RESOLVE NETWORK

RESEARCH ADVISORY GROUP GUIDELINES

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RESOLVE
NETWORK

INSIGHT INTO VIOLENT EXTREMISM AROUND THE WORLD

An Initiative of the Global Research Network on Conflict

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OVERVIEW

The RESOLVE Network's Terms of Reference call for the development of the Research Advisory Group (the "Group"). The Group is comprised of a select group of exemplary researchers and practitioners known for their scholarship and policy relevance. As active contributors to the international conversation on the drivers of violence, they bring the skills, experience, expertise, and intellectual heft to expand upon the strong foundation built by the Network's stellar partner organizations.

The Group is the engine of thought leadership that drives the Network forward. The purpose of the Group is to develop locally informed, context-specific analysis of the dynamics underlying political violence, violent extremism, and violent social movements and to promulgate its findings to the wider global community of researchers, practitioners, policy makers, and the general public. In addition to providing peer-review and advice on Network based research proposals, project design, and outputs, the Research Advisory Group serves as the central node for evaluating, recommending, and promoting the expertise of leading researchers, practitioners and policymakers affiliated with the Network. Members of the Research Advisory Group serve to ensure that a diversity of views and experience is fully represented in every line of effort from generating new research, aggregating existing research to supporting research capacity development at the local level.

Membership in the Group is approved by partner organization representatives in consultation with the Secretariat. Partners may nominate up to two qualified individual scholars/practitioners each year. Only one of the two may also be directly employed by the partner organizations. Partners are encouraged to broaden the Network's reach by nominating researchers from outside of their own organizations whose work has been particularly influential.

The Group's functions are threefold:

- Generate, aggregate, synthesize, and share research, data, and analysis on violent extremism;
- Facilitate research projects in concert with Network partners and identify lessons and best practices for developing effective responses to violent extremism and the enhancement of community resilience to violent extremism; and
- Support the development of research capacity in regions of concern for research organizations and individual researchers interested in political violence and violent extremism.

The RESOLVE Network (the "Network") undertakes these activities in the following two ways: Locally Powered Projects and Partner Powered Regional Projects.

- **Locally Powered Project** entail country-based partnerships with local civil society centers and institutions for the support of local researchers.
- **Partner Powered Regional Projects** draw on the combined efforts of at least two Network member organizations and direct support for local researchers based in one of the Network's six priority regions.

RESEARCH INTEGRITY

The RESOLVE Network Mission

The RESOLVE Network mission is simple and straightforward. Our role is to connect, capture, curate, and catalyze locally informed research on violent extremism to promote effective policy and practice. Practically speaking, this adds up to a collective commitment to producing high-quality, empirically sound, and policy relevant research on the drivers of violent extremism and the factors that contribute to community resilience. RESOLVE reports, research briefs, practice notes, articles, blogs, and other outputs must focus on issues that relate to the Network's core mission and research agenda.

Research Integrity & Standards

Research integrity is paramount for our credibility. Plagiarism of any kind is unacceptable at all times. Works paraphrased or directly quoted must be properly cited and noted in both the main body of the text and in references. Research supported and produced by the RESOLVE Network should adhere to established standards of quality and researchers affiliated with the Network must maintain integrity. Network research and analysis should demonstrate:

- **Clear Purpose:** The topic and reasons for undertaking study of an issue should be well articulated.
- **Comprehensive Scope:** The context for analysis should be fully outlined and how the analysis fits in with existing research or addresses gaps should be noted.
- **Sound Methods:** Assumptions should be made explicit and methods and approaches to data and information collection clearly explained.
- **Innovative Design:** Effort should be made to find creative solutions to challenges in conducting research in a field that often demands a blend of qualitative and quantitative analysis.
- **Objectivity & Independence:** Opinion does not belong in research--full stop. Analysis should reflect principles of accuracy, fairness, independence and intellectual freedom.
- **Policy Relevance:** Research must focus on the end user first. Findings, implications, conclusions, and recommendations should be realistic and sharply targeted toward policymakers and practitioners.
- **Timeliness & Foresight:** Analysis should tap into current trends and interests with a view to delivering lasting, long-term impact.

