



# Knowledge Management Fund Information and Application Criteria

## Overview

The Knowledge Management Fund is the Knowledge Platform's instrument to financially support activities arising from its network. The small-scale grants awarded by the Fund offer a low barrier to entry for innovative, agile and experimental proposals. The aim of proposals is to diversify thinking and evidence in the Security & Rule of Law (SRL) field, particularly in Fragile and Conflict-Affected Settings (FCAS).

The KMF is a €300,000 annual fund that awards grants of up to €15,000 for events, research ideas and other initiatives that contribute to improving the quality of knowledge generated by the SRL field, *and* its subsequent uptake.

## KMF Thematic Headlines 2018

The KMF will award funds to projects that fall within this year's thematic headlines. Following consultations with Platform members, the results of an online survey, and discussions with the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the KMF in 2018 will support initiatives that pertain to existing and emerging problems within the following themes:

### 1. Addressing Inequality as Prevention

Widening social and economic inequality between countries, as well as between demographic groups within countries, are currently seen as critical drivers of political disaffection, violence and migration. Unequal opportunities and disparities in access to institutions or protections from harm can transform into grievances and destabilize communities. Growing evidence of how inequality can lead to violence has spurred new attention for addressing inequality as a way to help prevent violent conflict. The recent *Sustaining Peace Agenda* of the UN, as well as the *Pathways for Peace* joint study by the UN and the World Bank, and numerous initiatives catalyzed by the Sustainable Development Goals all seek to galvanize action for reducing inequality across myriad fronts.

When it comes to preventing violence, inequality is not limited merely to economic or class disparity. Inequality is not determined by GINI coefficients alone. Addressing unequal structures of power and grievances that stem from systemic social inequality can be essential in preventing the outbreak of violent conflict. But more can be done to demonstrate how: rather than asking 'what does prevention look like in practice?', this headline poses the question, 'what does addressing inequality look like in practice, and how does that contribute to preventing violence conflict?'

Examples of issues to investigate might include the impact of power relations on experiences of security, and justice, and their provision; how promoting gender parity could benefit sustainable peace efforts; whether and how including minority groups' participation in peacebuilding, transitional justice or constitution building lowers the recurrence of violence; or how to fit perceptions of inequality into conflict sensitive programming in fragile and conflict-affected settings (FCAS). Against this backdrop, this theme asks what social, legal, political and economic inequalities are driving conflict, and what are the best ways to transform them, build peace, and prevent violence.

## 2. Moving the Needle on Goal 16.3 of the SDGs

Sustainable Development Goal 16.3 seeks to promote the rule of law at the national and international levels, and ensure equal access to justice for all. Making certain that people are able to access legal protections, impartial settlements, and redress is essential to building a society in which people feel their rights are recognized and will be defended. In this way, access to justice is the foundation of empowerment, both a goal in and of itself and an enabler for the other goals.

As the High-Level Political Forum of 2019 approaches, the international community must improve its understanding of the ways in which access to justice contributes to building peaceful and inclusive societies. Currently, focus primarily remains on the establishment of justice institutions. However, it is also important to investigate the variety of ways in which people seek recognition, safeguards, reconciliation, just arbitration and amends. Especially in fragile and conflict affected settings, access to justice means more than the affordability of a lawyer or the proximity of a courthouse (though these are important). It also means enabling individuals and groups to have their grievances addressed through trusted systems, and preventing disputes from devolving into violence. In this way it is also important to see the role access to justice plays in strengthening and maintaining social cohesion. This means understanding, from a *people-centered perspective*, how just outcomes can best be pursued, addressing not only economic or institutional barriers, but also barriers of trust between authorities and populations.

This Knowledge Management Fund Headline will designate a space for proposals that seize upon opportunities to move the needle on Goal 16.3, in particular ensuring equal access to just outcomes, addressing issues of marginalization, and building respect, recognition and trust within societies.

