

Call for Applications

2012 SDPI-IDRC Master's and MPhil/PhD Fellowships in Governance, Security & Justice in South Asia

Introduction & Background: The International Development Research Centre (IDRC) of Canada and the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) invite fellowships applications from students intending to pursue Masters, MPhil and PhD degrees in South Asian universities in the fields of governance, security and justice. The program is open to nationals from Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal and Pakistan. SDPI will manage these fellowships in South Asia and the program focus is to address research gaps and analytical capacity in issues revolving around degree programs in governance, security and justice. SDPI's Centre for Capacity Building will also coordinate for students, short term intensive training courses in research design, academic writing, field research, dissemination through advocacy and outreach. On the occasion of Sustainable Development Conference held annually in Islamabad, IDRC fellows will be given the opportunity to share their research findings during a multidisciplinary discourse.

Objectives: The SDPI-IDRC Fellowships in Governance, Security & Justice in South Asia intend to produce highly skilled professionals, policy-makers, scholars and researchers on non-traditional security issues in the region. In particular, this program aims for:

- Research on multidisciplinary areas currently not being focused by traditional university programs in South Asia.
- Research on non-traditional security threats in South Asia. These threats today originate from (but are not limited to) governance, conflict, economic and financial security, lack of education and health interventions, environmental security, food and livelihoods security, terrorism, human and drugs trafficking, piracy, illegal immigration, and information security.
- Research on cross-border issues of mutual interest in South Asia where multi-country case studies can help towards collective solutions.
- Allowing IDRC fellows to meet every year to network and collectively discuss and disseminate their research findings and to provide policy relevant advice to the

governments and communities in South Asia. This will be an opportunity for these fellows to brainstorm key areas of interest through a multidisciplinary discourse.

- Providing short term intensive training courses for graduate and research students in research design, academic writing, data survey and analysis, research dissemination through advocacy and outreach.

Number of fellowships: IDRC-SDPI has offered total 15 fellowships, of which six fellowships have been granted to the students. While, in the second round of the IDRC-SDPI Fellowships total Nine Scholarships will be awarded in South Asia. The eligible countries include: Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal and Pakistan. Applicants are free to apply for Masters, MPhil or PhD programs. For Master's and MPhil the maximum duration of fellowship will be 2 years while for PhD the maximum duration will be 4 years.

Thematic Focus: The taught and research programs will be supported in the following sub-themes:-

1. National and sub-national Governance Systems
 - a. Accountability frameworks
 - b. Inter-governmental relations
 - c. Voice and empowerment of women and minority groups in public policy decision making
2. Legal and Judicial reforms
 - a. Access to gender-responsive affordable and expedient justice mechanisms
 - b. Informal justice systems and alternate dispute resolution mechanisms
 - c. Combating sexual violence
3. Peace and Conflict

- a. Post-conflict institutions building
 - b. Conflict impact on women and children
 - c. Inclusive political processes
4. Strengthening Democracy
- a. Binding constraints in strengthening democracy at grass roots level
 - b. Electoral reform
 - c. Capacity issues at parliamentary levels
 - d. Ensuring inclusion of women, minority groups and marginalized segments of the population
5. Practices in governance at local/cross regional level
- a. Partnerships with civil society
 - b. Promoting social innovations
 - c. Aid effectiveness in context of good governance

Eligibility: The following serves as a basic eligibility criteria for applications under this fellowship call.

- **Nationality:** Be a citizen and current resident of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal and Pakistan.
- **Age requirement:** Applicants should be under 30 years of age at the time of application.
- **Accreditation:** Applicants should be in possession of a recognized degree from a recognized university in South Asia. The recognition details may be seen on the websites of University Grants Commission/Higher Education Commission. In all previous degrees, the applicants should have achieved either marks above 75 percent, GPA: above 3.20/4.00 or equivalent.

- **Admission:** Applicants should be in possession of conditional/unconditional admission letter in the degree programs having the above mentioned thematic focus. Applicants are only eligible to apply in their own home country. However in case of Bhutan and Maldives, applicants can apply to Indian universities. MPhil/PhD supervisors willing to make an exception where the academic calendar has already started may indicate this directly via email. Similarly if a deserving and needy student has already started his/her studies (this being the first term) he/she is eligible if the supervisor makes a strong case directly before the student's application is received.
- **Affidavit requirement:** An Affidavit will be required indicating that the candidate has a previous university degree and where the university and the taught degree program are both recognized. It should be clearly mentioned that the applicant is not availing any other scholarship. Applicants will have to be full time students during the study period. Those who are employed need to produce a letter of study leave. A proof of English language proficiency is also required. The documentary proof may be previously cleared TOEFL/IELTS examination or letter from university/employer.

Important: Applicants will be assessed on the basis of past academic credentials, extra-curricular achievements, two reference letters from university professors, and a research proposal in the case of MPhil/PhD students. The research proposal should be 3-5 pages long providing details of research objectives, research problem, gaps in past literature, methodology, data sources and expected results. For Masters' level students, a detailed essay of 3-5 pages is required briefly stating how this degree programme will better serve their future pursuits and their country of origin. Female students and students from fragile areas and minority groups are particularly encouraged to apply.

Application forms can be found at: <http://isfsa.sdpi.org/content.php?value=af> and complete applications with required documents should be submitted electronically to afsheen@sdpi.org or can be mailed via post/courier to: Afsheen Naz, Sustainable Development Policy Institute, H-38, Main Embassy Road, G-6/3, Islamabad, Pakistan.

The program will remain open for receipt of applications until 15th December 2012. You are encouraged to apply as early as possible and once you have secured admission. For students applying for Jan-Feb 2013 session, the name of selected candidates will be announced by the end of December 2012. In case of any queries or technical difficulties, please contact Afsheen Naz at afsheen@sdpi.org.

