

Call for Applications

The Blinken OSA Archivum invites applications for the Visegrad Scholarship at OSA twice a year, in July and November. The calls are published on this page. More information about the application process can be found below.

The application deadline for the next call is: 23:59 PM, July 25, 2026.

About the Visegrad Scholarship at OSA

The Visegrad Scholarship at OSA is a joint grant scheme of the International Visegrad Fund and the Blinken OSA Archivum. Designed to provide access to the Archivum in Budapest, Hungary, grants of 3,000 euros each cover travel to and from Budapest, a modest subsistence, and accommodation for a research period of eight weeks. For shorter periods, the grant amount is pro-rated. The Archivum's academic and archival staff will provide reference services, introductory information sessions about the collections, research suggestions through designated advisors, feedback via the Visegrad seminars, and will facilitate contact with the CEU community.

With submission deadlines usually in July and November, the call invites applications along a central theme linked to the Archivum's holdings and includes suggested research topics. In the 2026/2027 academic year, the recommended theme of the proposals is

Naming Reality.

Since its start in 2010, the Visegrad Scholarship at the Blinken OSA Archivum has been awarded to more than 290 fellows from over 65 countries.

The list of awardees and their final reports submitted by former fellows are available [here!](#)

Eligibility

Anybody holding an MA degree in the social sciences or the humanities. The call is not restricted to citizens from a V4 country. Socially engaged artists, journalists, scholars at risk from war zones and refugees of conscience (scholars fleeing authoritarian regimes) are especially invited to apply.

Research Theme in 2026/2027:

Naming reality

Václav Havel's words about the necessity of truthfulness in contested times filled the media again in January 2026, 50 years after their original pronouncement. Politicians warned about the need to acknowledge systemic dysfunctions within the international system, thus reversing perceptions about the incompatibility between truth and politics. This unusual recuperation of a concept within non-totalitarian conditions challenges scholars to go back not only to the reconsideration of the idea of truth, but also to the conditions of dramatically claiming it. During the Cold War, accurately describing political and social realities was difficult, restricted, or risky; official discourses were not necessarily outrightly filled with falsities, but obscured crises or suppressed conflict through what Havel coined as "evasive language," understood as substituting ideological tropes for empirical observation.

The current call invites researchers to reflect on the political, linguistic, and strategic challenges of **naming reality** during the Cold War and after. Scholars and artists are given the opportunity to explore the practices, institutions, and intellectual frameworks involved in documenting and describing reality under conditions of censorship, limited information, ideological transformation of languages, political pressures, and complicated perceptual dynamic between East and West.

Making the 35th anniversary of the Visegrad Group founding, this call also invites reflection on how, after 1989, the countries of Central Europe sought to reestablish a shared political vocabulary grounded in open debate and reliable information, while exploring the possibilities of describing social realities without ideological constraint. The historical experience of restricted speech and contested truths forms an important backdrop to the regional cooperation that the Visegrad framework continues to represent.

Sub-topics of **Naming Reality** call can include:

- the **content and practices** of truth-telling among oppositionists and dissidents;
- the dilemmas of artistic and literary actors in **re-creating socio-political languages** that paradoxically eschewed direct engagement with "reality";
- cases of **ideological disillusionment** and awakening among left-wing thinkers and workers and re-evaluation of Marxist concepts regarding "reality";
- the strategies of the **documentary media**: novels, films, private photo collections;

(Clues: [Photographs and Home Movie Collection of Private Photo and Film Foundation](#), [Black Box Foundation Collection](#), [Lajos Erdélyi Photo Collection and Personal Papers*](#), etc.)

- the role of **transnational cultural organizations** in promoting realist and/or aesthetically reflexive works and authors;

- the tools of **empirical realism and its relationship to political thinking**;

- **the samizdat cultures of** bypassing official channels and documenting phenomena (Clues: collections of [János Kis](#), [Gábor Demszky](#), [Samizdat Archives](#), etc.);

- the workings of **propaganda** and the dismantlement of the very idea of truth;

(Clues: [Soviet propaganda films](#), [Monitoring Unit of RFE/ RL](#), etc.)

