for per application?	Up to £20,000.
How many applications can be submitted?	Each Lead Applicant can only submit one Expression of Interest and if this is approved, a further Full Application. You may also be a named partner on a joint application, but you cannot be the Lead Applicant on more than one submission in this round of funding.
When must projects be completed?	All projects should complete no later than 30 June 2023. Projects cannot start before 1 July 2021.
When will you be notified about the decision?	We aim to contact applicants no later than 1 June 2021.
Quality assurance	As part of our due diligence process, we reserve the right to quality assure applications or submit applications to recognised reviewing software (e.g., Turnitin).

Aims of INSBS

The **International Research Network for the Study of Science and Belief in Society (INSBS)** supports the growth of high-quality international research examining the *relationship* between science and belief, *in relation* to cutting-edge social issues and individuals' lived experiences.

We aim to foster and support research that examines social and/or cultural aspects of science, technology, engineering, mathematics or medicine (STEMM) in relation to any religious, spiritual or non-religious tradition, position or worldview, including unbelief.

The INSBS network brings together and builds links between researchers in a range of disciplines across the social sciences and humanities. Membership includes scholars from, but not limited to, sociology of religion, psychology of religion, science and technology studies, sociology of health/medicine, media and cultural studies, social anthropology, politics, the history and philosophy of science/religion and religious studies.

Our member's research interests cover a wide range of issues including:

- The social scientific and historical study of the relationship between science and religious and/or non-religious belief and identity.
- Public perceptions of the relationship between science, religion and non-religion and their respective roles in society.
- National and international comparative perspectives on the study of science, religion and belief in society.
- Past and present media, or popular, representations of science, religion and belief in society.
- The past or present roles of science, rationalism, religion and belief in national, social or cultural identity and related geopolitical narratives.
- Multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches to the study of science, religion and non-religion in society.
- Research relating to any aspect of public policy that intersects with issues connected to science, religion and belief in society. This includes studies on the impact of publics' views on science and religion on policy making, and provision for religious, spiritual or non-religious communities across a range of geographies and issues (for example healthcare provision, educational policy, science policy, environmental policy and development policy).
- International studies of religious or spiritual communities' perspectives on the intersection, and possible relationships, between science and religion over time.

Aims of this grant scheme

There is currently a significant gap in research into the social and cultural dimensions of the relationship between science and belief in diverse global contexts. This lack of international research on contemporary religious, spiritual, or non-religious publics' views on science and religion, the historical or cultural contexts of these views, and how these views relate to individuals' day-to-day lived experience, has led to the perpetuation of a range of misconceptions and/or polarising narratives.

It is difficult to build a better understanding of these social or cultural narratives and issues, or to engage with them, without up-to-date robust social scientific or humanities research that examines the nuances and complexities of the relationship between science and belief. There is a need to grow the capacity of researchers globally in order to undertake the research necessary to explore these societal and cultural narratives and to provide a more comprehensive perspective of the relationship between science and religion or personal belief across a range of religious, spiritual and non-religious beliefs within a wider variety of geographies, identities, institutions, cultures and societies.

We aim to foster and support research that examines social and/or cultural aspects of science, technology, engineering, mathematics or medicine (STEMM) in relation to any religious, spiritual or non-religious tradition, position or worldview, including unbelief.

Enabling broader and more diverse approaches to research within this field will provide the opportunity to consider in sufficient detail the culturally contingent nuances or diversity of positions relating to localized issues across different country or regional contexts, publics or communities of interest.

This grant scheme therefore seeks to support the development of either single-country or regional research networks.

The grant can be used to support events or activities that run at a national level (including participants from multiple institutions within that country) or at a regional level (including participants from more than two countries that are in the same geographical region).

This grant scheme will allow for the development of local and regional research networks that can include events or activities undertaken in multiple languages where relevant.

Grants will be awarded for events and activities that share the aims of INSBS and can evidence a contribution to the development of the field at a national or regional level.

