**Social Science Research in the Arab Middle East and North Africa: guidelines for the conduct of responsible, ethical and constructive social inquiry.**

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This project aims to improve the quality of social science research on, and in, the Arab Middle East and North Africa. Born of the conviction that no single researcher or research team can ignore or transcend the incentives and hindrances their research environment imposes, the purpose of this effort is to examine the particular context that shapes—and often distorts—decisions about research in the Middle East and North Africa and to propose responses that will reflect the ethical responsibilities that researchers who work in and on the region have to each other and to the broader research enterprise of which they are a part.

To that end, it has taken on:

(a) identifying impediments—institutional, economic, political, sociological—to the conduct of social science research in the region today;

(b) proposing strategies for addressing such impediments and promoting and sustaining social science research there;

(c) recommending mechanisms for greater co-operation among social science communities within and beyond the Arab Middle East and North Africa;

(d) developing guidelines for the ethical conduct of research, particularly in communities under duress and in circumstances of unequal power relations;

(e) fostering shared perceptions of the value of social science research and of the circumstances that advance it, within the region and beyond.

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Originally conceived as a series of workshops in the region, during the global COVID lockdown, the project convened an online Seminar in the Winter of 2020-21 and is now launching a series of working groups.  We are reaching out to prospective collaborators and participants for focused
examinations of the economics of research in the region, dissemination of social science, careers and career progression, methods of inquiry, and the shaping of research agendas.  Participants in these discussions will be invited to join the Seminar when it reconvenes online in the Fall 2021 and to contribute to the development of the in-person workshops in Cairo, Tunis, Rabat and Amman, now expected for 2022.