



university reviewer manual

open society internship for rights and governance

2018

OPEN SOCIETY INTERNSHIP FOR RIGHTS AND GOVERNANCE
UNIVERSITY REVIEWER MANUAL
2018

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PROGRAM BACKGROUND

About the Open Society Foundations

The Open Society Foundations (OSF) work to build vibrant and tolerant democracies whose governments are accountable to their citizens. To achieve this mission, the Foundations seek to shape public policies that assure greater fairness in political, legal, and economic systems, and safeguard fundamental rights. On a local level, the Foundations implement a range of initiatives to advance justice, education, public health and independent media. The Foundations work to build alliances across borders and continents on issues such as corruption and freedom of information. In addition, the Foundations place a high priority on protecting and improving the lives of marginalized people and their communities.

What is an “open society”?

The concept of “open society,” first popularized by the philosopher Karl Popper in his 1945 book *Open Society and Its Enemies*, is based on the recognition that all societal constructs are fallible and thus merit constant amendment. An open society is generally characterized by a reliance on the rule of law, the existence of a democratically elected government, a diverse and vigorous civil society and respect for minorities and minority opinions.

About the Open Society Internship for Rights and Governance program

Individuals committed to advancing local and global forms of human rights and justice constantly confront new and unforeseen challenges. This changing landscape, coupled with the dynamic role of civil society actors, complicates our understanding of human rights advocacy. Simultaneously, information and communication technologies, freedom of movement and democratic accountability afford policy practitioners new channels through which they can increase human welfare and dignity. These conditions require innovative policy ideas that effectively integrate theory and practice to foster and sustain open societies.

The Open Society Internship for Rights and Governance (OSIRG), a joint program of OSF and the School of Public Policy at Central European University (SPP at CEU), is specifically tailored to invest in the next generation of leaders poised to pursue these ideas. The program takes a broad definition of human rights and governance that is inclusive of promoting fundamental freedoms, expanding public access to information, challenging inequalities through development and rights and advancing approaches that ensure transparency and accountability in a global context. In 2017-2018, master’s candidates from the following universities will be eligible to participate in OSIRG:

American University of Beirut, Faculty of Arts & Sciences

Beirut, Lebanon

An-Najah National University, Faculty of Economics & Social Sciences

West Bank, Palestine

An-Najah National University, Faculty of Law

West Bank, Palestine

Birzeit University Muwatit Institute for Democracy and Human Rights

West Bank, Palestine

Harvard Kennedy School of Government

Massachusetts, United States of America

The International University of Rabat, School of Political Science

Rabat, Morocco

Makerere University School of Law
Kampala, Uganda

School of Public Policy at Central European University
Budapest, Hungary

Sciences Po Paris School of International Affairs
Paris, France

The University of Chicago, Harris School of Public Policy
Chicago, United States of America

University of the Andes Alberto Lleras Camargo School of Government
Bogota, Colombia

University of the Andes Masters in International Law
Bogota, Colombia

The University of Hong Kong Faculty of Law
Pok Fu Lam, Hong Kong

The University of Hong Kong Journalism and Media Studies Centre
Pok Fu Lam, Hong Kong

University of Pretoria Centre for Human Rights
Pretoria, South Africa

University of Toronto Munk School of Global Affairs
Toronto, Canada

PROGRAM STRUCTURE

OSIRG allows students to immerse themselves in the ideas and practice of open society by participating in a clinical seminar held at SPP at CEU in Budapest, Hungary. The seminar is followed by an 8- or 12-week intensive internship either at an OSF-selected non-governmental organization, where students will complete a project developed by one of OSIRG's partner host institutions or, if the student applies via the collaboration track, at an organization where the student has an existing relationship and a clearly defined project which has been accepted by the organization and OSF.

Students admitted to the program and their hosts are expected to further develop and refine the project in the months leading up to the internship.

Clinical seminar in Budapest

Taught by practitioners and leading lecturers from universities around the world, students will examine both the applied and conceptual practice of public policy in a rigorous course on human rights and governance. The clinical seminar will utilize tailored curricula, informal discussion, and group work to explore themes ranging from civil society and public policy to implementation of international law. In 2018, the seminar will be directed by Katrin Kinzelbach, Associate Director of the Global Public Policy Institute (GPPi) in Berlin and Visiting Professor at the School of Public Policy, Central European University.

The Clinical Seminar will take place from **11 June to 24 June 2018**. All students participating in OSIRG must be available during these dates without exception.

