

FELLOWSHIPS 2027/28

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

Funded by:
Minister for Federal, European,
International Affairs and Media
of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia
and Head of the State Chancellery



RETHINK
POLITICS

Fellowships for the Fellow Year 2027/28:

The Academy of International Affairs North Rhine-Westphalia (AIA NRW) invites outstanding scholars (post-doc level and upwards) and practitioners from politics, diplomacy, media, business, and civil society to apply for **fellowships with a duration between three and ten months at AIA NRW in Bonn.**

We welcome innovative project proposals (in English) for individual or tandem projects in one of two main areas:

- **Track A (Open Focus): Pressing issues in the general field of International Politics.**
- **Track B (Annual Focus Topic): Comprehensive Security for a Changing World: Building Strategic and Technological Resilience.**

Located in Bonn, UN-City and one of Germany's key centers for international cooperation and global governance, AIA NRW provides a professional platform and a unique environment that fosters dynamic, vibrant exchange in an international and interdisciplinary setting.

Europe is entering a period of profound geopolitical transformation. The return of interstate war on the European continent, growing geopolitical and geoeconomic competition, pressures on global supply chains and energy systems, and the erosion of long-standing political partnerships are reshaping the foundations of international order. In this context, questions of security, resilience, and strategic capacity have moved to the centre of political debate across Europe.

At the same time, the understanding of security itself is expanding. Security today encompasses defence, but also the resilience of democratic institutions and societies, the protection of critical infrastructures, the governance of emerging technologies, and the capacity of states to respond to complex and interconnected risks. These developments have renewed attention to the concept of comprehensive security, an approach that seeks to integrate political, economic, technological, and societal dimensions of security policy.

The multidimensional nature of contemporary threats requires new forms of strategic thinking and institutional cooperation. Strengthening resilience and collective capabilities increasingly involves coordinated efforts across policy domains and governance levels. These debates resonate with broader calls for strategic renewal in European security policy, including the *Zeitenwende* announced by the German government, which aims to strengthen Europe's ability to act and to reinforce a more resilient European and international security architecture.

Against this backdrop, the Academy of International Affairs NRW (AIA NRW) invites applications for its international Fellowship Programme dedicated to the focus theme:

Comprehensive Security for a Changing World. Building Resilient Strategies and Technologies.

The fellowship programme seeks to bring together leading scholars and experienced practitioners from across disciplines and professional backgrounds to explore how approaches to comprehensive security can inform the development of more integrated strategies for addressing contemporary security challenges. Projects can discuss (but are not limited to) questions of international politics in general and around key themes such as integrated security and defence architectures at the national, European, and international level; the potential of different forms of governance and institutional cooperation; the promise of emerging and dual-use technologies; the role of economic resilience, geoeconomic instruments, and supply-chain security; instruments for strengthening the resilience of democratic societies; anticipation of challenges through analytical tools like strategic foresight, scenario-building, or risk analysis. Applications are welcome from scholars and practitioners working in fields including, but not limited to: international security and security studies; critical security studies; military and war studies; geopolitics and geoeconomics; strategic foresight and scenario-building; emerging and dual-use technologies; democratic and societal resilience; protection of critical infrastructures; governance of complex security risks.

The Academy particularly encourages applications that combine **analytical excellence with policy relevance** and that contribute to interdisciplinary dialogue on the future of European and international security.

Applicants can apply to one of the following two tracks:

(a) **Academic Track**

For projects that have an explicit academic focus, linking up to ongoing or emerging academic debates, and provide a clear objective on how they contribute to a better understanding of international politics.

(b) **Practitioner's Track**

For projects that reflect on international politics from the perspective of practical experience in a relevant professional field and provide a clear objective on how they contribute to a better understanding of international politics.

Application

Applicants need to submit

(a) form for applicants and

(b) the following documents, compiled in **one PDF**:

(1) a letter of motivation;

(2) a proposal of their envisaged academic project at AIA NRW (max. 5 pages including an abstract, guiding research questions, a brief summary of the state of research in the respective field, a specific work

- plan/timetable and targeted outputs as well as the expected added value of the stay in Bonn to the environment of AIA NRW);
- (3) a short CV (around 2 pages).

Additionally for the academic track applicants should provide

- (4) certified documentation of their PhD certificate;
- (5) a complete list of publications, and
- (6) electronic copies of 2-3 recent (journal) publications (in English).

Conditions at AIA

AIA NRW's fellowship programme is committed to bring together academics and practitioners for a lively and meaningful exchange and offers excellent academic and administrative support. Fellowships can take the form of paid/unpaid leaves, compensation costs paid to the home institution, or a stipend. AIA NRW provides accommodation for the fellows and their families and covers travel expenses to and from Bonn. Fellows are allocated office space and the necessary research infrastructures to conduct their projects as well as some further individual budgets for research expenses. Final fellowship durations are awarded based on project scope, board assessment, and available funding.

Expectations

Fellows are expected to reside in Bonn during their fellowship, i.e. with no longer absences during the time of their fellowship. A regular attendance of research formats and colloquia, participation in events and willingness to contribute to the publication series are further requirements. Interest in societal transfer activities and social media engagement is also welcome.

Applications need to be submitted [online](#) by **May 31st, 2026**.

Applicants are solely responsible for the originality of their proposals; the use of AI tools must be limited to language editing and must not generate core academic concepts.

Decisions will be taken by the Academic Board and will be communicated by mid-September.

This call pertains to fellowships in the **period between April 2027 and March 2028**.

The applications must be submitted by **May 31st, 2026 [here](#)**

The Director of the
Academy of International Affairs NRW

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