- the usage of **political psychiatry** against people whose perception of abusive realities was questioned;

- the status of information **within archival cultures of fact-gathering and documentation** (at [Radio Free Europe](#) and beyond);

- **critical archiving** from the margins (documentation about marginalized communities, racialized or stigmatized identities)

(Clues: documents about the Roma Parliament in the collection of the Black Box Foundation, [Network Women's Program](#), collections on the Hungarian Roma Parliament Association*, Roma Civil Rights Foundation*, [records about people with disabilities*](#));

- **transnational networks of information** about development behind the Iron Curtain (Clues: collections of [Index on Censorship](#), [Western Press Archive](#), [Radio Liberty Russian broadcasts](#) about samizdat, [Human Rights Watch reports](#), personal papers of former dissidents, etc.);

- **human rights monitoring and reporting** in Socialist states and their connection with Western organizations/exilic communities;

- the limits and paradoxes of **anti-Stalinist prose**;

- the **paradoxes of documenting "totalitarianism," dissent, and protest in the 70s**, at the heart of the détente;

- the **Western reception** of (un)comfortable truths about socialism/ communism;

- the **epistemological challenges of expert cultures** in times of information and material shortages (the reliability of data and the methods of sociology, statistics, futurology, demography, food engineering within Communism)

(Clues: personal papers of [Mihály Csákó](#) and [István Kemény](#), collection on the [Hungarian Institute for Public Opinion Research](#), etc.);

- the **afterlives of censored cultural artifacts** after the fall of Communism;
- the post-1989 **re-evaluation and verification of systemic socio-political insights** from before 1989 (the meta-analysis of their framing, concepts, as well as of their accuracy).

The sub-topics are meant to enable and inspire various reflections on the topic of the call, not to limit the range of possible connected themes and analyses. Potential candidates can refer to them, enrich them, and work with them. Please also mention the collections you would like to consult and be as specific as possible with regards to the subfonds and series you might find relevant for your research.

* Access to these collections is partly restricted. Please contact Csaba Szilágyi szilagyc@ceu.edu prior to submission.

Application Procedure

The application deadline for the current call is: 23:59 PM, July 25, 2026.

Please submit the following to the Archivum (in one merged pdf file)

Application letter in English - specifying:

- the expected period of stay and preferred dates - please note that 1) the Archivum does not host Grantees in August; 2) the Archivum's Research Room is closed during the Christmas period, and 3) the research stay must end on the last day of the given academic year, on July 31.
- how you learnt about the scholarship—through what courses, instructors, social media groups or pages, websites, academic platforms, public programs/projects etc.

Research description/plan in English: about 800 words, and should include the following:

- introduction
- presentation of the stage of research
- literature on the subject
- preliminary hypothesis
- research questions
- identification of possible documents in the Archivum's holdings

- artists are expected to submit a portfolio, too. We recommend that you refer to one of the topics in your application. Please also mention the specific collections you would like to consult.
- Curriculum Vitae (C.V.)
- Proof of officially recognized advanced level English language exam (native speakers and those with qualification from an English-language institution/degree program are exempted)
- Names of two referees with contact details. Letters of reference are not needed.

The Application letter, C.V., the research description/plan, the copy of a language exam certification, and the Referees' contact information should be submitted in a single, merged PDF file online through the [Application Form](#)

If there is any problem with submitting the application contact Katalin Gadoros in email at gadoros@ceu.edu.

Please only proceed with the application if you have read our Information about [data processing](#) and you accept the terms and conditions described!

For Applicants

We seek to promote exchanges among people with backgrounds in the arts, humanities, and social sciences in the way they think through and about archives while being concerned with current problems. From this point of view, the calls are not only addressed to scholars working specifically on Cold War topics, but to all those interested in theories of knowledge, who would use the Archivum's documents as props for larger reflections and activist concerns.

The Scholarship supports fellows at different stages of their research towards widely varied research aims ranging from articles, PhD theses through novels, films, exhibitions to plays. Research and publication topics cover an extensive area of history, literature, performing and fine arts, philosophy, and sociology, with a focus on media and objectivity, conceptualization of opposition, techno-science and mass communication, information gathering, production and dissemination, documentation and verification of human rights abuses, political "facts" and socio-economic issues among others.