## 3. Change and Learning Processes

This theme explores how people, organizations and institutions working on SRL learn and why situations, practices and behaviors really change – for better or worse. Specifically, this theme will help elucidate how to translate research findings and lessons into better programming and policy. Example areas for investigation might be (but are not limited to): what really nudges behavioral change (at all levels) and how can this improve the quality of SRL work; how can accountability and oversight mechanisms better induce positive change processes; and how can interventions hope to reshape institutional practices or shift cultural norms in ways that are meaningful, sensitive and sustainable?

## Who can apply?

The KMF is particularly interested in diversifying the perspectives and sources of evidence that contribute to SRL policy and programming.

Applications are open to any consortium or individual with the ambition to improve policies, programs or knowledge in the field of security and rule of law in fragile and conflict affected countries. Think-tanks, (I)NGOs, academics, universities, private sector organizations, government institutions, journalists, independent researchers or innovators, data specialists, learning experts, and PhD candidates are all welcome to submit proposals.

Partnerships between individuals and organizations and across the range of sectors within our network are highly encouraged. In particular, the KMF prioritizes partnerships that link people from different regions of the globe.

Geographic foci are not limited, but preference is given to countries located in the following priority regions: Middle East, North Africa, Horn of Africa, Sahel, Afghanistan/Pakistan. In exceptional cases research outside these regions may be considered.

Please note the KMF will not fund salaries, personnel or fee days beyond 40% of the total requested KMF budget. Nor will it cover overheads or any expenses not agreed in advance, as designated in the budget within the signed contract.

## Application criteria

The KMF is made up of three strands to which you may apply: General, Research, and Innovation. Each strand funds different kinds of activities and initiatives that, collectively, aim to produce original insights to help the Platform improve the quality and uptake of knowledge across its thematic areas.

Knowledge Management Fund (KMF)			
	General	Research	Innovation
WHAT?	This strand is the most flexible, and developed to service the majority of applications.	The Research strand offers opportunities to respond to clear gaps in knowledge and understanding.	This strand is specifically designed to provide a safe space for testing (failing) and learning by enabling low-risk trial and error.
FOR WHO?	It is for applicants wishing to discuss, disseminate, or debate issues related to the four thematic areas.	It is for applicants who will conduct small-scale studies to address knowledge gaps and spur knowledge uptake.	It is for applicants who wish to try out of the box approaches with a high potential for impact, even if success is not guaranteed.
ACTIVITIES/INITIATIVES	Initiatives may include but are not limited to, learning events, dissemination of research findings, debates, validation workshops, blog series, or capacity building workshops. These events may be one-off or part of a thematic series. This fund may not be used for research.	This may be through primary research, fieldwork, desk studies, literature reviews, exchange visits, pilot studies, organizing small conferences, or panels and side-events, and other related initiatives.	It will support activities that generate and test innovative ideas, theories, and approaches to address the problems inherent within the thematic headlines; highlight and help policy makers prepare for emerging issues; and/or present research in innovative ways more conducive to learning and uptake.

In order to do so, the Secretariat discerns three dimensions of knowledge acquisition: production, distribution, and uptake. For each knowledge question, it must be specified whether the question requires primarily new research (is it a question for which insufficient knowledge or expertise is available?), the linking of existing knowledge and/or actors (does the question stem from a lack of awareness of and insight in existing knowledge?), or breaking down the barriers for learning and change within an organization (does an adequate knowledge base exist, is the knowledge known, but not applied in policy making or program development?)

Each strand has its own eligibility criteria against which applicants will be assessed. These criteria are laid out in the remainder of this section and will help you decide which strand to apply to.