Internship

Following the seminar, interns will disperse to one of several dozen host institutions around the world (please see the *Appendix* for a list of potential host institutions). For those students who apply via the individual track, OSF has established relationships with many of the strongest and most ambitious transnational non-governmental organizations, such as International Crisis Group and Human Rights Watch, as well as innovative, local organizations, such as Fundar in Mexico and Al-Haq in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

Student and host institution matching – Individual Track

Effectively matching students' interests and expertise with the objectives and capacity of OSIRG host institutions is an essential element of the internship program. OSIRG staff will create matches based on student applications, host institution requirements, host project descriptions and student interest.

- **Application:** The essay portion of the application requires students to present a policy area, related to the field of human rights and/or governance, where the student believes reform can improve the lives of relevant populations. This exercise allows students to identify a specific policy problem that they are passionate about, and assists OSIRG staff in identifying host institutions whose project proposal corresponds to this area of interest.
- **Host institution requirements:** Each host institution will provide OSIRG staff with a project proposal outlining a focus area and activities that a student will likely undertake during the course of the internship term.
- **Student interest:** Students to whom interviews are offered are encouraged to familiarize themselves with OSIRG's host institutions and communicate their interests to staff during their interview. While it is not guaranteed that students will be matched with those organizations, this will contribute to the staff's overall view of the applicant's profile and the type of placement that may best suit the student.

In most cases, OSIRG staff will offer finalists alternatives for host institution placement and students will be required to rank these options according to their preference. The rankings will help guide the matching process.

Mentorship

As part of the internship, one or more staff members at the host institution will be responsible for overseeing the student and the development and execution of his or her project. During the months prior to the start of the clinical seminar, hosts will assist interns in preparing for their project. It is the responsibility of the student, however, to maintain consistent communication with his or her mentor(s). As such, it is important that students reach out to their host institution contacts before and during the seminar so that any changes students feel should be made to their project are discussed well in advance of the internship.

Cost and compensation

The OSIRG program is fully funded. The cost of student travel and accommodations during the clinical seminar and internship period will be covered by OSF. The Foundations will also provide a stipend during the seminar and internship periods. The stipend is comprehensive and will include a per diem as well as visa costs, travel insurance, and currency conversion fees. In addition to funds to cover accommodations, students will also be awarded a relocation fund during the internship period. OSF will not be responsible for any costs that exceed the allocated stipend.

APPLICATION

There are two tracks of application for the OSIRG program: the individual track and the collaboration track. Students are allowed to apply to only one track.

The individual track allows individual applicants to request placement with an OSF-selected host institution. OSIRG staff members will use information gathered from the essay portion of the application and from the interview to match students with an appropriate host institution.

The collaboration track allows students to apply to the OSIRG program as a team of two or three. In this track students are required to identify a host institution and submit a project proposal along with written approval from host institution management confirming their acceptance of the project and the student team. OSIRG staff is required to review and approve all project descriptions. The timeline for this track differs from the individual track to allow students adequate time to define their project with input from the host institution.

Please note that regardless of the application track, selected students will have the opportunity to collaborate with host institution staff to further develop the project.

Students may access OSIRG's application by using the following link: <https://osirg.submittable.com/submit>.

A link to the application can also be found on OSIRG's [OSF](#) web page.

Please note that a separate guide meant for distribution to student applicants is attached. The guide provides background information on the program and directions for application submission. ***The University Reviewer Manual should not be distributed to students.***

Application Structure: Individual Track

The OSIRG application is separated into eight parts. Students do not have to complete their application in one sitting. *Submittable* allows an applicant to save a draft and return to the application up to 21 days later. ***Please advise students that they will not be able to submit an application unless all fields marked with a red asterisk are completed.*** The following includes further information on each part of the application:

I. Personal information

All contact information should be current.

II. Emergency contact information

All emergency contact information should be valid until the end of the internship term.

III. Academic history

Students are required to provide information about their bachelor's degree and the master's program in which they are currently enrolled. There is also space to provide information about one additional degree or certification.

IV. Professional history

Only information that is **relevant** for the program should be listed in this section. Previous positions, volunteer work, or activities that are unrelated to the project should **not** be included. Students will need to provide a comprehensive curriculum vitae or professional résumé in addition to this abbreviated listing.

V. Language skills and additional information

Students should only list those languages in which they are **fluent**.

VI. Essays

Students are asked to answer both essay questions. Please remember that the response to **Essay B** will assist OSIRG staff in matching accepted candidates and host institutions. **Also note that applications with essays that are longer than the maximum length will not be considered.**

A. Personal statement

In **500 words maximum**, students should write a personal statement discussing their interests, life experiences, goals, and commitment to human rights and governance.