Artists submitting proposals are kindly asked to frame their application as research-based projects, indicating the collections they will rely on. The artistic proposals will be assessed according to their merit, originality, timeliness, as well as their feasibility regarding their reliance on available collections. The Archivum can only offer conditions for the realization of artistic research, not for production.

Evaluation

The Selection Committee (names cannot be disclosed) evaluates proposals on the strength of the professional quality and novelty of the research proposal, its relevance to the chosen topic and the involvement of the Archivum's holdings in the research. In the case of equal scores, those from V4 countries have an advantage.

Coordinators of the program

Academic coordinator: [Ioana Macrea-Toma](mailto:macrea-tomai@ceu.edu), macrea-tomai@ceu.edu

Administrative coordinator: [Katalin Gádoros](mailto:gadoros@ceu.edu), gadoros@ceu.edu

Visegrad Lecture Series

While working on their own subject, fellows will have the opportunity to collaborate with the Archivum's researchers and to transform their archival investigation into a full research experience. At the end of their research stay, the fellows are invited to give a final presentation about their research findings at the Archivum and the ways in which the documents were relevant to their research. The presentations are organized within the Visegrad Scholarship at OSA lecture series and as such are open to the public.

Grant award procedure

The grants administration is carried out by the Archivum's Grants Administrators. The Call posted on the Blinken OSA Archivum and the IVF websites is updated each year in May. Applications are sent to the Archivum via e-mail, checked for formal criteria (application letter, research proposal, CV and names of 2 referees, all in one merged pdf file), then receipt of arrival is sent back to the applicant via e-mail.

Members of the Jury are representatives of the International Visegrad Fund and the Archivum. After the decision is reached and approved by the Council of V4 Ambassadors, the proposals with the names of successful candidates are posted on the Archivum's website. At the same time, the Grants Administrators contact each successful candidate via e-mail.

The two-month scholarship grant is 3,000 euros without financial reporting responsibility. Stipends for shorter research periods are pro-rated.

Grants are paid in two installments: 75 per cent prior to or right at the beginning of the grant period, 25 per cent after the Grantee has given his/her final presentation at the

CEU and has submitted his/her final report and this has been approved by all members of the Jury. The Grantee has a maximum of ten working days to submit his/her final report to the Archivum after the end of the research period. The Jury has five working days to approve or ask for improvements. After the final report has been approved, the last 25 per cent of the grant is paid out to the fellow and the report is posted on the Archivum's website.

Information about data processing is available [here](#).

Contact Information

To find out more about the program, please
visit: <https://archivum.org/academics/visegrad-scholarship-at-osa>

The Archivum's collections, research suggestions

The archival collection and research papers of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Research Institute constitute the most comprehensive Cold War and post-Cold War archive about the problems of Communism and its aftermath in the early years of post-Socialist and post-Communist transition. The collection offers important tips both about facts and about their conceptualizations from 1949 to 1994. Scholars particularly interested in the former Soviet Union and in the aftermath of its dissolution can find relevant the rich collection of sub-fonds Soviet Red Archives, Samizdat Archives, and the Soviet Research Department of the RFE/RL RI (to be compared with the RFE/RL Russian broadcast recordings). These sub-fonds and series allowed the radios to extract reliable data from the massive body of media produced by the Soviet republics; the Western Press Archives contain the Western representations about the phenomena in the communist bloc and beyond it, about the transition in the 1990s. This archival collection also holds several series of biographical files about major historical figures, dissidents, leaders of national minorities, and those persecuted by the political regimes of that time.

Besides its archival analogue collections, the Archivum can also offer access to unique, audiovisual materials related to documentary practices, a special collection of RFE (anti)propaganda books, and a growing collection on digital humanities, human rights, archival theory and philosophy.

We also suggest many other possible archival collections to be investigated, such as the records of Index on Censorship, the Soviet Propaganda Film collection, the records related to the 1956 Hungarian Revolution, the documents of the Constitutional and

Legal Policy Institute, the records of the Forced Migration projects at the Open Society Institute, the records of the International Human Rights Law Institute relating to the conflict in the former Yugoslavia, the records of the American Refugee Committee Balkan's Programs, the Gary Filerman Collection on Hungarian Refugees from 1956, etc.

More Information

To find out more about the program, please visit:

<https://archivum.org/academics/visegrad-scholarship-at-osa>