Please note that *all* applicants must meet the eligibility criteria in the General strand. Applicants to the Innovation and Research grants must meet the General strand requirements, *plus* the specific criteria for that particular strand:

## 1. General

### General strand Eligibility Criteria

All applications must:

- Explain how the project aligns with one of the Platform's thematic headlines
- Describe the specific knowledge and/or capacity gap to be addressed, specifying whether the question addresses a lack of existing research or evidence, a lack of awareness of existing research, actors, evidence, or ideas, or whether it addresses a barrier to change and uptake despite awareness of existing evidence.
- Describe how the project will test new evidence, analysis, ideas, theories, approaches and/or solutions to a clearly defined problem
- Include a prospective budget not to exceed €15,000 (see guidelines and template below) – **note that no personnel costs are allowed under this strand**
- Commence within six weeks of funds being awarded. The running time of projects may not exceed six months
- Commit to present findings to Platform members in an interactive way
- Commit to providing (in-kind) contributions equal to at least 20% of the total award sought

## 2. Innovation

### Innovation strand Eligibility Criteria

*In addition to the General Fund requirements, applications must:*

- Clearly show how the project is pushing boundaries, taking a (reasonable) risk, or working 'outside the box'
- And/or propose new and creative ways to disseminate results, and describe how this will encourage learning and knowledge uptake

## 3. Research

### Research strand Eligibility Criteria

*In addition to the General Fund requirements, applications must:*

- Clearly identify a relevant and testable assumption that underlies policy or practice
- Propose a sound and appropriate methodology that can be used to interrogate the research question posed in the proposal

## How to apply

Interested parties are asked to submit their application using the form on the [KMF page of the website](#) by clicking “**Apply Now**”. All necessary documents can be found at the bottom of the page. All relevant documentation for applications can be attached through the form. If you have any question about submitting an application, please contact us at [KMF@kpsrl.org](mailto:KMF@kpsrl.org).

**Please note that applications must be submitted through the webform, the application form document serves only as an example.**

Once received, the Secretariat will assess proposals based on the criteria outlined above. The Secretariat will provide the applicant with feedback on their proposal along with its funding decision. KMF grants will be awarded according to the following weighting: 40% for General; 35% for Innovation; and 25% for Research.

## Application deadline

Applications are accepted on a **rolling basis** between the opening date (1 March) and the final deadline for applications (16 November). Applications submitted before the “Deadline for Applications” shown below will be accepted or rejected by the corresponding “Decision Announcement” date.

	Round I	Round II	Round III	Round IV
Deadline for Applications	13 April 2018	15 June 2018	14 September 2018	16 November 2018
Decision Announcement	1 May 2018	2 July 2018	1 October 2018	3 December 2018

All applicants will be notified of the outcomes on the Decision Announcement date corresponding to their submission date. If approved, the Secretariat will contact you to discuss deliverables, budgets, and the division of labor between the Secretariat and the applicant(s) in more detail. What is agreed will be drawn up in a contract and signed by the Secretariat and the applicant(s).

## Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. Who can apply?

Applications are open to any consortium or individual with the ambition to improve policies, programs or knowledge in the field of security and rule of law in fragile and conflict affected countries. Think-tanks, (I)NGOs, academics, universities, private sector organizations, government institutions, journalists, independent researchers or innovators, data specialists, learning experts, and PhD candidates are all welcome to submit proposals.

Partnerships between individuals and organizations and across the range of sectors within our network are highly encouraged. In particular, the KMF prioritizes partnerships that link people from different regions of the globe.

