POLICY CENTER FOR THE NEW SOUTH

THINK • STIMULATE • BRIDGE

Youth Policy Center

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

2ND EDITION

MENTORSHIP PROGRAM 2027

From Academic Research to Policy Impact

Driven by a shared vision to elevate youth leadership in policy and research, the Policy Center for the New South (PCNS) and the Youth Policy Center (YPC) created the Mentorship Program to support early stage, policy focused young researchers.

APPLY BY	OPEN TO	DURATION
Monday, November 30, 2026	**Master's students**	**January – July 2027**

01 WHAT THE PROGRAM OFFERS

Six things you take away

- **Individual feedback:** Receive individualized feedback from experienced researchers.
- **Practical skills:** Develop practical skills in research design, evidence use, analysis, policy writing and presentation.
- **A policy brief:** Produce a policy brief of approximately 1,800 words.
- **A public stage:** Present your work at the program's public presentations.
- **Publication:** Have your brief published on the YPC platform following editorial review.
- **A lasting community:** Join the PCNS & YPC community, with a network and mentorship experience that last beyond the program.

The mentoring model



02 PROGRAM CALENDAR

Phase	Activity	Timing
SELECTION	Review of applications	Dec 2026
	Online interviews, final selection & onboarding	Jan 2027
LEARNING & MENTORSHIP	Kick off event	Jan 2027
	Preparatory workshop bootcamp	Feb 2027
	Mentorship & policy brief development, with selected follow up workshops	Mar – May 2027
	Final policy brief submission	Mid May 2027
PREPARING & PRESENTING	Review & presentation preparation	Jun 2027
	Public presentations & publication	Jul 2027

03 HOW THE PROGRAM WORKS

Your journey in five steps

1 Apply with research ideas

Applicants select one research theme and propose up to three possible topics within it. These proposals are the starting point for the selection process and should be saved, as shortlisted candidates will develop one or two of them in the next stage.

2 Written submission & interview

Shortlisted candidates select one or two topics from their original proposals and prepare a written submission. Guidelines and the preparation deadline will be shared at that stage. Candidates whose submissions proceed are invited to a short online interview with the relevant mentor pair.

Application → Written submission → Online interview → Selected

3 Build research and communication skills

UP TO 12 WORKSHOPS · MANDATORY

The program opens with a kick off event in January. Selected participants take part in a preparatory workshop bootcamp that provides a shared foundation for the research and writing process; selected sessions continue during the mentorship phase. Workshops help participants:

- Develop a focused research question and research design.
- Select appropriate research methods and work with evidence and sources.
- Build a clear analytical argument.
- Write and structure a policy brief.
- Develop evidence based policy recommendations.
- Present research, prepare slides and communicate findings to an audience.

4 Develop and refine the policy brief

≈ 6 to 8 HYBRID MEETINGS

From March through May, each mentee develops a policy brief with guidance from a PCNS Senior Fellow and a PCNS Expert, who bring complementary perspectives and help refine the research question, assess evidence, strengthen the argument and clarify the brief's policy relevance.

Mentees should expect approximately 6 to 8 hybrid meetings; number and frequency may vary with each project's needs. Before each meeting, mentees prepare and share agreed materials (research question, outline, findings or draft section). Meetings are working sessions for feedback and concrete next steps; mentees progress their work between meetings and remain responsible for the research, analysis and writing.

- **In person at PCNS, Rabat** when mentee and mentors are locally available
- **Online** when participants are based elsewhere

5 Finalize and present the research

- **MID MAY – Submit:** Final policy brief of approximately 1,800 words
- **JUNE – Refine:** Review; respond to feedback and prepare your presentation; other meetings if necessary
- **JULY – Present & publish:** Public presentations and publication on the YPC platform

04 RESEARCH THEMES

Choose one of the themes

Applicants select one theme. Each theme specifies the required academic background and working language.

Please review the requirements when choosing a theme.
FR = French · EN = English

01 Gender Equality, Social Inclusion and Participatory Governance

FR / EN

POSSIBLE TOPICS
Women's political participation and leadership, gender responsive public policy and legal reform, the Women, Peace and Security agenda, youth civic engagement, social inclusion, equal opportunities and diaspora engagement.

ACADEMIC BACKGROUND
Gender Studies, Political Science, Public Policy, International Relations or Sociology.

02 Global Governance, International Cooperation and Development

FR / EN

POSSIBLE TOPICS
Reform of multilateral institutions, development finance, international financial institutions, governance and economic recovery in fragile settings, South South cooperation and changing development partnerships.

ACADEMIC BACKGROUND
International Relations, Political Science, Public Policy, Economics or Development Studies.

03 Geopolitics, Sovereignty and Europe and Africa Relations

FR / EN

POSSIBLE TOPICS
European strategic autonomy, foreign policy, Europe and Africa partnerships, sovereignty, shifting global power relations, trade, protectionism, international law and diplomacy.

