

# THE UNIVERSITY *of York*

## Centre for Applied Human Rights

### Protective Fellowship Scheme for Human Rights Defenders at Risk

The Protective Fellowship Scheme at the Centre for Applied Human Rights (CAHR) is aimed at strengthening the capacity of human rights defenders at risk.

The Scheme offers a 3-6-month Fellowship at the University of York, where Fellows engage in human rights research, develop their research capacity, and engage in learning and teaching. During this time, they will also conduct advocacy to further their work; expand their networks of contacts in the United Kingdom and Europe; and share their work with the general public.

#### *About the Centre for Applied Human Rights*

CAHR is an inter-disciplinary research and teaching centre focused on human rights. CAHR specializes in a number of research areas: human rights defenders, international refugee law and policy, development studies, human rights cities, culture and human rights practice, and post-conflict justice. It manages a Master of Arts (MA) in Applied Human Rights, and a Master of Laws (LLM) in International Human Rights Law and Practice. CAHR is also home to the Human Rights Defender (HRD) Hub which hosts all of CAHR's HRD related research and the Protective Fellowship Scheme.

The protection and support of human rights defenders lies at the heart of CAHR's work. Since 2008, CAHR has hosted 91 human rights defenders from 47 countries: Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belarus, Brazil, Burma, Burundi, Chad, China, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Jamaica, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Mexico, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Palestine, Papua New Guinea, Russia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Somaliland, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Syria, Tajikistan, Thailand, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, Yemen and Zimbabwe.

#### *About HRD Research*

We define research broadly. Virtually all elements of human rights work involve critical thinking, data gathering, presenting arguments, etc. This is the case in report writing, advocacy, fund raising, and other areas of human rights work. In short, you do not need to be an academic based at a university to use and need research skills.

At CAHR and the HRD Hub we base our applied research on everyday human rights practice. HRDs are at the core of this research, both as researchers and as contributors to research. CAHR staff have, for example, conducted research on the security and protection of HRDs, and have included both HRDs in the field and visiting fellows at CAHR to inform this research. We collaborated with the UN Special Rapporteur on HRDs in 2015-2019.

As a visiting fellow on the Protective Fellowship Scheme, you will be welcomed as a member of CAHR's research community. You will conduct applied research based on your own human rights practice. Your research will address practical human rights issues you face in your work. It will feed into your organisation's human rights work and, after the Fellowship, it will be implemented in practice. Your research in York will have a positive impact in your local community in the medium and long-term. It

may also feed into policy briefs and practice notes published by the HRD Hub, and support the work of other researchers at CAHR.

### *Eligibility Criteria*

The Scheme is open to human rights defenders who work in difficult environments. We are looking for reflective, experienced human rights practitioners in positions where they can effectively share the results of their research. They will be experiencing difficulties in their human rights work and, in finding long-term strategic solutions, they would benefit from the research support and knowledge transfer that CAHR can offer.

In order to benefit from the Scheme, you must be able to understand and converse in English. You must demonstrate a keen desire to conduct research, to learn and to participate in the intellectual life of the Centre, and an ability to work independently. You must show a deep commitment to the continuation of your human rights work after the conclusion of your Fellowship.

The Centre welcomes nominations for the Protective Fellowship Scheme from reputable civil society organisations. Please note that the organisation your conduct your human rights work with/for **cannot** act as a nominating organisation. Self-nominations by individuals are **not** accepted. You must have a valid passport and be able to travel out of your country of residence at the time of nomination.

### *Overview of the Protective Fellowship Scheme*

1. During the Scheme, you will be based at the Centre for Applied Human Rights, University of York.
2. The Fellowships ordinarily last for 6 months. In exceptional circumstances, a 3-month fellowship may be considered.
3. The Fellowships start in September each year. Only under exceptional circumstances will you be allowed to commence your Fellowship at another time of the year.
4. The Fellowship will provide:
  - a. A modest weekly allowance to cover the cost of living in the UK;
  - b. One economy class return airfare and visa costs;
  - c. Shared accommodation with other Fellows, University college accommodation, or a home stay, depending on availability;
  - d. A set budget for activities related to conferences and training, advocacy and/or networking;
  - e. Reimbursement of travel and healthcare insurance.
5. You are expected to commit around 30 hours of work a week to Centre-related activities, including:
  - a. Conducting research
  - b. Participating in research seminars and workshops, and in postgraduate classes, on a regular basis
  - c. Participating in bespoke research training for human rights defenders
  - d. Engaging in advocacy and networking activities
  - e. Engaging in outreach activities such as speaking in schools
  - f. Engaging in independent study
  - g. Staying in touch with the Fellowship Coordinator on a weekly basis
6. If you are interested in strengthening your English language skills, you will be encouraged to attend English language classes.

7. The Centre offers:
  - a. A support structure to conduct independent applied human rights research, including an academic mentor
  - b. An opportunity to attend postgraduate level classes in human rights
  - c. Possibilities to visit and network with UK-based human rights organisations, researchers and universities
  - d. Access to the University library and other facilities
8. The Centre has an Advisory Board that participates in the selection of the Fellows and oversees the work of the Centre.
9. You will be required to abide by the University's policies, procedures and codes of conduct.

#### *Nomination Procedure*

For more information on the nomination procedure and to obtain nomination forms, contact [sanna.eriksson@york.ac.uk](mailto:sanna.eriksson@york.ac.uk).