Research Guidelines

Gathering locally informed, context specific information, perspectives, and data directly from the field is the heart of the Network's value to policymakers, practitioners, and

researchers. Below are a few helpful guidelines for making sure that research is impactful and useful:

- **Diverse & Credible Sourcing:** As a rule research should be based on a range of different sources, including interviews, books, peer reviewed articles, and periodicals, original datasets, and available statistics.
- **Triangulation:** Trust but verify. Assertions of fact rarely stand well on their own. When making assertions make sure they are corroborated by more than at least two or three sources.
- **Safeguard Confidentiality:** Providing confidentiality assurances to interview subjects and research participants is critical. But it is important not to overdo it; good research is supported by information from sources that can be fully verified.
- **Stay off the Beaten Path:** Mine the gaps. Avoid recapitulating research that has already been done by asking follow on questions that are unanswered by existing literature.
- **How Equals Why:** Simon Cottee put it best in his book The Apostates: "If you want to know why, don't ask why. Ask how. And let your interviewees speak."

RESEARCH ADVISORY GROUP ROLES

There are three roles within the Group:

- **Research Advisors** – Senior subject matter experts with a proven track record of research in the field who provide peer review on project proposals, implementation plans, and publications and/or supporting guidance on research, and represent the Network at events;
- **Principal Investigators** – Senior subject matter experts with a proven track record of research in the field who lead the design and implementation of research projects and serve as mentors to Research Fellows; and
- **Research Fellows** – Early and mid-career researchers with knowledge of local contexts and proven expertise in the Network's priority countries or regions.

Each member will have a featured profile page on the public facing RESOLVE Network website. Profile information will be determined by each individual Group member according to their preferences. Members will be given access to control, edit, and update their individual profiles whenever they see fit. All members of the Group will automatically be included in the Network's online Global Expert Directory, the details of which will be made available only to vetted members of the Network with a login on a restricted access basis.

Research Advisors

Research Advisors provide peer review on project proposals, implementation plans, and publications and/or supporting guidance on research, provide editorial advice on research outputs as need, and represent the Network at events. These individuals – researchers and practitioners – have significant experience conducting field-based research on topics related to political violence, violent extremism, and violent social movements in the Network's priority countries and regions. Individuals selected as Research Advisors are by definition internationally and/or regionally recognized experts in their respective fields. Research Advisors therefore must have a demonstrated track record of expertise and publications. Research Advisors may serve as Principal Investigators on specific projects upon consultation with the RESOLVE Network Secretariat (the "Secretariat"), but cannot serve in both roles at the same time.

Principal Investigators

Principal Investigators lead the design and implementation of research projects and serve as mentors to Research Fellows. These individuals have experience designing, executing, and effectively disseminating policy-relevant research studies on topics related to political violence, violent extremism, and violent social movements in the Network's priority countries and regions. They also have experience teaching and a commitment to mentorship. Principal Investigators are by definition internationally and/or regionally recognized experts in their respective fields. These individuals, therefore, must have a demonstrated track record of expertise and publications. Principal Investigators may serve as Research Advisors upon consultation with the Secretariat when they are not contracted as Principal Investigators.

Research Fellows

Research Fellows are selected for the RESOLVE Network Research Fellowship, which may run from 6-12 months, through a competitive application process administered by the Secretariat. The length of the fellowship is contingent on funding availability and project support from partners and members of the Group. Criteria for selection is guided by the Network's commitment to enhance opportunities for the promotion of locally informed research and provide both regionally-based and thematic analysis and expertise.

GROUP FUNCTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

The Network catalyzes and supports the establishment of an interconnected set of locally and regionally based research projects across the Network's six priority regions. Collaborative research projects and trainings, which are driven by members of the Group, are part and parcel of the Group's primary activities.

