



## CALL FOR APPLICATIONS:

### DOCTORAL AND POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCH GRANTS AT SAINT JOSEPH UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT FOR THE STUDY OF COLLECTIONS HELD BY THE ORIENTAL LIBRARY IN BEIRUT

#### DESCRIPTION:

**Saint Joseph University of Beirut (USJ)** intends to award up to three doctoral and/or postdoctoral grants for durations of 3 to 12 months to be held in Beirut between **1 September 2024 and 30 June 2025**. Grants will support research (including, possibly, description and indexing) and scholarly publications on collections held by the **Oriental Library (BO)**. The grantee(s) will be hosted by and work closely with the BO. The grants are made possible thanks to a partnership with the **National Library of France (BnF)** in the framework of the *Bibliothèques d'Orient* programme.

#### CONTEXT:

**Saint Joseph University of Beirut (USJ)** is a private, non-profit Lebanese university founded in 1875 by the Jesuit Fathers and comprising thirteen faculties – of which Religious sciences, Political Science, Humanities and Social Sciences, Education and Languages. The university has positioned itself as a French-language cultural institution supporting biculturalism (French and Arabic) and trilingualism (French, English and Arabic). USJ's mission is threefold: the creation of new knowledge (research), the transmission of this knowledge (teaching) and the use of this knowledge for the benefit of society (service). To fulfil its first mission, the university has set up research structures and doctoral schools, and actively participates in international scientific projects.

**The Oriental Library (BO)** is a library dedicated to the Middle East and Oriental studies, built up from the holdings of generations of Jesuit scholars since the 19th century. Under the administrative supervision of the USJ, it is the third-largest private heritage library in the Middle East, holding 230,000 book titles, including early editions by chroniclers and travellers as well as works by Arab poets and thinkers. It also holds: 1,800 periodical titles, including newspapers and magazines dating back to the beginnings of the Arab press in Beirut and Cairo in the second half of the 19th century; some 250 lithographs and 3,700 manuscripts in Arabic and other oriental languages, including Syriac, Turkish, Persian and Armenian; and 2,400 antique maps and plans of Lebanon and the region. A vast programme of conservation-restoration, digitisation and enhancement of the library's holdings has been underway since the early 2000s, with the aim of safeguarding its documentary resources and making them accessible to the Lebanese and international public.

**The National Library of France (BnF)** runs the *Bibliothèques d'Orient* (Libraries of the Middle East) programme of which the BO is a partner. Within this framework, and thanks

to the financial backing of [The Mellon Foundation](#), the BnF contributes to the BO's conservation-restoration, digitisation and enhancement programme, including through the online dissemination of its digitised items on [Gallica](#), the digital library of the BnF and its partners, and support for research on its holdings.

#### **ELIGIBILITY:**

- **Expertise:** The grants are open to students registered in a doctoral programme and to researchers affiliated with a postdoctoral programme holders, respectively, of a Master's or a doctoral degree in ancient, modern and contemporary History with a focus on Lebanon and the Near-East or any other research area and topic meeting the second eligibility criteria.
- **Documentary focus:** Projects must include, at least in part, research on, or using as sources, holdings already digitised or in the process of being digitised as part of the partnership with the BnF. Items from the BO's holdings available on *Gallica* to date can be found by clicking on this [Link](#). Other items in the process of being uploaded into the digital library include monographs on the so-called Eastern Question, the French mandate period, Arab reformism, the Nahda period, and Maronite history.
- **Language Skills:** Academic English proficiency is required for the dissemination of scientific results. Other language skills will have to be relevant to the research project.

#### **DURATION OF THE GRANTS:**

Up to three grants will be awarded for periods ranging from 3 to 12 months depending on the scope of the selected research projects and applicants' workplans.

#### **AMOUNT OF THE STIPENDS:**

Grantees will receive €1,875 per month all inclusive. They will be expected to cover transportation costs to and from Beirut, housing and other living expenses, and compulsory insurance (medical, civil liability and, if applicable, repatriation) in Lebanon.

#### **WORKING CONDITIONS:**

During the grant period, grantees will be expected to be physically present principally in Beirut. They will have facilitated access to the USJ campus and to a dedicated workspace within the BO.

#### **DELIVERABLES:**

- Grantees will be expected to work towards an academic publication describing and/or making use of the BO's holdings, and deliver an oral presentation of their research project at USJ-BO during their grant period.
- They will also be expected to mention the grant and the granting and funding institutions (the USJ, BO, BnF and Mellon Foundation) in their related publications and presentations at academic events during and after the grant period.
- At the end of the grant period, they will be required to deliver a written activity report to the USJ and the BO. This report will be shared with the BnF and The Mellon Foundation
- If they produce descriptions of the holdings studied (such as bibliographic records, indexes, inventories, pre-inventories, status of holdings, and descriptions), they will provide the BO with a copy of the relevant data as an

appendix to the activity report, so that the BO can put this data online if it so wishes. The BO may also share the data with the BnF to be made available online under the Etalab open license.

- In case they produce descriptions or indexing of the holdings under study, they will be required to deliver related data sets to the BO as part of their activity report.

**PERSONAL DATA:**

Candidates' and grantees' personal data collected by the USJ and the BO will be shared with the BnF and treated in accordance with relevant rules and regulations regarding the protection of personal data.

**SELECTION PROCESS:**

Applications will be reviewed by a committee composed of members of the USJ, the BO, the BnF and external experts, and evaluated on the basis of the candidates' academic credentials, relevant language skills, quality of the research project and work plan, and intentions regarding the dissemination of research results.

**APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS:**

Applications are to be submitted in French or English to: [candidatures.bo@usj.edu.lb](mailto:candidatures.bo@usj.edu.lb).

They should include the following documents:

- A concise CV (up to 2,500 words);
- A copy of the candidate's ID card or passport;
- A research project (up to 5,000 words) detailing the research, identifying the concerned BO's holdings, and explaining how they will be dealt with;
- A detailed work plan covering the duration of the grant period;
- A statement of intentions about the dissemination of research results, including the participation to and/or organisation of academic events (with details) during the grant period, and plans for publishing in international peer-reviewed indexed journals (please specify);
- A cover letter stating the applicant's interest for the proposed grant;
- A support letter from the PhD supervisor or head of the postdoctoral programme

**Application Deadline:** 10/05/2024 at 00.00 o'clock (Beirut time)

**Selection Results Announcement:** 10/06/2024

**Earliest starting date:** 01/09/2024

**Latest end date:** 31/06/2025