



NIAS

Netherlands Institute
for Advanced Study
in the Humanities
and Social Sciences

Regulations - NIAS Selection Procedure

NIAS Individual Fellowships

Article 1 General

- 1 NIAS opens the Call for NIAS Fellowship applications once a year. Eligible scholars can be with or without an affiliation to a university, research institute or organisation or work as self-employed, independent researchers. As of March 2022, as part of the EU sanctions in response to the Ukraine crisis, NIAS does not accept applicants (whatever their nationality) affiliated to a Russian or Belarusian university or research institute. Applicants with a Russian or Belarusian nationality who are affiliated to a research institution not part of Russia or Belarus, may apply. NIAS' sanctions are foremost targeted towards institutions, not people.
- 2 A NIAS Fellowship consists of:
 - a. 5 or 10 months to work on a project proposal of a scholar's own choice that fits within the scope of humanities and/or social sciences;
 - b. Office with internet and ICT support;
 - c. Communal lunches (4 working days a week, holidays excluded);
 - d. Technical and practical support;
 - e. Library services;
 - f. Participation in the weekly seminar and other academic activities;
 - g. Facilities to organise an in-house workshop;
 - h. Facilities for public outreach;
 - i. Possibility to apply for a stipend covering part of the costs of a fellowship (for fellows from universities or institutes abroad or independent scholars);
 - j. Or a Dutch University Grant (given to the university of fellows affiliated to Dutch universities or institutes);
 - k. Possibility to apply for subsidised accommodation in Amsterdam or reimbursement of the daily commuting travel expenses up to € 250 per month.

- 3 A NIAS fellowship does not constitute an employment relationship. During the fellowship, the fellow is and remains an employee of their own university or research institute, or remains a self-employed researcher. Subsequently, NIAS is not obligated to make social-insurance contributions or to contribute to a pension or unemployment insurance.
- 4 Stipends. Fellows who are in need of financial support, can apply for a stipend of € 3.500 Euros a month (up to a maximum of € 35.000 for a full year fellowship). This applies to fellows without (sufficient) income during their fellowship, who are 1) affiliated to a university or institute outside the Netherlands; or who are 2) (temporarily) not affiliated to a university or self-employed, either living in or outside of the Netherlands.
- 5 Extra funding. In case a fellow, who meets the requirements mentioned in *Article 1*, needs extra financial compensation of another type to be able to fully commit to their fellowship, it is possible to apply for (limited) extra funding. The NIAS director will make the decision, based on additional information on the fellow's (personal) circumstances, on whether this extra funding is granted.
- 6 NIAS Dutch University Grant. In case of a Dutch University Grant, Dutch universities or institutes receive a grant of € 2.500 per month for fellows affiliated to their university or institute during the period of the fellowship. Grants will be paid on the basis of an invoice which universities send to NIAS.
- 7 Taxation of stipends. Stipends awarded by NIAS to Dutch scholars, authors, journalists and artists are seen as '[Income from other work](#)' by the tax authorities of the Netherlands, and should be filed as such for tax return by the recipients themselves. Fellows who do not live in the Netherlands [will not be taxed for stipends](#) which, according to the bilateral tax treaty, have been assigned to their country of residence and they pay taxes there.
- 8 Accommodation. Fellows from outside the Netherlands or fellows living in the Netherlands with more than a 1.5-hour commute (one way) from the NIAS premises can apply for a studio at the Fellows House at a highly subsidised rate of € 975 per month. Fellows who bring their children to Amsterdam may apply for a family apartment at the same subsidised rate.
- 9 Travel costs. Fellows who travel from abroad to the Netherlands can receive reimbursement of one return ticket up to a maximum of € 1.500. Fellows who commute from their home in the Netherlands to NIAS, can receive reimbursement of their travel costs up to a maximum of € 250 per month.
- 10 Conditions. When signing a fellowship agreement at NIAS, you agree to live by the requirements and responsibilities listed below:

Requirements

- NIAS fellows are required to be physically present at NIAS at least four days per week.
- For the complete duration of the Fellowship Agreement every fellow needs to be released as much as possible from teaching, supervision, and administrative obligations. An exception is made for the supervision of PhD-candidates. By signing the Fellowship Agreement, both fellows and Dutch universities or institutes are committing to meet these basic conditions of a NIAS fellowship. See for exceptions on this rule: *Article 8* of these Regulations.
- Fellows attend all weekly seminars during their fellowship period.
- During the academic year of their fellowship at NIAS, fellows are required to conduct a minimum of two peer reviews of fellowship applications on behalf of NIAS.
- Fellows may take up to two weeks of vacation per semester. This must be reported in advance to facility@nias.knaw.nl.
- Fellows can attend a maximum of two external research related events of more than one weekday per semester. The costs involved will be at the expense of the fellows.

Responsibilities

- Fellows commit to making a constructive social and intellectual contribution to the NIAS community during their stay.
- NIAS fellows are required to respect and honour the [NIAS Code of Conduct](#).
- NIAS fellows generally collaborate in the case of interview requests, videos, photography and other ways in which NIAS wishes to present the institute to the outside world.
- Fellows selected within the context of a partnered fellowship, also commit to the fellowship requirements of that partner.