Identifying, Inviting & Vetting Research Advisory Group Members

The Secretariat will review the entire Group on an annual basis during RESOLVE's annual forums and consult as needed with Network partners on membership at the September Forum business meeting. During this review, current members can be renewed or removed and new members can be nominated.

The Secretariat reserves the right to reject or dismiss unqualified candidates who do not fit the criteria outlined in the Network's Terms of Reference or who prove inactive at any point. The Secretariat may also consider termination of the term of any member of the Group at will if demonstrated conflicts of interest arise or serious and substantive concerns are raised about the conduct, integrity, and independence of researchers or practitioners selected for membership.

Research Advisors

Each partner organization representative may nominate up to two Research Advisors a year. Only one of the two nominees maybe affiliated with a member organization; the nominee may not be the designated representative for the partner organization and must have a demonstrated track record as a subject matter expert who has conducted field research in one of the Network's six priority regions. Research Advisors will serve a two-year term with an annual review for a renewable two-year term. To stimulate the growth of a diverse range of expertise member organizations will be encouraged to recruit altogether new members every four years. The partner representatives will be responsible for contacting their nominee(s) and facilitating the application process in conjunction with the Secretariat. Partner organization representatives will submit the following for their nominee(s): CV or resume; 3-5 of the nominee's most relevant publications; and a letter of support for the individual from the nominating member organization representative.

New Research Advisors will be considered annually at the September forum business meeting. Member organization representatives must submit background materials for their nominee(s) **at least 60 days before the September forum**; all applications will be shared ahead of the business meeting at the September forum. If the Secretariat rejects a candidate, it must be for a concrete reason based on why the individual fails to meet the criteria and/or threatens the integrity of the Network overall. Any rejections must be forwarded to the appropriate parties in a formal letter with a detailed explanation for the rejection.

Principal Investigators

For **Locally Powered Projects**, the Secretariat will identify relevant subject matter experts to serve as Principal Investigators. Principal Investigators may be selected from either within the pool of existing Research Advisors or may be recruited from outside the network in cases where project parameters call for specific experience and skills. For projects implemented through a **Partner Powered Regional Projects**, each partner organization may nominate one Principal Investigator when responding to a request for proposals; the Secretariat will vet the nominee for inclusion as a Principal Investigator on the basis of their CV and record of publications included in submitted project proposals.

Research Fellows

Research Fellows are selected through a competitive application process administered by the Secretariat. Criteria for selection is guided by the Network's commitment to enhance opportunities for the promotion of locally informed research and provide both regionally-based and thematic analysis and expertise. The Secretariat and project-specific Principal Investigators will review and select the most qualified candidates from the applicant pool.

A fellowship review board will review and finalize award recipients. The fellowship review board is made up of the Committee co-chairs (the Secretariat and the rotating co-chair) and at least one and up to three Strategic Network Partner(s) nominated by the co-chairs and approved by the Committee. The co-chairs will identify at least one and up to three Strategic Network Partner(s) to serve one-year terms as additional members of the fellowship review board. The co-chairs will contact the Strategic Network Partner(s) ahead of the annual September forum business meeting to confirm interest and availability. The co-chairs will officially nominate the Strategic Network Partner(s) during the September forum business meeting during which the Committee will confirm or reject the nominee(s). If a candidate is rejected by a member of the fellowship review board, it must be for a concrete reason on why the individual fails to meet the criteria and/or threatens the integrity of the Network overall; the rejection must be submitted in a formal letter with a detailed explanation for the rejection. More information on the fellowship process is presented in Appendices 1-4.

Project Support and Capacity Building

Network collaborative research projects use a three-pronged approach to building local research capacity and amplifying the voices of local researchers and practitioners in wider national, regional, and international fora:

- Support research fellowships that provide opportunities to network with other locally based researchers and to partner directly with senior subject matter experts;
- Support at least one weeklong combined focus group and research seminar in country toward the beginning of project cycle to be led by the Secretariat, Principal Investigators, in-country partners, and Network member organizations when appropriate. Network member organizations based in the region of focus might,

for instance, send their researchers for training and/or serve as trainers on specific themes, issues, and/or methods; and

- Support a co-sponsored residential "summer institute" at a select regionally-based university/institute, or a select university/institute in Europe, the UK, or US toward the end of the project cycle, with the aim of reinforcing empirical analysis techniques and polishing written analytical products for presentation at the September forum.

