



## CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

### Visiting Research Fellowship on Religion and Development in Northern Iraq

The Research Programme on Religious Communities and Sustainable Development (RCSD) at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, in cooperation with Malteser International, is advertising two post-doctoral / doctoral visiting research fellowships on religion and development in Northern Iraq.

The **Research Programme on Religious Communities and Sustainable Development** ([www.rcsd.hu-berlin.de](http://www.rcsd.hu-berlin.de)) is a hub for various research initiatives on the relationship of religion and development. It is based at the Faculty of Theology at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin. One of these initiatives is the project “Driving Forces of Transformation”, which investigates the potential of religious communities for sustainable development Africa and the Middle East.

**Malteser International** ([www.malteser-international.org](http://www.malteser-international.org)), the worldwide humanitarian relief agency of the Sovereign Order of Malta, is implementing the Ninewa Return Program, a major rehabilitation and reconstruction programme in Northern Iraq funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). The three-year program aims at encouraging internally displaced people to return to and remain in their homes following the re-taking of these areas from ISIS control, through activities in the areas of shelter, education, social cohesion and livelihoods.

Within the framework of the visiting research fellowships, the fellows will conduct their own research projects within the framework of the thematic frames outlined below, including empirical field research in Northern Iraq.

#### ***2 Fellowships: Understanding the reasons for return vs. non-return of displaced people in the Ninewa Plains (starting once the global health situation allows travel to Iraq)***

Within the framework of its Ninewa Return Programme, Malteser International has repaired over 2000 houses in the Ninewa Plains, jointly with local partner organizations, with the overall objective to encourage displaced families to return to their homes. A quantitative study is currently being conducted to assess how many families and individuals returned to the rebuilt houses. Building on the quantitative data, the aim of the fellowship is to conduct in-depth qualitative research to understand the reasons for return vs. non-return of displaced families. The precise research topics will be defined jointly with RCSD/HU and Malteser International once the results of the quantitative survey are available. Possible research questions include:

- Why have different ethno-religious groups returned – or why have they *not* returned?
- Why have different demographic groups returned – or why have they *not* returned?
- What are the specific challenges of youth, and how could we further encourage their return? What livelihoods perspectives do youth have in the Ninewa Plains?
- What are the specific challenges and perspectives of women, and what does this imply for future development programs?
- What role does education play in return vs. non-return? How can education contribute to rebuilding trust and social cohesion in post-ISIS Iraq?
- What is the direct and indirect role of the different religious communities regarding the decision of returning vs. not returning? How do these communities contribute to social cohesion and development?

## Structure of the fellowships

The length of the fellowships will be 6 months. We offer

- a lump-sum subsidy of €500 per month for 3 months spent in Berlin + a lump-sum subsidy of €2700 per month for 3 months in Iraq,
- travel costs for field research in Iraq,
- costs for local field research assistants
- being part of the dynamic research environment of the Research Programme RCSD and Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin as a visiting researcher and a working space in the city centre of Berlin.

The visiting research fellowship does not entail employment at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin. The visiting fellows will need to cover their own health insurance.

Ideally, the fellowship would be done in full-time and the fellows would be based in Berlin and Iraq for 3 months, respectively. The research will be conducted in consultation with both RCSD and MI staff. Ideally, the fellowship would be structured along the following lines:

1. Preparatory phase (drafting of research plan and research design, literature review, preparation of field study)
2. Field research phase (field research in the areas of Mosul / Ninewa Plains / Kurdistan Region of Iraq, with the assistance of MI's field staff)
3. Writing phase (analysis of material, writing up research paper and policy brief)

By the end of the fellowship, an academic paper containing the research results should have been written. The paper will be released as a Discussion Paper in the Discussion Paper Series of the Research Programme RCSD and can be submitted for publication in an academic journal. A summary of key results and policy implications will be published as a policy brief in RCSD's policy brief series. Moreover, the research will be presented in a research workshop.

## Requirements

Applicants should fulfil the following requirements:

- Master's degree or PhD in the humanities (religious studies, sociology, anthropology, cultural studies, regional studies, or another relevant discipline)
- Very good academic writing skills (please attach a writing sample in English)
- Experience in qualitative field research
- Knowledge of qualitative research methods
- Knowledge of Iraq (preferably: Northern Iraq) and the Middle East region
- Language skills: very good English (required), very good Arabic (required), knowledge any other languages spoken in Northern Iraq as well as German are an advantage

If you are interested, please send your CV, a brief letter of motivation and a writing sample to

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