

RFP

Facebook Research Awards

General Description

Facebook's Protect & Care team builds products and services for people who use Facebook around the world. The researchers within our Protect & Care team support this work with the broader goal of promoting supportive, safe interaction in all online environments through collaborations and publications.

As part of its mission, Facebook's Protect & Care team collaborates with scholars around the world who work at the intersection of technology & society. Investigators have worked with us to carry out early-stage exploration, usability studies, and publication in peer-reviewed journals on social media and information technology. Past efforts have included joint projects on topics such as conflict resolution, happiness and well-being, prevention of self-harm, proliferation of hate speech and violence, and internet access and use in developing markets.

Facebook's Protect & Care team will make a competitive set of awards to researchers interested in exploring these issues particularly in regions of the world that typically receive less attention from researchers: South and Southeast Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. We welcome proposals from any social science or related discipline that foster insights into the impact of information technology on contemporary society. Such insights may be of a particular nature—e.g., specific to platforms, innovations, product usage— or they may be more general and wider-reaching. The awards will provide funding for research projects that are designed to be shared widely in the scholarly and policy communities.

These awards are one-time unrestricted payments that enable researchers to deepen and extend their existing research portfolio. Applications are welcome from individuals with established experience studying online interaction and information technologies. We particularly encourage applications from social scientists who might expand their existing research into the study of online interaction and communities.

Program Format

The awards are intended to support independent research by providing scholars resources to free up their time to gather new insights, develop new conceptual tools and propose novel projects that synthesize existing research and knowledge. We welcome proposals that build upon existing research initiatives. However, the short-term duration of these awards cannot support substantial new data collection that involves durations of time beyond the scope of the award period. Examples of viable research include, but are not limited to, new research designs for exploring social media use, examinations of national or regional level demographic patterns, in-depth qualitative analyses of micro-samples, and

critical explorations of best practices in a policy domain.

Each awardee will retain all intellectual property rights to their work.

Each award recipient will be invited to meet with Facebook researchers twice during the project. An initial phone/Video Conference (VC) meeting will enable participants to introduce their projects and discuss it with peers. All awardees will be invited to a final research gathering in which final analyses may be shared with all attendees. Our hope is that, upon completion of the research, award recipients will continue to share their research with the wider public.

The program is expected to make awards between \$20,000-\$50,000 at the sole discretion of Facebook. Applications will be reviewed by Facebook's Protect & Care team.

For priority consideration, applications should be submitted by August 15, 2017. We encourage submissions of applications as early as possible, and they will be accepted on a rolling basis until September 15. We will begin to notify recipients in mid-September 2017.

Core Areas of Exploration

We will review proposals from any social science perspective that describe projects that share interests with our Protect & Care research priorities. High priority areas include (but are not limited to):

- **Safety:** We welcome proposals that examine the challenges of creating safe online environments. We are particularly interested in research that helps educate the public on the challenges of bringing technology safely and effectively into underserved geographical regions. This includes studies of individuals, families and communities, but also wider inquiries into factors that shape the experience of people online. Proposals may focus on particular behavioral issues, such as harassment or violence; on populations or regions; or on organizations and institutions that impact people.
- **Online Support & Community Building:** We are witnessing the increasing use of online media to provide support, promote social belonging, and build community. We welcome proposals that examine particular cases of online support, critically review current practices, and inquire into the potential uses of information technologies to carry out community building and related social functions.
- **Access and Use:** Societal barriers can impede the ability of individuals to access and use information technologies. We are interested in understanding the way that various social, political, economic and other related factors shape the capacity of persons to connect in online environments. These can include challenges such as language and communication barriers, and familial or community boundaries. Eligible projects may examine such societal dynamics via small-scale case studies or broader inquiries at the national or regional level.

We will review proposals for research that focus on the following geographic areas. Proposals may be specifically directed at people and places within these regions. They may also incorporate issues such as migration and immigration, refugee and transitory populations, and patterns of online communication that connect people across multiple geographic regions.

- South Asia and South East Asia
- Africa
- The Middle East (including North Africa)

Eligibility & Participant Expectations

- Applications are encouraged from social scientists and/or researchers in related disciplines.
- Applications must include the following:
 - A brief project statement (not to exceed 5 pages, single spaced, no less than 11 point font) that specifies the proposed scope of the research. This statement should include the following elements:
 - brief summary of the proposed research and expected insights/outcomes.
 - specification of key questions(s) addressed by the research; description of any data to be used in the project.
 - relevance for our understanding of people's experiences in online environments.
 - brief (2-3 paragraph) review of relevant related studies.
 - workplan and description of final product(s) and planned dissemination.
 - A one paragraph biography of the principal researcher(s).
 - A curriculum vitae of the principal researcher(s).
 - A budget summary that specifies how the funds requested will enable individuals to create time to carry out the proposed scope of the research, and other use of funds.
- The award is designed to support social science research that contributes to generalized scientific knowledge. Documentaries, journalism, and oral history projects will not be eligible.
- The submitted projects do not need to be about Facebook.
- We welcome proposals from researchers who seek to deepen their research portfolio by expanding into the area of information and communication technologies. We also welcome proposals from individuals holding PhDs who are not affiliated with academic institutions.
- Facebook will host a workshop in Spring, 2018 where awardees may present their findings. Presentation materials that comprise the final report must be made available for review ten days prior to the date of the workshop. (All rights to these materials will be held by the award recipient.)

- Applicants should be affiliated with an institution that supports research and can process external funding awards -- note, applications from students are not able to be considered.
- This program is for those persons who currently hold a Ph.D.
- If chosen, your institution will receive the award as a gift in US\$ and in the amount decided solely by Facebook.
- You will be invited to attend and present your findings at a Facebook Protect & Care workshop, likely to be held in Menlo Park, CA, USA in Spring 2018. (Travel expenses should be included in the proposed budget.)

FAQ

Are scholars based outside of the United States eligible to apply?

Yes. This program is open to scholars both in the United States and in other countries.

Do I need to hold a PhD to be eligible to apply?

Yes. You must have received a PhD to apply for this award.

Do I need to be logged in to Facebook to submit application materials?

No.

Do I need to obtain letters of reference?

No letters of reference are necessary.

What is the deadline for applications?

For priority consideration, submit applications no later than August 15, 2017. Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis until September 15. Award notifications will be made starting in mid September 2017.

How can I submit the application?

Please send all documents via a single email message to pacawards@fb.com.