Examples of networking activity could include:

- Reading groups to discuss in-preparation or published research in the field
- Events, workshops, symposia or seminars involving group members and external guest speakers

- Skills development or training events/networking activities relevant to research in the field
- The development of repositories of literature, bibliographies and other academic resources focusing on a specific region or area of study
- Networking events involving scholars or discussion between scholars and non-academic partners
- Development of tools to communicate between regional network members including websites, mailing lists, social media and newsletters

Networks must be focussed on both science and belief as described above in the **Aims of INSBS** section.

Due to the global pandemic, we are prioritising funding for virtual networking activity and online events. Though we are aware that face-to-face activities may be possible in some country contexts and over the coming years (towards the end of the grant cycle), we would advise that you outline your plans in a way that is flexible and takes account of the potential for unforeseen impacts of the current pandemic on face-to-face activities or events. We are also aware that where face-to-face activities may be possible, these might exclude those who are in vulnerable groups or from countries with different pandemic guidelines, therefore we also welcome applications that embed innovative virtual networking activities or hybrid (simultaneously virtual and face-to-face) networking activities.

Permitted uses of sub-award funding include:

- Salaried or casual staffing costs and/or teaching buyout or summer salary
- Modest allowance for justifiable publication charges, software, data packages, and other consumables
- Relevant venue or I.T. hire costs for events
- Refreshments for event participants
- Travel costs (NB: where travel costs are included, they must not constitute more than 10% of the total funding requested)

Funding CANNOT support any institutional overheads or indirect costs.

All projects must complete by 30 June 2023. We welcome applications from academic researchers based in any country worldwide.

Criteria for successful applications will include:

- Feasibility within the proposed timescale and budget.
- Activities that are focused on relevant issues relating to science and (non-) religion or belief in society and culture.
- Evidence that applicants have considered how they will expand network membership within the lifetime of the grant.
- Evidence that applicants have considered how their proposed network might benefit or support researchers at different career stages.
- Evidence that applicants have considered how their network will contribute to integrating the study of science and belief in society into wider debates within relevant academic disciplines.
- Evidence of buy-in to the proposed network from more than one institution.
- An indication of how the regional network will grow beyond the initial grant period.
- A clearly defined web and/or communications strategy (including social media). Explicit and clear support from relevant institutions and, where feasible or appropriate, evidence of buy-in and additional in-kind support from host institutions or departments.

Please note we can support successful regional networks in building integrated web-space, on, or attached to, the main INSBS website.

How to Apply

Expression of Interest

First complete an Expression of Interest (Eol) Form. [You will find this form on our website](https://scienceandbeliefinsociety.org/grants/how-to-apply-2/) (the full address is <https://scienceandbeliefinsociety.org/grants/how-to-apply-2/>)

Expressions of Interest must be submitted no later than **15 March 2021**. Unfortunately, any Eols received after this time cannot be considered.

At this first stage we require a project title, a brief summary of your project activity, an indication of costs, timescales, staffing arrangements, intended outcomes and outputs, and CVs for all PIs and Co-PIs. For more detail on what is required, including word counts, please see the Eol Form.

If you are successful at the Expression of Interest stage, we will notify you by 31 March 2021 and send you a Full Application Form, which you must complete and submit to us by 4 May 2021 at the latest. **You can only submit a Full Application for a proposal which has firstly been approved at the Eol stage.** Applicants to this second phase will be notified of the final decision by 1 June 2021.

What happens after you apply?

Once we have received your application, we will check it to ensure that the application is eligible and all mandatory information has been received and downloaded successfully. If any mandatory documentation is missing or cannot be read, we will contact you within five working days of receiving your application to request that you send any missing or unreadable documents. **Please note that each application must be provided as a single document, please combine the Eol Form with all CVs.**

We will notify you of the final decision, by email by 31 March 2021.

If you have any questions about the scheme, or the application process, please contact Paula Brikci (p.e.brikci@bham.ac.uk).