

[The Science of Religious and Spiritual Exercises \(Request for Proposals\)](#)

Templeton World Charity Foundation

Unlimited Opportunity

Coordinator: Tiffany Worboy, Office of Foundation Relations (tworboy@emory.edu)
Website: <https://www.templetonworldcharity.org/our-priorities/science-religious-and-spiritual-exercises>
Submission Limitations: None
Foundation Deadline: **Friday, November 5, 2021** (no later than 5pm EST)

*Please contact your RAS unit *and* Tiffany Worboy to inform them of your intent to submit.*

In 2021, Templeton World Charity Foundation (TWCF) launched a new five-year strategic framework that emphasizes both interdisciplinary scientific research on fundamental aspects of human nature, and the development of practical tools and innovations for human flourishing.

As part of this framework, the Foundation is eager to expand their scientific understanding of how the practice of religious and spiritual exercises are linked to outcomes that are associated with human flourishing -- and to develop science-informed innovations in the practice of religious and spiritual exercises that impact on our capacity to live well.

Research grants of up to \$500,000 will be awarded to support interdisciplinary teams of empirical researchers, scholars, and practitioners to examine the impact of religious and spiritual exercises that have hitherto been neglected by scientific research on human capacities, states, and outcomes that comprise human flourishing, and to better understand the moderators and mechanisms that are involved in the relationship between spiritual exercises and flourishing.

To that end, Templeton World Charity Foundation seeks projects that aim to:

1. Empirically investigate and evaluate the impact of specific religious and spiritual exercises or practices on wellbeing and flourishing;
2. Identify and test potential mechanisms and mediators that link practices to their outcomes, as well as moderators that might influence those outcomes.

In doing so, TWCF hopes to broaden and deepen our scientific understanding of these exercises with a view to informing more innovative adaptations and applications of religious and spiritual exercises that can promote human flourishing for different people in diverse contexts.

Eligibility:

This funding competition is open to researchers worldwide. Applications are encouraged from, but not limited to, scholars in the behavioral sciences (such as psychology, cognitive science, anthropology, religious studies, and sociology). The Project Director must hold a doctoral-level degree or equivalent at the time of application. Projects involving a Co-Director with expertise in religious or spiritual exercises are encouraged.

Budget:

Applicants may request up to \$234,000 for a Project Grant, or up to \$500,000 for a Program Grant. All projects must be completed within 36 months. Grants should have a start date between 1 September 2022 and 31 December 2022.

Application Process and Timeline:

This funding competition has a two-stage process. The first stage involves submission of an **Expression of Interest due no later than 5pm EST on Friday November 5, 2021**. Applicants will be notified by November 19, 2021.

The second stage is by invitation only, and involves submission of a Full Proposal form due by February 9, 2022. Outcomes of Full Proposal review and decisions will be communicated to applicants on or before July 1, 2022.

Additional Details:

The research program is open to investigations of spiritual exercises that are embedded within or that transcend religious traditions, and to both exercises that are practiced individually and those that are practiced collectively.

TWCF is particularly interested in religious and spiritual exercises that have potential for adaptation and application in innovative ways in contemporary and diverse settings, that have a relatively low barrier to entry for adoption by practitioners, and are likely to be scalable.

Research methodologies should aim to establish causality between spiritual exercises and target outcomes, and can include experimental and quasi-experimental research, as well as field experiments. Projects can include qualitative research that will inform the design of its quantitative aspects (for example to devise authentic, accurate, and appropriate operationalizations of the spiritual exercise and hypothesized outcomes).

Projects should seek to identify potential moderators and mediators that may affect the effectiveness of the practice. We are particularly interested in understanding the factors that can inform the design and delivery of innovative adaptations and implementations of religious and spiritual exercises in contemporary contexts.

Next Steps for Expressions of Interest:

To register and submit your Expression of Interest form, please visit TWCF's [submission portal](#). Interested applicants will need to create a profile in the portal.

All components of the submission are explained within the online application.

Please inform Tiffany Worboy (tworboy@emory.edu) and your respective RAS contact as soon as you decide to submit for this opportunity.

Plan to attend TWCF's informational webinar on **Wednesday, October 20th, at 11am EST** to hear about the submission process and requirements. Access the webinar here: [REGISTER](#)