### 2. When can I apply?

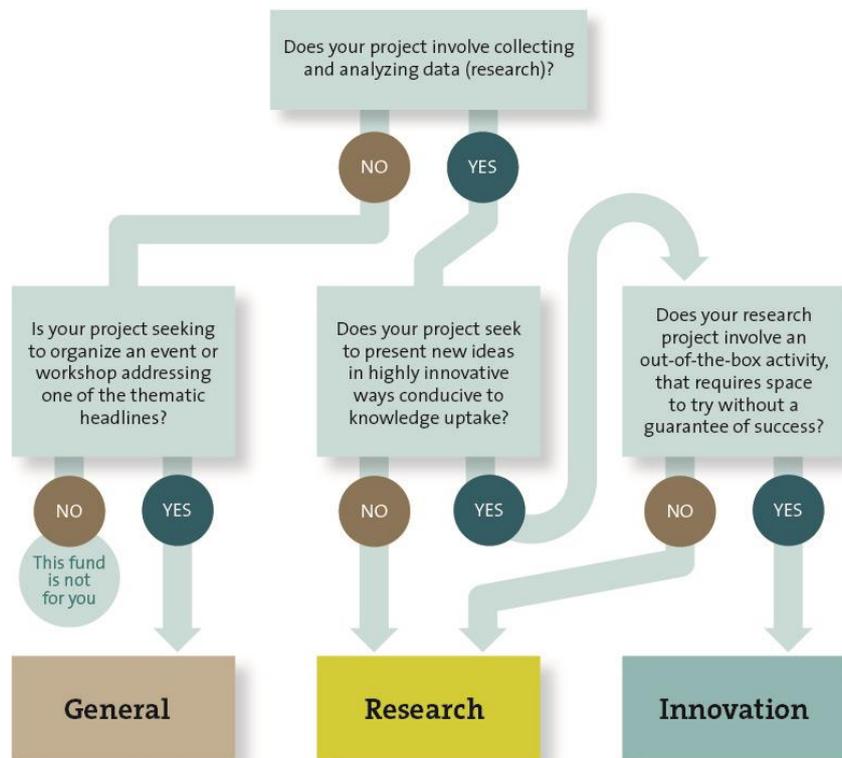
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### 3. Which of the three strands should I apply for?

We understand that there is some overlap between the three strands. However, each strand has a specific purpose. As a rule of thumb, if your application involves events, workshops etc. then the General strand is likely to be the most relevant. If your application is at all Research based then you may not apply to the General strand.

For research projects, that is, pilot studies, proof of concept studies, methodology testing, literature reviews and other activities focused on collecting and analyzing data, we encourage you to apply for the Research strand. If your idea is committed to experimentation or fresh ways to present findings and stimulate learning, then the Innovation strand is best for you. See the following flow chart for clarification.



#### 4. How much can I apply for?

The fund will award grants of up to a maximum of €15,000. There is no minimum amount, however, the Secretariat will assess each grant's level of impact against the administrative burden involved in allocating and managing it.

All applicants must commit to providing (in-kind) contributions amounting to at least 20% of the total award sought, and use the [budget template](#) to propose how they will do this.

#### 5. How long does each grant last?

Projects must commence within six weeks of funds being awarded. The running time of projects may not exceed six months.

#### 6. Can I apply for security and rule of law related projects outside of the thematic areas?

No. In 2018, the KMF will only award grants to projects that fall within one of the thematic headline areas:

1. Addressing Inequality as Prevention
2. Moving the needle on Goal 16.3 of the SDGs
3. Change and Learning Processes

These themes have been decided following extensive consultation with Platform members, the Dutch government, and NWO/WOTRO and reflect people's most pressing and emerging priority areas. They are purposefully broad and try to leave as much scope as possible for applicants to engage the Platform on their specialist thematic and geographic areas.

#### 7. What will the KMF not fund?

The KMF will not fund salaries, Personnel or Fee Days beyond 40% of the total submitted budget. Furthermore, the KMF will not fund any personnel fees for projects submitted under the *General* strand of funding. The KMF will not cover overheads or any expenses not agreed in advance in the budget within the signed contract. For full information please see the budget guidelines, [here](#).

#### 8. What is an "applicant contribution"?

"Applicant Contribution" entails any in-kind or co-funding contribution by the applicant to any of the existing budget items, supplementary to the budget requested from the KMF. "Applicant Contribution" should not imply or include double funding of the same budget item. However, budget items can be split between separate funding sources.

#### 9. Do I have to present at the Annual Conference?

There must be some public presentation of the results of the project in order to ensure that the entire community can benefit. One of the preferred ways of doing this is to host a session at the Annual Conference. If you are categorically unable to present at the Conference in September then please do state this in your application.