LSE-Kuwait Academic Collaborations

Call for Proposals for Funding Year 2026/27

The LSE-Kuwait Programme, LSE Middle East Centre, invites applications for academic collaborative research projects in social, political, and economic sciences between researchers at LSE and at universities and research institutions in Kuwait.

Aims

- To promote high-calibre research by scholars at LSE and Kuwait universities and research institutions working in partnership on policy-relevant challenges facing Kuwait;
- To support academic excellence at Kuwait universities and institutions;
- To strengthen long-term academic collaboration and knowledge transfer between LSE and Kuwait.

Eligibility and Procedure

- Projects must involve a **Principal Investigator (PI) from LSE** and a **Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI) from a Kuwait university** or **research institution**. Proposals involving multi-disciplinary teams are welcome. The Kuwait Programme can assist in trying to match LSE and Kuwait-based researchers. However, we cannot guarantee a match will be made.
  - **LSE PIs** must be **members of academic or research staff**.
    - Academic staff at LSE may apply for buyout for **no more than 20%** of their time. Total salary costs may amount to no more than 70% of the total budget.
  - **Co-PIs** must be **members of academic or research staff** or hold a **visiting affiliation** at their host institution.
    - Kuwaiti partner institutions may claim an overhead of up to 10% of the direct costs of their share of the budget (no overheads can be claimed by the LSE PI).
  - PIs **cannot** concurrently work on a Collaborations project and an LSE-Kuwait Fellowship.
- Applications are limited to **one application per person** each year. In the event of **reapplication**, preference will be given to new applications, and the former project will be taken into consideration.
- Projects run as **full and equal partnerships**, with **funding shared** between the two partners.
- Projects should **contribute to** the Kuwait Programme **thematic research priorities** listed below.
- Projects should produce **high-quality, peer-reviewed research papers** for publication in top journals and contribute to academic and professional development of researchers at institutions in Kuwait.
- PIs and Co-PIs who have **previously been awarded funding cannot reapply during their project** or in the same academic year that the previous project finished.
- PIs are encouraged to **develop research networks** in Kuwait as part of their projects.
  - Other individuals employed by other universities and organisations may be involved as sub-partners engaged under the direction of the project leaders. Projects may involve more than one university, and applicants are encouraged to hire Kuwait-based research assistants.
- **Eligible project expenses** are: salaries, conferences, seminars, travel, publications, research assistance, administration, consultancy fees, translation, and small equipment and consumables.
  - Salary costs are eligible for PIs, consultants and other research staff employed by the project.
  - Ineligible expenses are physical infrastructure, rent, permanent resources and large equipment.

Outputs

- Output 1: Kuwait Programme paper of 7000 words maximum
- Output 2: Kuwait Programme policy brief of 1000-1500 words
- Output 3: LSE Middle East Centre blog post

Thematic Research Priorities

- Improving the delivery of healthcare in Kuwait;
- Enhancing Kuwait's water and food security;
- Diversifying energy sources in an oil-rich economy;
- Driving forward Kuwait's digital transformation;
- Developing public policy to reform the public sector and improve public service delivery in Kuwait;
- Informing and improving environmental policy in Kuwait;
- Improving the role of the sovereign wealth fund in driving forward Kuwaiti development;
- Setting economic vision(s) to diversify the economy;
- Improving and developing education policies in Kuwait.

Level of Award

- Individual projects may have a total budget of up to £90,000.
- Projects should run for a minimum of 12 months and maximum of 24 months.
- There is no minimum budget for projects.

Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be considered according to the following criteria:

1. **Originality, significance** and **rigour** of the research;
2. Likely **contribution** of the research **towards policy-relevant challenges** facing Kuwait;
3. **Compatibility** of the research with the broader work of the Kuwait Programme;
4. **Support of academic excellence** in Kuwait institutions;
5. The contribution made towards **strengthening long-term cooperation** between LSE and Kuwait institutions;
6. Evidence that the individuals and institutions involved have the **capacity to execute the proposal** and **deliver on stated outcomes**;
7. **Value for money**

Award of Funds

Proposals selected by the committee will be awarded funds subject to LSE's Research Ethics Policy. **The awards will be announced in June 2026. Projects will commence in September 2026**. The LSE-Kuwait Programme, LSE Middle East Centre, will host and administer all awards, with oversight provided by LSE's Research and Innovation Division. Funds will be managed by the Middle East Centre except for transfers to Kuwait partners as agreed. LSE PIs and Research Assistants will be affiliated to the Middle East Centre for the duration of the award. Where salary funds are requested, project researchers will be employed by the Middle East Centre.

Application Process

Stage One – Expression of Interest

Applicants should submit an expression of interest outlining the project in no more than 500 words. This must include the names of the two Co-PIs who have agreed to collaborate. This allows the Kuwait Programme to ensure proposals fit with the programme criteria and goals before full applications are made.

Deadline: 3 April 2026

Stage Two – Submission of Application

If the application fits with the programme criteria and goals, a full first draft of the application, of no more than 4,000 words (excluding bibliography), should be submitted, using the template provided here. The Kuwait Programme will assist with finalising budgets before the final submission of applications and is happy to offer advice and assistance to applicants during the preparation of full applications.

Deadline: 4 May 2026

Stage Three – Award

Applicants will be contacted about the result of their application in *June 2026.*

Start Date – 1 September 2026

Final Submission of Application

- Please submit applications electronically to the LSE-Kuwait Programme Manager, Mercedes Masters (m.c.masters@lse.ac.uk), using the template below.
- The final submission should be no more than 4,000 words (excluding bibliography).
- Proposals should be submitted jointly by the LSE PI and the Kuwait institution Co-PI.
- Proposals should address the seven evaluation criteria laid out in the Selection Process section above.
- All applications must submit:
    1. Full application of no more than 4,000 words using the template provided.
    2. Annex 1: Budget using the Excel template provided here.
    3. Annex 2: Letter showing Kuwait partner institution supports the application (this should be signed by a person with authority to confirm institutional approval), and an email from the LSE PI's Head of Department or Centre confirming their support.
- Please contact Mercedes Masters (m.c.masters@lse.ac.uk), if you are unable to access the budget and application template.

For submissions and all enquiries, please contact Mercedes Masters, LSE-Kuwait Programme Manager: m.c.masters@lse.ac.uk.