ACADEMIC BACKGROUND
International Relations, Political Science, European Studies, Public Policy or International Law.

04 Global Macroeconomics and International Finance

EN

POSSIBLE TOPICS
Economic growth and macroeconomic stability, emerging economies, sovereign debt, development finance, international monetary systems, financial governance, productivity and global value chains.

ACADEMIC BACKGROUND
Economics, Applied Economics or Finance.

05 Industrialization and Structural Economic Transformation

EN

POSSIBLE TOPICS
Industrial policy, economic diversification, manufacturing, productivity, job creation, small and medium sized enterprise development, global value chains, foreign investment and technology transfer.

ACADEMIC BACKGROUND
Economics, Applied Economics or Development Economics.

06 Territorial Development, Regional Economics and Climate Resilience

EN

POSSIBLE TOPICS
Regional inequalities, place based development, urban economies, sustainable cities, transport infrastructure, territorial connectivity, climate impacts and public investment.

ACADEMIC BACKGROUND
Economics, Applied Economics or Regional Economics.

07 Security, Conflict and Geopolitics in the Sahel

FR / EN

POSSIBLE TOPICS

Armed conflict and political instability, violent extremism, non state armed groups, border security, illicit networks, climate related insecurity, resource competition and regional security cooperation.

ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

International Relations, Political Science, Security Studies or Public Policy.

08 Migration, Labour Markets, Employment and International Cooperation

EN / FR

POSSIBLE TOPICS

Migration governance, labour mobility, migration partnerships, diaspora engagement, migration and development, Europe and Africa relations, Mediterranean cooperation, labour markets and employment in North Africa.

ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

Economics, Political Science, International Relations or Public Policy. Applicants with a background in Law or Sociology are not eligible for this theme.

09 International Security, Extremism and Africa and Asia Relations

FR / EN

POSSIBLE TOPICS

Radicalization, prevention of violent extremism, crisis management, societal resilience, psychosocial drivers of political violence, digital threats, disinformation and strategic relations between Africa and Asia.

ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

International Relations, Political Science, Security Studies or Psychology.

10 Economic Policy, Strategic Resources and Economic Sovereignty

FR

POSSIBLE TOPICS

Economic sovereignty, strategic industries, economic diversification, Morocco's development model, investment, sovereign wealth funds, development finance, water scarcity and natural resource governance.

ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

Economics, Applied Economics or Finance.

11 Education, Labour Markets and Human Capital Development

FR

POSSIBLE TOPICS
Education policy, learning outcomes, educational inequalities, skills development, education and labour market mismatches, youth employment, school to work transitions and employment policy evaluation.

ACADEMIC BACKGROUND
Economics.

12 Multilateral Diplomacy, International Law and Conflict Resolution

FR / EN

POSSIBLE TOPICS
The United Nations, global governance, multilateral diplomacy, international law, peaceful settlement of disputes, mediation, peacekeeping, human rights diplomacy and maritime governance.

ACADEMIC BACKGROUND
International Relations, Political Science, International Law or Public Policy.

13 National Security Governance, Intelligence and African Geopolitics

FR

POSSIBLE TOPICS
National security strategies, security sector governance, intelligence analysis, strategic foresight, early warning, border security, transnational threats and security dynamics in Africa.

ACADEMIC BACKGROUND
International Relations, Political Science, Security Studies or Public Policy.

05 WHO CAN APPLY

Eligibility

Open to Master's students who meet all of the following criteria:

- Currently enrolled in a Master's program in a Moroccan public or private university.
- Residing in Morocco, in any region.
- Studying in a field related to the selected theme and aligned with PCNS thematic areas, such as International Relations, Political Science, Public Policy, Economics or Social Sciences.
- Available to participate in the program activities from the January start through the July public presentations.

06 WHAT IS EXPECTED

Your commitments

Participants are expected to:

- **Show up:** Attend and actively participate in all mandatory workshops and program activities.
- **Prepare:** Prepare materials before each mentoring meeting and make progress between meetings.
- **Communicate:** Communicate clearly and professionally with mentors and the organizing team.
- **Be reliable:** Respond promptly, take initiative, be punctual and meet agreed deadlines.
- **Own your work:** Take responsibility for the research, analysis and writing in the policy brief.

07 THE FIRST EDITION

2026 at a glance

06
MASTER'S STUDENTS

12
PCNS MENTORS

06
POLICY BRIEFS

The first edition, which took place from March to July 2026, brought together **six Master's students**, supported by **12 PCNS mentors**, who developed **six policy briefs**.

Discover the first edition's policy briefs and the mentors and mentees behind the journey. **Here**

08 HOW TO APPLY

Ready to start your research journey?

APPLICATION FORM
Here

FOR QUERIES, PLEASE CONTACT
mentorship@policycenter.ma

APPLICATION DEADLINE: **Monday, November 30, 2026**

www.policycenter.ma