Transnational Heritage Joint Research Grants:

Unveiling Shared Pasts, Shaping Common Futures

2025

Organized by
Korean National Commission for UNESCO

Funded by
Korea Heritage Service, Republic of Korea

- **Transnational Heritage Joint Research Grants: Unveiling Shared Pasts, Shaping Common Futures**

Join a global collaboration with scholars to uncover the intricate narratives of our shared heritage. This pioneering research grant programme, launched by the Korean National Commission for UNESCO and funded by the Korea Heritage Service, fosters innovative studies exploring the diverse social, cultural, and political dimensions of heritage.

By amplifying diverse voices and perspectives, the programme seeks to deepen our collective understanding of heritage while addressing contemporary challenges. Together, we strive to reimagine the role of heritage in promoting inclusivity and sustainability, contributing to a richer appreciation of our interconnected histories and aspirations for a harmonious future.

The 2025 grants programme will select a total of four research teams through an open call: two mid-career teams and two early-career teams. These teams will receive funding to conduct pilot studies. At the end of October 2025, based on the outcomes of these pilot studies and evaluations of their main research proposals, outstanding teams will be provided with additional funding to continue their main research projects for up to three years (2026–2028).

> **Mid-Career Research Teams:** Teams led by a Principal Investigator (PI) who obtained their doctoral degree 11 to 20 years ago and either holds a position of associate professor or higher, or has experience managing an independent research lab or mentoring junior scholars.
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> **Early-Career Research Teams:** Teams primarily composed of researchers who obtained their doctoral degree within the past 10 years, or are faculty members, assistant professors, or researchers with less than 10 years of appointment. One member of the team, meeting these criteria, will serve as the Principal Investigator (PI).

The Transnational Heritage Joint Research Grants for 2025 are now open for applications, with a submission deadline of **28 February 2025**.

- **Research Support Areas/Topics**
  1. **Deepening Understanding of Shared Pasts:** Exploring transnational interactions, contested memories, and the intricate dynamics of cultural exchanges across history to develop a nuanced understanding of interconnected pasts, with a focus on shared heritage sites such as the Silk Road or the Transatlantic Slave Trade.
  2. **The Politics of Heritage:** Examining the instrumentalization of heritage in constructing or contesting national identities, power hierarchies, and political ideologies, while addressing its

implications in transnational sociopolitical contexts, including disputes over World Heritage designations.

3. **Heritage, Memory, and Reconciliation:** Investigating how heritage shapes collective memory and addresses the transnational legacies of conflict, trauma, and systemic discrimination. Examining the impact of colonialism, war, and political oppression on heritage management and representation, while exploring heritage's role in fostering reconciliation, peacebuilding, and intercultural understanding.

4. **Heritage for a Sustainable Future:** Analysing the potential of heritage to foster intercultural dialogue, strengthen social cohesion, and contribute to sustainable development, with a focus on transnational initiatives addressing global challenges such as climate change, cultural diversity, and social inequality.

Encouragement of Research on Korean Heritage: Promoting studies that mediate understanding of Korean heritage or explore and share its universal value for humanity.

● **Eligibility**

Mid-Career Research Teams

Research teams must be led by a Principal Investigator (PI) who meets the following criteria:

1. Obtained their doctoral degree 11 to 20 years ago.

2. Holds a position of associate professor or higher, or has experience managing an independent research lab or mentoring junior scholars.

3. The team must consist of the PI, who has the capacity to reliably lead the project through to its conclusion, and at least two additional researchers. It is strongly recommended that team composition reflects diversity and inclusivity (e.g., in terms of nationality, ethnicity, gender, and culture).

4. Teams are encouraged to include at least one early-career scholar (within 10 years of earning their doctoral degree).

Early-Career Research Teams

Research teams must be led by a Principal Investigator (PI) who meets the following criteria:

1. Holds a doctoral degree obtained within the past 10 years, or is a faculty member, assistant professor, or researcher within 10 years of appointment.

2. The team must consist of the PI, who has the capacity to reliably lead the project through to its conclusion, and at least two additional researchers. It is strongly recommended that team composition reflects diversity and inclusivity (e.g., in terms of nationality, ethnicity, gender, and culture).

Eligibility will be determined based on the date of doctoral degree completion as of the application deadline, February 28, 2025.

● **Funding Scope**

For the 2025 pilot research, funding for each research team will be determined through a comprehensive review of the appropriateness of the proposed budget. The final allocation will adhere to the budget framework of the Transnational Heritage International Collaborative Research (Pilot Research) Programme.

Mid-Career Teams: Grants will be up to KRW80,500,000 (equivalent to $54,000 USD) per team.

Early-Career Teams: Grants will be up to KRW63,000,000 (equivalent to $42,000 USD) per team.

☞ *The final payment amount is subject to change depending on exchange rate fluctuations*

● **Selection Process**

The selection of research teams will involve a rigorous two-stage evaluation process:

Stage 1: Proposal Review: A panel of experts with extensive knowledge and experience in the relevant field will review submitted proposals to evaluate their alignment with the programme's objectives, feasibility, and overall quality.