Research Advisors

At least one Research Advisor will be assigned to each research project to provide peer review on the project proposal, implementation plan, research outputs, and/or supporting guidance on research. The Secretariat will identify individuals from the Group with relevant experience and expertise for each project and facilitate the connection between the project team and Research Advisor based on availability.

Principal Investigators

The Principal Investigators play a critical role in increasing the skills, experience, visibility, and credibility of the Research Fellows. At least one Principal Investigator will lead each research project. Principal Investigators fill three roles on a research project: researcher, facilitator, and mentor. As a **researcher**, the Principal Investigator plays the lead role in framing a project proposal and overseeing study implementation; associated tasks may include, but are not limited to, developing the study instrument, defining the sampling and recruitment strategies, and training study personnel. As a **facilitator**, the Principal Investigator will assist in building relationships with key stakeholders in country for the Network and navigating the often challenging contexts in which the Network supports research. Principal Investigators will also work with local researchers and practitioners from their own professional networks to ensure the collaborative research projects target policy relevant questions on the drivers of violent extremism, and are implemented in a culturally and contextually appropriate way. Lastly, and possibly most importantly, the Principal Investigator serves as a **mentor** to a Research Fellow during a project cycle. The fellows will be able to draw on a bank of up to 15 hours during the project period for one on one consultations with their principal. The Principal Investigator will incorporate the Research Fellow into all stages of the research project design, implementation, and analysis. The pair will co-author a briefing paper to be published by the Secretariat and co-present results from the project at the September forum.

Research Fellows

At least one Research Fellow will work on each research project. Each Research Fellow will be mentored by a Principal Investigator under a "learning by doing" model throughout the project cycle, as well as receive additional skills training. S/he will participate in and contribute toward all stages of the project cycle under the guidance of the Principal Investigator. A final output of the fellowship is a co-authored briefing paper written by the

pair; the Research Fellow will also co-present the findings from the project with the Principal Investigator at the September forum. The goal of the mentorship experience is to build upon the skills the Research Fellow already has and increase the overall skills, experience, visibility, and credibility of the Research Fellows.

REQUESTS FOR PROPOSALS

Vetted members of the Group will be encouraged to respond to calls for research and will automatically be eligible to submit proposals for specific requests for term limited projects related to the Network's broad research agenda. The Secretariat will set out the parameters of the research priorities annually per consultations with the Steering Committee at the semi-annual Committee meeting. Members of the Committee who wish to have their member organization's proposals considered shall adhere to the Committee's conflict of interest policy and recuse themselves from the decision-making process. The Secretariat will take the Committee's final recommendation under advisement but reserves the right to make the final judgment on projects undertaken on behalf of the Network.

POINT OF CONTACT

Within the Secretariat, the Research Coordinator is the point of contact for questions related to the Group. The Research Coordinator can be reached at research@resolvenet.org.

