

Contemporary Religious Life

Call for Applications for Post-Doctoral Scholarships for the 2026–27 Academic Year

The 21st century is characterized by rapid change and profound transformations that shape religious ideas, practices, and social formations across the globe. In an era marked by globalization, digital technologies, intensified migration, and recurring global crises, religion continues to play a central role in the lives of billions of people—yet in new, complex, and often unexpected ways. Religious traditions today are continuously reconfigured as they respond to shifting social, cultural, political, and technological realities.

For the 2026–27 academic year, the Center for the Study of Conversion and Inter-Religious Encounters (CSoC) at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev (BGU) will focus its activities on contemporary religious life. CSOC invites postdoctoral researchers working on any of the world's religions, or in comparative perspective, whose research is grounded in disciplines such as Religious Studies, History, Sociology, Anthropology, Political Science, Gender Studies, Cultural Studies, or related fields, to submit research proposals addressing one or more of the following themes:

Prof. Oded Yisraeli
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1. **Religion and Digital Technology:** Interactions between religion and the digital revolution, including virtual religious communities, online rituals and worship, religious engagement on social media, and the implications of digital media for theology and religious practice.
2. **Secularization, Post-Secularism, and Return to Religion:** Changing configurations of secularity and religiosity, including “spiritual but not religious” identities, processes of proselytization across traditions, hybrid forms of religiosity, new religious movements, and institutional responses to these developments.
3. **Religion, Politics, and Nationalism:** The political roles of religion in contemporary contexts, including religious nationalism, religion as a component of national identity, geopolitically rooted conflicts with religious dimensions, and diverse models of religion–state relations.
4. **Religion, Gender, and Sexuality:** Tensions and transformations surrounding gender and sexuality in religious contexts, including religious feminism, shifting roles of women in religious institutions, and religious approaches to diverse gender and sexual identities.
5. **Religion and the Ecological Crisis:** Religious environmental activism, reinterpretations of religious conceptions of human–nature relations, and the contributions of religious traditions to environmental awareness and ethics.
6. **Migration, Pluralism, and Inter-Religious Dialogue:** The impact of global migration on religious landscapes, including the formation of new religious communities, dynamics of religious minorities, conflict and integration, religious pluralism in modern societies, and initiatives for inter-religious dialogue and cooperation.
7. **Eastern Religions and Their Global Influence:** The spread and global impact of Buddhism, Hinduism, and other Eastern traditions beyond their regions of origin, including the adoption of Eastern spiritual practices in Western contexts, new forms of Orientalism, and dialogue between Eastern and Western traditions.

Eligibility and Scholarship Details

Researchers who submitted their doctoral dissertation within the past five years, or who will have submitted their doctorate by October 2026 at the latest, are eligible to apply. The fellowship includes a scholarship of 86,385 NIS, paid over 12 months, a shared workspace in the CSoC's offices at the Aranne Library on BGU's Marcus Campus in Be'er Sheva, and full library privileges. Fellows will join a vibrant and supportive scholarly environment composed of junior and senior researchers from Israel and abroad, representing the humanities and social sciences.

Scholarship recipients must be physically present on campus every Tuesday during the academic semesters, participate in the weekly seminar (12:00–14:00), and take part in other CSoC activities. Fellows are also expected to present their research to the group in both Hebrew and English and to take an active role in planning the annual program (including seminars, reading groups, writing workshops, book events, an annual excursion, and an international conference in Israel), beginning prior to the start of the academic year.

Application Procedure

To apply, please send the following documents (in Hebrew or English) by email to CSoC's administrative manager, [Raya Even-David](mailto:rayaed@bgu.ac.il):

- A research proposal (up to 1,000 words) related to the annual theme described above
- An abstract of the doctoral dissertation (up to 1,000 words)
- An updated CV, including a full list of publications
- Two letters of recommendation, one of which must be from the doctoral supervisor, to be sent directly to: rayaed@bgu.ac.il

For more information, please visit [CSoC's website](https://www.bgu.ac.il/cso), [Facebook page](https://www.facebook.com/cso.bgu), or [YouTube channel](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCvXpYqYqYqYqYqYqYqYqYqY).

Application deadline: March 22, 2026

Notifications of acceptance: April, 2026

For inquiries, please contact Prof. [Oded Israeli](mailto:odedi@bgu.ac.il), CSoC Director, BGU.

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