Stage 2: Expert Panel Interviews: Shortlisted teams will participate in online interviews conducted by an expert panel. These interviews will assess the teams' research capabilities, the originality and innovativeness of their proposed projects, the potential impact of their research outcomes, their prospects for future development, and the feasibility of fostering long-term collaboration with Korea. Teams that demonstrate excellence across both stages will be selected for funding.

● **Funding Coverage**

The Grant Funds may be utilized to support the following:

1. Compensation for Research Personnel: Funds may be allocated for the Principal Investigator (PI), Co-researchers, and Research Assistant(s) who directly contribute to the project. All personnel expenses must comply with applicable tax laws and local regulations. Double compensation is strictly prohibited for administrative staff or other personnel already receiving a salary from their home institution.

2. Project-Related Personnel Expenses: Personnel expenses for the PI, Co-researchers, and Research Assistant(s) directly involved in the project. If applicable, one of the following options may be selected. Overlapping allocations are not permitted:

① Summer Salary: Personnel expenses for the vacation period are considered if the researcher does not receive a monthly salary from their home institution during this time.

② Research Leave: Personnel expenses that can be received annually if the researcher takes leave from their home institution to dedicate time to this research.

③ Class Buy-out: The cost paid to the home institution for hiring substitute lecturers, allowing the researcher to be exempt from teaching duties to focus on this research.

④ Visiting Scholarship: Expenses related to inviting distinguished scholars to collaborate on this research as the principal investigator.

3. Domestic and International Travel Expenses: Costs for transportation, meals, and accommodation for research participants. (The PI must be prepared to travel to Seoul, Republic of Korea, to attend the annual research outcome review meeting in October.)

4. Organizing workshops and conferences.

5. Administrative Expenses: Costs related to printing, copying, imaging, and slide production directly associated with the project.

6. Fees for Dissemination of Progress and/or Results: This includes costs such as publication fees.

7. In the event of indirect costs, the budget shall be planned to ensure comprehensive coverage of both direct and indirect expenses within the total amount of this grant. Overhead and/or indirect cost may not exceed 20 % of the total amount of the grant.

☞ *All Expenditures must be carefully documented and justified in compliance with the grant's terms and conditions.*

However, the following items cannot be covered by the Grant Funds:

1. Any form of expenditure unrelated to the research purpose.

2. Computer hardware, including laptops, electronic notepads, digital cameras, etc.

3. Other permanent resources.

● **Reporting Requirements**

Grant recipient teams must submit a preliminary research report on their chosen topic, along with a financial report and a detailed three-year research plan, by mid-October 2025. They are also required to attend a research outcome review meeting in Korea in October 2025 to present their findings. Furthermore, teams are expected to publish at least one journal article presenting their research findings in academic journals indexed in SCI, A&HCI, or SCOPUS within three years after completing the pilot research period. If selected for further funding, this publication requirement will be replaced by the responsibility of achieving a minimum score under a designated KNCU Research Outcomes Scoring System, with details to be provided in due course.

● **Tentative Schedule for the Year 2025**

Period	Key activities
January – February	☞ Call for Applications: Applications must be submitted by Friday, February 28 (Seoul local time).
March	☞ Application Evaluation: Four research teams will be selected. - 1st stage: Proposal review - 2nd stage: Expert Panel Interviews ☞ Contract Signing: Formal agreements with the selected teams will be finalized by mid-March.
March – July	☞ Pilot Research Phase: Research teams will begin their pilot projects.
July	☞ Mid-Term Review Meeting (Online): Each team will present a 15 – 20 minute progress report, sharing updates with other teams.
July – October	☞ Continuation of Pilot Research: Teams will continue their pilot research activities.
October	☞ Submission of Preliminary Research Reports: Each team must submit a preliminary research report, including a financial report and a detailed research plan for the next three years, by mid-October. ☞ Research Outcome Review Meeting: The Principal Investigator (PI) of each team is required to attend a research outcome review meeting in Korea in October 2025 to present their results. This meeting aims to foster networking and collaboration among participants, share preliminary findings, exchange insights, and discuss potential refinements to their research projects.
November –December	☞ Oral Presentation: Following the Research Outcome Review Meeting, all research teams will be invited to present their findings and future research plans through a formal oral presentation conducted via Zoom in early November. This presentation will provide an opportunity to incorporate feedback from the review meeting and further elaborate on their proposals for the subsequent three years. ☞ Evaluation and Selection: Based on the evaluation of the preliminary reports, oral presentations, and proposed research plans, the selection panel will identify and recommend outstanding research teams for continued funding under the main research grants (2026–2028). ☞ Project Finalization: Comprehensive settlement of project finances and submission of the final project report.

● **How to apply**

Applicants for the Transnational Heritage Joint Research Grants must submit a complete application to the Korean National Commission for UNESCO at leeyh@unesco.or.kr before the submission deadline of **February 28, 2025** (Seoul local time).

The application must contain:

1. A completed application form (see the attached application form)

2. CVs of the Principal Investigator and co-researchers (in PDF format)

3. A copy of the doctoral degree certificate of the Principal Investigator

4. A preliminary budget plan (either in a separate form or included in the application form)

Shortlisted applicants will be notified individually and may be required to participate in interviews, which will be conducted online during the second week of March 2025. Successful applicants will be notified and contacted by mid-March 2025.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at leeyh@unesco.or.kr

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