

Call for Applications

The International Sociological Association invites early-career sociologists to participate in the 2026 edition of the ISA Annual PhD Laboratory. Since 2000, the ISA International Laboratory for PhD Students in Social Sciences has brought together doctoral students from across the globe. It remains a core initiative of the ISA to foster an inclusive and collaborative global sociological community. This year's event will be hosted by the Doha Institute for Graduate Studies in Qatar, offering an opportunity for doctoral researchers from around the world to come together to share, reflect, and develop their work in an intensive week of exchange and mentoring.

The 2026 theme, **"Global Orders, Intimate Struggles: Material Lives and the Micropolitics of Resistance,"** invites participants to explore how global structures of power are embedded in everyday life and how individuals and communities navigate, negotiate, and, at times, resist these forces. The laboratory invites participants undertaking sociological inquiries into how global orders – shaped by capitalism, colonial legacies, contemporary settler-colonial regimes, war-making and genocides, climate crisis, and migration governance are made material, lived and contested in ordinary settings.

Participants are encouraged to consider questions such as:

- How do and bureaucratic systems, technologies, and infrastructures serve as everyday mechanisms of governance, and how do they reproduce or disrupt hierarchies of race, gender, class, and citizenship?
- How do these global orders shape sociological research agendas on and in the Global South? And how have wars and genocides—from Sudan to the Congo, Myanmar, Syria, Gaza and Palestine—repeatedly unsettled these agendas and the conditions of knowledge production?
- In what ways do global structures—such as migration regimes, development agendas, climate crisis, and securitization—materialize in local institutions like schools, clinics, homes, or places of worship?
- How is social reproduction—care work, domestic labor, emotional labor—implicated in sustaining or contesting global political and economic orders?

- What role do material culture and embodied practices (e.g., dress, documents, architecture) play in shaping visibility, legitimacy, or marginality in contested social landscapes?
- What forms of agency and resistance emerge in constrained or ambiguous settings, and how can sociologists attend to micropolitics without losing sight of structural forces?

Participants will bring their own empirical work, unresolved analytical questions, or methodological challenges into dialogue with an international cohort. **The laboratory is designed for PhD students in the middle stages of their doctoral research – those who have begun collecting or analyzing data and are engaging with theoretical or conceptual framing, especially through transnational, comparative, or multi-scalar approaches.**

Logistical Information

- No participation fee
- Travel to Doha, accommodation, and meals during the Lab will be covered
- Venue: Doha Institute for Graduate Studies, Doha, Qatar
- Organizer: Nazanin Shahrokni, ISA Executive Committee Member and Associate Professor of International Studies at Simon Fraser University (nazanin_shahrokni@sfu.ca)

Key Dates

- Call for Applications Opens: 17 November 2025
- Application Deadline: 30 January 2026
- Notification of Acceptance: 30 April 2026
- Lab Dates: Second week of December 2026 (exact dates to be confirmed)

Application Requirements

The [ISA Secretariat](#) handles applications. If you have any questions concerning the application process, please get in touch with the ISA Secretariat: isa@isa-sociology.org

1. To apply, you should have a registered ISA user account with accredited student status: <https://members.isa-sociology.org/login>.

2. Prepare a single PDF file with the following:
 - A one-page motivation letter explaining the applicant's connection to the Lab theme and interest in ISA
 - A research plan (maximum three pages)
 - A curriculum vitae (maximum three pages)
3. Submit your application through the ISA online application form available here: <https://forms.gle/PDPoFbcLkDyWm3u59>. The form will require you to identify with a Google-based email address.
4. Only applications submitted with the form will be considered. The application form closes on **January 30 at 23:59 GMT/UTC**; no extensions will be granted.

Selection Criteria

The Selection Committee will admit 12 doctoral students from diverse countries, institutions, and disciplinary traditions. These students will be joined by a small number of locally based students. Priority will be given to high-quality, original research projects; full-time students; doctoral candidates who have advanced in their programs and are well into their research stage; and applicants who are or plan to remain active in ISA networks, including Research Committees, Forums, and Congresses.

The working language of the Lab is English.