B. Demonstrated interest in human rights and governance

In **1,000 words maximum**, students should describe a policy area, related to the field of human rights and/or governance, where they believe some reform can be made to improve the lives of relevant populations. The essay should include a specific illustration of the policy problem, describe potential solutions, and present what actions might be taken to reach the proposed resolutions.

VII. Required attachments

Students are required to attach a print-quality (300 dpi or higher) passport-sized photo or headshot of themselves, as well as a copy of their passport identification pages.

VIII. Signature

In order to complete the application, students must certify that all information provided is true to the best of their knowledge.

Application Structure: Collaboration Track

The OSIRG application is separated into nine parts. Students do not have to complete their application in one sitting. *Submittable* allows an applicant to save a draft and return to the application up to 21 days later. **Please advise students that they will not be able to submit an application unless all fields marked with a red asterisk are completed.** The following includes further information on each part of the application:

I. Team information

Include team's proposal title, host institution, members' full names, and the student's current university.

II. Personal information

All contact information should be current.

III. Emergency contact information

All emergency contact information should be current.

IV. Academic history

Students are required to provide information about their bachelor's degree and the master's program in which they are currently enrolled. There is also space to provide information about one additional degree or certification.

V. Professional history

Only information that is **relevant** for the program should be listed in this section. Previous positions, volunteer work, or activities that are unrelated to the project should **not** be included. Students will need to provide a comprehensive curriculum vitae or professional résumé in addition to this abbreviated listing.

VI. Language skills and additional information

Students should only list those languages in which they are **fluent**.

VII. Writing Portion

Students are asked to answer both essay questions and to upload a copy of the project proposal using the provided template. Essay A should be answered individually, while the answer to Essay B should be a collaborative effort of the entire team. ***Please note that applications with essays that are longer than the maximum length will not be considered.***

A. Personal statement

In **500 words maximum**, the student should submit a personal statement discussing their interests, goals, and commitment to human rights and governance. The student should also describe why he or she applied via the collaboration track.

B. Executive Summary and Policy Discussion

In **1,500 words maximum**, the team should provide an executive summary of the proposed project, including a description of the policy problem and how the proposed project is meant to spur reform. Students should also describe the specific strengths of their team and how those are related to the proposed project.

VIII. Required attachments

Students are required to attach a print-quality (300 dpi or higher) passport-sized photo or headshot of themselves, a copy of their passport identification pages, a project proposal and written confirmation from the host institution stating the office's agreement to host the intern.

IX. Signature

In order to complete the application, students must certify that all information provided is true to the best of their knowledge.

SELECTION PROCESS

Students applying for the 2018 internship will be subject to two phases of selection. These include:

Phase 1: University selection

Each university is required to identify and submit applications for **eight** candidates, ranked in order of preference, to OSIRG staff by **11 December 2017**. Universities are encouraged to consider not only students' academic abilities but their potential for success and their compatibility with the program's goals, which are to support emerging leaders and civil society professionals. Students will be selected without regard to their race, color, religion, gender, political beliefs, national origin, disability, age, or sexual orientation.

Please note that only students who apply via the individual track will be subject to university selection. Students who apply through the collaboration track will be reviewed exclusively by the OSF selection committee.

Program Promotion

Each university is tasked with promoting OSIRG to the student population eligible for the program. Promotion may take many forms, but university representatives are encouraged to distribute information about the program as early and often as possible. OSIRG staff will be available throughout the fall and early winter to hold virtual and in-person introductory sessions with interested students and answer any questions they might have.

Selection criteria

The criteria listed below should guide the selection of candidates. All criteria should be weighed equally when reviewing candidates.

- Applicant demonstrates strong interest in human rights and governance.
- Applicant demonstrates professional and academic achievement and potential.
- Applicant demonstrates a strong commitment to pursuing a career in public policy.
- Applicant demonstrates the ability to effectively work with others while maintaining a professional demeanor.
- Applicant demonstrates the ability to work in a multicultural environment.

Suggested selection procedures

While universities are not required to adhere to a set of standard selection procedures for OSIRG, they are encouraged to select candidates utilizing an open and transparent process. In the past, successful processes have included the following:

- **An application review committee** composed of appropriate academic and administrative staff, including:
 - Committee members with expertise in or familiarity with human rights and/or governance policy areas;
 - Committee members with intimate knowledge of the student body from which applications were drawn.
- If using a review committee:
 - Committee members should **individually review each application** weighing all selection criteria described above equally.
 - Once individual reviews of the application are complete, the **committee should meet as a whole** to discuss applicants and decide on the eight finalists the university would like to submit to OSIRG for final selection.
 - Including OSIRG alumni from the university (if available) on a committee might prove beneficial.

