AI METHODOLOGIES AND APPLICATIONS IN MIDDLE EASTERN AND ISLAMIC WORLD STUDIES

RESEARCH CONFERENCE – CALL FOR PAPERS

Date: 4-5 February 2026

Location: Global Studies Centre, Gulf University for Science and Technology, Kuwait

Organizers: Dr. Ismail Lala – Assistant Professor of Philosophy
Dr. Jennifer Lofkrantz – Associate Professor of History/GSC Chair

CALL FOR PAPERS

The new age of artificial intelligence (AI) presents many opportunities and challenges to methodology in all disciplines of Social Sciences and Humanities including in Middle Eastern and Islamic World Studies. AI technologies, such as data analysis, machine learning, and natural language processing, can uncover hidden patterns, automate repetitive tasks, and provide deeper insights into the topic of study. However, these benefits also come with some significant ethical challenges such as concerns about data privacy, algorithmic bias, and human responsibility and accountability in the use and application of AI technologies. This research conference is focused on the use and application of AI in the methodology of all disciplines of Middle Eastern and Islamic World Studies broadly defined. Overarching questions to be addressed include: What is the difference between the types of uses of AI: are some more acceptable than others? Are there some fields in which the use of AI presents huge opportunities and others in which it causes major issues? Can we speak of AI in terms of being a "net-good" in Middle Eastern and Islamic World Studies?

Conference themes include but are not limited to the following:

1. Opportunities/Challenges/Ethics in incorporating AI in the methodology of the Social Sciences and Humanities disciplines including in Islamic Philosophy, History, Religious Studies, Literature, Anthropology, Theology, Sociology, Communications.
2. Specific Social Sciences or Humanities research projects or applications with significant use of AI or other digital technologies in Middle Eastern and Islamic World Studies.
3. AI applications in religious law, textual commentary and prophetic traditions.
4. AI applications in the cultural heritage of the Middle East and Islamic World.

Confirmed Keynote Speakers:
Dr. David Wrisley, Professor of Digital Humanities, New York University Abu Dhabi
Dr. Shoaib Malik, Lecturer in Science and Religion, University of Edinburgh

Limited travel funding may be available for graduate students, post doctoral fellows and faculty from low income countries and institutions. We aim to publish the revised papers as articles/chapters in either a refereed special issue of a journal or as an edited volume.

Instructions

Individual Submissions: Individual proposals should include an **abstract** (250-word maximum), and the email, and the affiliation and **short biography** (max. 100 words) of presenter(s).

Email submissions to both **Dr. Ismail Lala** (Lala.I@gust.edu.kw) and **Dr. Jennifer Lofkrantz** (Lofkrantz.J@gust.edu.kw)

Papers will need to be completed prior to the research conference for pre-circulation. Date to be announced after acceptance of proposals.

Deadline for submission of proposals: October 1, 2025

Notification of acceptance: October 15, 2025