

## About IRIS

The Institute of Regional and International Studies (IRIS) is an independent research center based in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI). Through multidisciplinary research, strategic partnerships, and open dialogue events among experts and influential public leaders, IRIS examines the most complex issues facing the KRI, Iraq and the Middle East.

IRIS is housed at the American University of Iraq, Sulaimani (AUIS), Iraq's only independent, not-for-profit, American-style institution of higher learning. IRIS's location offers academics, journalists and institutions access to areas of interest and a safe space in an otherwise unstable region, making it an attractive, unique meeting place.

The Institute's main focus areas include but are not limited to: security, energy, water resource management, regional geopolitics, socio-economics, gender and archeology.

IRIS seeks to partner with institutes, think tanks and universities in four areas:

- Fellowships
- Fieldwork, research and publications
- Events on pressing issues
- Institutional partnerships

### Fellowships

IRIS and AUIS seek to bring top academics, analysts and research practitioners in relevant fields with a focus on the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI), Iraq, Turkey and Iran.

IRIS & AUIS can provide fellows with:

- Housing
- Access to university facilities
- Student research assistants in the relevant field
- Technical, material and financial support

Depending on the length of their stay, fellows will:

- Publish a number of articles or reports through IRIS and their institution
- Give lectures or workshops
- Teach a course



## Fieldwork, Research and Publications

IRIS can provide fieldwork, research and analysis on various relevant topics in the KRI and disputed territories for policy groups, news outlets and multinational companies interested in the area.

IRIS's research capabilities are unique because of the team's access to local communities, experience, education and language skills. Research teams are assembled on a project-by-project basis, with the makeup depending on the client's geographic area of interest and the scope and subject matter in question.

IRIS staff and AUIS faculty members and students have substantial experience conducting such research. IRIS Director Christine van den Toorn and teams of undergraduates from the University have compiled reports for news outlets and IOCs operating in the KRI and disputed territories. Dr. Bilal Wahab, Professor of International Studies at AUIS, published a comprehensive study on the future of Iraqi oil relations while he was an IRIS faculty fellow.

## Events on Pressing Issues

IRIS convenes dialogues and meetings in the form of panels, roundtables, lectures and workshops throughout the year, all of which aim to engage leaders from various sectors in the KRI, Iraq and the international community.

The Institute seeks to partner with like-minded organizations to host meetings that examine the latest crises and developments unfolding both at local and regional levels.

The Institute has held panels on Iraqi elections, energy issues and IDPs. Every year, IRIS hosts its flagship event, the Sulaimani Forum, which brings together leading scholars, analysts, journalists and officials to discuss pressing issues facing the region.

## Institutional Partnerships

IRIS currently has a number of partnerships in place with leading institutions such as Stanford Law School (SLS), the Independent Media Center Kurdistan (IMCK)/ Free Press Unlimited and UN Women. Partnerships can be open-ended or project-based, and all aim to build the Institute's capacity and experience through mutually beneficial strategic relationships. IRIS is eager to cooperate with compatible institutions, and aims to expand its network of partners as it moves forward.

## Contact Us

For more information on our programs, please email IRIS Director Christine van den Toorn at [c.vandentoor@auis.edu.krd](mailto:c.vandentoor@auis.edu.krd) or IRIS Coordinator Zeina Najjar at [zeina.najjar@auis.edu.krd](mailto:zeina.najjar@auis.edu.krd)

[www.auis.edu.krd/iris](http://www.auis.edu.krd/iris)