11 Research Integrity. NIAS fellows are required to adhere to the [Netherlands Code of Conduct for Research Integrity](#) and observe this code when carrying out their research at NIAS. This document speaks of five general principles: 1) Honesty, 2) Scrupulousness, 3) Transparency, 4) Independence and 5) Responsibility.

12 Each academic year between twenty and forty fellowships (in sum a maximum of two hundred forty fellow months) are granted to NIAS Fellowship applicants. The exact number of fellowships granted is a decision made by the NIAS Directorate in line with *Article 7* in these *Regulations*, taking into account for instance the available office spaces, accommodation and resources.

Article 2 Formal requirements for a NIAS Individual Fellowship application

- 1 The formal requirements for a NIAS Individual Fellowship application are:
 - a. On the date that the Call closes, the applicant must have at least three years academic experience since the date they were awarded a PhD;
 - b. The project proposal must fit within the scope of humanities and/or social sciences;
 - c. The project proposal should consist of no more than a maximum of fifteen hundred words including footnotes, excluding references and abstract;
 - d. The project proposal should contain at least a clear description of the project that will be conducted during a stay at NIAS, a research question, as well as the methodological and theoretical contribution the project aims at;
 - e. Project descriptions that are not embedded in the existing literature and do not contain a short list of references are not eligible for selection;
 - f. The applicant should submit an updated C.V. including a list of core publications (of maximum 4 pages). Begin with a narrative section addressing the following items (in no more than 300 words):
 - o How does your proposed project relate to your academic trajectory to date?
 - o Why is this fellowship timely for your current academic context?
 - g. The applicant may not resubmit a project proposal that was previously rejected by NIAS;
 - h. Applicants can only apply for one type of fellowship per academic year (i.e. either a NIAS Individual Fellowship, a partnered individual fellowship, a NIAS theme group fellowship, or a partnered theme group fellowship);
 - i. An applicant who previously held a NIAS fellowship may only apply for a NIAS Individual Fellowship if there are at least 10 years between the application date of the previous fellowship and the current application deadline date (see for exceptions on this rule *Article 8* of these *Regulations*);
 - j. Applicants provide the names of three international experts in their field who would be suitable to approach as referees. Experts should not have a conflict of interest when reviewing the proposal. Excluded experts are colleagues from the same department, co-authors, (former) supervisors, friends, and scholars involved in the current research project proposal;

- k. Project descriptions cannot be generated by AI;
- l. The application must be completed correctly and contain all the requested information and required documentation. In case an application is not complete or correct, the application is automatically rejected.

Article 3 Application procedure

- 1 The annual Call for Applications for NIAS Individual Fellowships is open from the 15th of January to the 15th of March (or the following Monday, in case this date is a Saturday or Sunday).
- 2 Applications are written in English and submitted via the application module on the NIAS website by 12.00 noon CET on the 15th of March (or the following Monday, in case this date is a Saturday or Sunday) and must comply with all the formal requirements stated above in *Article 2* of these *Regulations*.
- 3 NIAS caps the number of applications admitted to the NIAS Open Call for Fellowships at two hundred and fifteen (215). This means that only the first 215 eligible applications will be considered for a NIAS Fellowship. This numerus clausus does not apply to applications for Theme Groups, or to candidates who are affiliated to an institute outside, or who are independently based outside the following countries: EU, Andorra, The Faroes, Iceland, Monaco, Norway, Liechtenstein, San Marino, Vatican City, Switzerland, UK, US, Canada, Japan, Australia, and New Zealand.
- 4 An application can be considered submitted once an automatic confirmation of receipt has been received. Applications that are not submitted before the deadline of 12 noon CET on the 15th of March (or the following Monday, in case this date is a Saturday or Sunday) will not be taken into consideration.
- 5 NIAS and KNAW Academy Bureau employees and members of the NIAS Academic Advisory Board (AAB) may not apply. External referees, as determined in *Article 4* of these regulations, may apply on the condition that they do not act as referees in the selection procedure for that year.
- 6 The Selection Officer at NIAS checks whether the application complies with all the eligibility criteria as stated in *Article 2* of these Regulations. If the application does not meet the formal requirements the application will be rejected and the applicant will be informed by email.

- 7 A NIAS Staff Committee will evaluate the collaborative engagement of eligible candidates. If an applicant demonstrates a clear commitment to the NIAS research community and has the necessary qualifications to contribute, their application is sent to two external referees to evaluate its scientific content. The applications put aside by the NIAS Staff Committee will be listed and put before the AAB in its annual Autumn meeting. The AAB will confirm the list, and may request information on the rejection.