Regardless of how the selection process takes shape, the university is required to submit a short but detailed memo outlining the structure of and participants involved in the process. Please submit this memo to the OSIRG inbox (osirg@opensocietyfoundations.org).

Submittable

OSIRG uses *Submittable*, an online application system that allows program staff to see all applications and gather feedback on the application process. Additionally, the system will allow university reviewers to review and, most importantly, rank applicants online instead of completing the paper forms and memos required previously. Therefore, we suggest that internal deliberation regarding each candidate occur offline.

For a step-by-step guide on using *Submittable*, please see attached. If needed, please email OSIRG (osirg@opensocietyfoundations.org) by 27 October 2017 to schedule a system demonstration.

Responsibilities

Each university is required to submit and/or handle the following:

1. The promotion, administration, and distribution of applications.
2. Eight candidates, ranked in order of preference, to OSIRG staff by 11 December 2017 via *Submittable*.
3. A short memo detailing the selection and ranking process undertaken by the university.

Phase 2: OSF selection

Following the submission of ranked applications, a selection committee composed of Foundation staff and program alumni will review each submission. The committee will then interview 40 to 60 applicants before selecting up to 24 finalists. It is important to note that students who are granted an interview are not guaranteed admission to the program, as the selection process is highly competitive. The program will announce finalists in January 2017. ***As per OSF policy, finalists are not considered OSF grantees until they countersign their grant agreement. For more information on this policy, please contact OSIRG staff.***

Timelines

The dates listed below provide a brief outline of university involvement in the OSIRG selection process. A more comprehensive program timeline will be provided to accepted students once selection is complete.

Individual Track

25 September 2017: Application, reviewer guide, and student application guide released to university

11 December 2017: Universities finalize reviews on *Submittable* and notify OSIRG staff to confirm rankings

02 January 2018: Candidate interviews begin

January 2018: OSIRG selection committee announces finalists

Collaborative Track

27 October 2017:
Application, reviewer guide, and student application guide released to university

12 February 2018:
Applications due

18 February 2018:

Candidate interviews begin

March 2018:

OSIRG selection committee announces finalists

APPENDIX: SAMPLE LIST OF HOST INSTITUTIONS

In 2018, OSIRG will partner with at least 40 host institutions around the world. The list below is a selection of some of our past participating organizations, included to illustrate the breadth and scope of our grantees' work. This list is not comprehensive, however, nor indicative of the internship placements offered during the 2018 cycle.

Organization	Country	Website
Al Haq	Palestine	www.alhaq.org
Association for Women's Rights in Development	Canada	www.awid.org
Associazione Antigone	Italy	www.associazioneantigone.it
Bulgarian Helsinki Committee	Bulgaria	www.bghelsinki.org/en
Center for Legal and Social Studies	Argentina	www.cels.org.ar
Center for Legal Applied Research at DIREITO GV	Brazil	www.direitogv.fgv.br
Center for the Study of Democracy	Bulgaria	www.csd.bg
Conectas	Brazil	www.conectas.org
Fundar	Mexico	www.fundar.org.mx
Girls Not Brides	UK	www.girlsnotbrides.org
Global Witness	UK	www.globalwitness.org
Grupa 484	Serbia	www.grupa484.org.rs/en
Hakijamii Trust	Nairobi	www.hakijamii.com
ILGA-Europe	Belgium	www.ilga-europe.org
Institute for Security Studies	South Africa	www.issafrica.org
Institute of Public Affairs	Poland	www.isp.org.pl
International Detention Coalition	Mexico & Central America	www.idcoalition.org
International Service for Human Rights	Switzerland	www.ishr.ch
Migration Policy Institute	USA	www.migrationpolicy.org
Minority Rights Group	UK	www.minorityrights.org
Society for International Development	Kenya	www.sidint.net
The East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project	Uganda	www.defenddefenders.org

The Open Society Internship for Rights and Governance is a joint program of the Open Society Foundations and the School of Public Policy at Central European University.



NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Open Society Foundations and the Open Society Internship for Rights and Governance do not discriminate based on race, color, religion, gender, political beliefs, national origin, disability, age, or sexual orientation.