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

Appendix 1. 12-month Fellowship/Project Proposal Application & Project Timeline

Duration	Activities & Milestones
Months 1-2 (8 weeks)	• Project selection; announcement of Principal Investigators/Research Advisors. • Call for fellowship applications – post the call online and promote through network partners and the wider network; rolling review of applications. • Begin fellowship application review and identify shortlisted candidate fellows.
Months 3-4 (8 weeks)	• Principal Investigators, Research Advisors and the Secretariat team interview shortlisted candidates on sidelines of regional/international/online fora; finalist fellowship candidates identified. • Shortlisted candidates interviewed; conditional or firm offers made. • Team vetting, contracting, visa applications, travel planning process begins. • Online Project Launch and Team Orientation Conference • Fellows Online Module 1 (Required): *Introduction to Field Research in High Risk Environments*
Months 5 (5 weeks)	• Fellows: 2-3week online training curriculum: Module 2: *Counterterrorism and Countering Violent Extremism Policy & Practice* Module 3 (Required): *Research Design and Data Collection Basics (Research Track)* or *M&E Tools & Techniques (M&E Track)* • Teams finalize research design and field based research planning. • Travel planning process completed; teams deploy
Month 6 (5 weeks)	• Regional Stakeholders and Partners Workshop • Fellows: 2 week in person Research Institute Training: Module 4: *Data Analysis & Visualization*; Module 5: *Writing Policy Relevant Analysis;* • Field work and data collection begins
Months 7-9 (12 weeks)	• Data collection completed; analysis begins • Research paper drafting process begins • Secretariat team conference/forum logistics and travel planning begins
Months 10-11 (10 weeks)	• Analysis completed • Research paper drafting process completion • Editorial and publication process begins • Forum logistics and travel planning completed
Month 12 (Approx. 5 weeks)	• Fellows: 1 Week Training: Module 6 *Mastering Communications & Research Leadership* • Team presentation of findings at international/regional for a • Publication of final papers and launch related website outputs • Call for project proposals from Research Advisory Group members.

**Appendix 2. Fellowship Call for Applications Standard Language
RESOLVE Network Research Leadership Fellowship Program:
Call for [DATE] Applications in [Country/Region of Focus]
Application Period Opening: [Date]
Application Period Deadline: [Date]**

The RESOLVE Network is soliciting applications from qualified candidates based in **[COUNTRY/REGION OF FOCUS]** for a project-based research fellowship on topics related to the drivers of conflict that leads to violent extremism and sources of community resilience. Supported by the RESOLVE Network Secretariat in Washington, D.C., the project will be led by a select team of principal investigators with experience in the region who will work closely with fellows in the program to conduct field based research over the course of **[6-12]** months from early November 2017 through late September 2018.

Violent extremism is a pervasive global threat to international security and stability. Over the last decade, the world has witnessed an exponential increase in the number of fatalities arising out of attacks by extremists. The global scale of the threat requires a global response. The UN Secretary's 2016 Plan of Action for the Prevention of Violent Extremism identifies the need for more locally-informed, evidence based research on the drivers of conflict and sources of community resilience. In direct response to that call, international stakeholders established the RESOLVE Network, a consortium of research organizations and researchers focused on analyzing the drivers of conflict that lead to extremism.

The RESOLVE Network Research Leadership Fellowship is a flagship initiative of the network. The goal of the fellowship is to grow the next generation of local thought leaders engaged in shaping local, regional, and international policy responses to the destabilizing threat of political violence and conflict. The program matches early and mid-career researchers from priority regions with seasoned senior subject matter experts who serve as Principal Investigators and lead major projects in alignment with the network's broad research agenda.

From [YEAR] to [YEAR], the network will focus its efforts on cultivating a cadre of local change agents in high risk areas of [PRIORITY COUNTRY/REGION]. Research projects draw on field-based research and are supported by local, regional, and international partner organizations engaged in the network. The program employs a "learning by doing model" that encourages Principal Investigators to team up with locally based fellows on project design, data collection and analysis. Throughout, fellows will be provided with in person and online guidance from project leads and training on the professional principles of conducting ethical, evidence-based policy relevant research. Each team will be expected to produce capstone analysis and present their findings at a RESOLVE Network Forum. Potential final fellowship products include:

- A co-authored briefing paper (Approx. 5,000 words)
- Data visualizations (map series, graphs, multimedia displays)
- Online blogs and/or podcasts

RESOLVE Network Research Leadership Fellowship awards will not be made for projects that constitute policymaking for a government agency or private organization, focus to any substantial degree on conflicts outside its priority regions, or adopt a partisan, advocacy, or activist stance. Projects and fellows will be selected on the basis of their potential for leadership and a demonstrated ability to contribute to the empirically derived evidence base in a balanced, non-partisan manner on what works and doesn't work to prevent violent extremism. All awards are project-specific and their focus and design is determined by the network Secretariat in consultation with members of the network's Research Advisory Group.