Article 4 Evaluation by external referees

- 1 Applications that meet all the formal requirements as stated in *Article 2* of these *Regulations* are sent to two selected external referees taken either from the panel of referees compiled by NIAS for the selection procedure, and/or from the three referees put forward by applicant as described in *Article 2h*. The range of specialties of the NIAS panel of referees is broad which ensures that a wide variety of expertise and backgrounds is represented.
- 2 The external referees evaluate the project proposal, with the applicant's C.V. serving as background information. The referees evaluate the project description and give each proposal a score of A+, A, B, C or D, where D indicates 'very poor' and A+ indicates 'excellent'. The scores are based on review of the following criteria:
 - a) Research topic and research question
 - b) Relation of the project to existing literature in the field
 - c) Relevance of the research project (i.e. academic; may also include societal, cultural or artistic relevance)
 - d) Identification of the problems involved and methodology
 - e) Fit with candidate's academic trajectory
 - f) Feasibility of the time schedule
 - g) Intended research output
 - h) How do you believe the applicant will benefit from carrying out the work in the interdisciplinary environment of NIAS.
- 3 The seventy-five applications with the highest scores from the referees' evaluations are presented to the NIAS Academic Advisory Board as described in *Article 5* of these *Regulations*.

Article 5 Academic Advisory Board, responsibilities, composition and work procedures

- 1 NIAS (the Director and the Head of Academic Affairs) installs an Academic Advisory Board (AAB) which has the task of advising NIAS on the selection procedure and of ranking applicants, taking into account the internal balance of the proposed year group, in terms of discipline, gender, age and regional diversity. On the basis of the advice of the AAB the NIAS directorate takes the final decisions about the allocation of fellowships.
- 2 The Academic Advisory Board consists of a maximum of seven members including the chair. Members are appointed by the Director of NIAS for a term of four years, which can be extended for one more term of four years.
- 3 The Academic Advisory Board consists of the chair and members of the Scientific Advisory Board (WECO) plus three additional members. In appointing the Academic Advisory Board members, care is taken to maintain a balance with respect to discipline, gender, age and regional diversity.
- 4 All decisions made by the Academic Advisory Board are by majority vote.
- 5 The members of the Academic Advisory Board are bound by the “KNAW code of conduct for the boards, juries and committees that assess and decide on the conferral of awards, memberships and funding” ([Website KNAW](#)).
- 6 NIAS staff provide the necessary administrative support and facilities to the Academic Advisory Board.

Article 6 Evaluation by the Academic Advisory Board

- 1 The Academic Advisory Board (AAB) evaluates the quality of the best seventy five applications that received the highest scores from external referees with respect to the criteria stated in *Article 4. 2* of these Regulations.
- 2 Subsequently, the (AAB) ranks candidates and compiles a list of the best applications up to a total maximum of two hundred fellowship months (twenty to forty applicants). The AAB then compiles a reserve list up to a total maximum of fifty fellowship months (five to ten applicants). The remaining applicants will be rejected. The Academic Advisory Board presents its findings and advises the Director by the 1st of December at the very latest.

Article 7 Final selection by the Director of NIAS

- 1 The Director of NIAS decides on the final selection of candidates and the composition of the year group on the basis of the Academic Advisory Board's advice, with a focus on the following additional criteria:
 - a. Diversity of disciplines;
 - b. Balance of Dutch and international scholars;
 - c. Gender balance;
 - d. Regional diversity;
 - e. Balance between early, mid and late career scholars;
 - f. Availability of office spaces, accommodation and resources.
- 2 The Director of NIAS also finalises the reserve list of candidates on the basis of the Academic Advisory Board's advice. This list will be used to augment the year group if candidates from the first list refuse (or are unable to accept) the fellowship offer. Candidates on the reserve list are then approached according to their ranking scores and the additional criteria stated in *Article 7.1*.
- 3 The Director of NIAS informs all candidates in writing of his decision no later than the 15th of December in the year that the application was submitted i.e. candidates who have been selected, candidates who have not been selected and candidates who have been placed on the reserve list.
- 4 Once all selected candidates have been informed by the Director, NIAS will discuss with the successful candidates the details of their Fellowship Agreement. If NIAS and the candidate have not come to mutual agreement by the 15th of April of the year following selection, the Director's decision (as stated in *Article 7.3*) expires. If that is the case, the candidate will be notified and the Director of NIAS will select the following candidate from the reserve list. Offers cannot be deferred to a future year.

Article 8 Events beyond the parties' control

- 1 In case of an event beyond the parties' control, such as a pandemic, that makes it (temporarily) impossible for NIAS and/or the successful candidates to comply with obligations set forth in their Fellowship Agreement, an additional agreement is drafted by NIAS and signed by both parties;
- 2 Such events include for instance (further) shutdown, work stoppage or work delay of a governmental entity, service provider or other business necessary for the performance of the terms of the Fellowship Agreement; (further) national or local government orders, including but not limited to (further) travel restrictions; the COVID-19 or other illness or required lockdown or quarantine of either NIAS-KNAW or the Fellow;
- 3 Successful candidates who hold a fellowship during such an event, are exempt from *Article 2, section 1i*.

Final Provisions

- 1 These *Regulations* are finalised by the Directorate of NIAS on 09-12-2024.
- 2 In any situations not mentioned or covered by these *Regulations*, the Director of NIAS will take the final decision.

Regulations - NIAS Selection Procedure effective from 1 January 2025

Jan Willem Duyvendak
Director of NIAS