Eligible Candidates

Qualified citizens of [PRIORITY COUNTRY/REGION] may apply for the fellowship. Applicants based full-time in other parts of the [PRIORITY COUNTRY/REGION] will be given the highest consideration. Applicants from the [PRIORTY COUNTRY/REGION] currently living abroad who show a commitment to traveling to the country to conduct research and to returning to their home countries within one-year of completing the program may also be considered.

Applicants must be fluent in English and [LOCAL LINGUA FRANCA] both written and spoken. The Network Secretariat will only consider candidates who have a combination of the following educational and professional experience:

- **Bachelor's degree** in political science, economics, international affairs, legal studies, journalism, anthropology, sociology, social psychology, criminology, or related social sciences **plus a minimum of 6 years professional experience** working with reputable media outlets, think tanks, universities, and/or research centers.

- **Master's degree** in political science, economics, international affairs, legal studies, journalism, anthropology, sociology, social psychology, criminology, or related social sciences **plus a minimum of 4 years professional experience** working with reputable media outlets, think tanks, universities, and/or research centers.

- **Doctoral candidates or degree recipients** in political science, economics, international affairs, legal studies, journalism, anthropology, sociology, social psychology, criminology, or related social sciences **plus a minimum of 2 years professional experience** working with reputable media outlets, think tanks, universities, and/or research centers.

Selection Process

RESOLVE Network Research Fellow applications are vetted through a review process that includes consideration by senior subject matter experts and professional staff at the RESOLVE Network Secretariat, which is currently housed at the U.S. Institute of Peace in Washington, DC. Following review of applications, a short list of qualified candidates will be invited to interview via Skype or in person when possible.

The Network Secretariat may confer with other network partner organizations during the selection process. Final authority for decisions about RESOLVE Network Research Leadership Fellowship awards, however, rests with the RESOLVE Network Secretariat in Washington, DC.

Selection Criteria

Selection of fellowship candidates is based on the assessment of the applicant's:

- Record of achievement in conflict analysis and/or social science research;
- Demonstrated professional experience that reflects leadership potential;
- Capacity to benefit from the fellowship experience in subsequent years;
- Commitment to building community and shaping future policy on critical social issues.

Terms of Award

The 2018 RESOLVE Network Research Leadership Fellowship Award amounts are set at a total of [AWARD AMOUNT DETERMINED BY SECRETARIAT] for a program that runs from 6-12 months and awards are paid directly to the individual. RESOLVE Network Research Leadership Fellowship awards for [PRIORITY COUNTRY/REGION] may not be deferred or extended beyond [DEADLINE DATE]. The first half of the award will be made available at the mid-way mark of the program; the last half of the award will be made available upon satisfactory completion of the project and presentation of findings at a network forum.

Fellows will either work as independent affiliated members of the network or as non-resident fellows of designated partner organizations specified by the RESOLVE Network Secretariat. Fellows are expected to devote the time and attention required to meet the deliverables outlined in the award terms letter, maintain regular contact with their mentors, and provide periodic reports to RESOLVE Network staff.

The RESOLVE Network will also support travel costs for fellows to participate in regionally based trainings and workshops in [PERIOD DETERMINED BY SECRETARIAT AND LOCAL PARTNERS]. Select fellows who demonstrate a strong commitment to fulfilling the project goals and leadership excellence will be invited to present their research findings in collaboration with their mentors at the network's Annual Global Forum in Washington, DC. The RESOLVE Network Secretariat reserves the right to make final determination about the terms and conditions for all travel support.

How to Apply

Please refer to the *RESOLVE Network [INSERT COUNTRY/REGION] Fellowship Application Form and Instructions* for further information on how to apply.

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If you have additional questions or would like further information about the fellowship program, please contact research@resolvenet.org.