

Rockefeller Incentive Fund Award Report

Johannes Karreth (jkarreth@albany.edu)
Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science
March 2, 2016

I used the funds from this award to pay for a round trip flight to Cape Town, South Africa. In Cape Town, I was based as a Visiting Researcher at the Democracy in Africa Research Unit (DARU) at the Centre for Social Research (CSSR) at the University of Cape Town (UCT) from June 1 to June 30, 2015.

The funds allowed me to conduct research on how international governmental organizations (IGOs) can mitigate potential violent conflicts between countries. Specifically, I was able to use my time at DARU, institutional support from CSSR, and resources at UCT to conduct elite interviews and archival research in Cape Town. DARU faculty put me in contact with local researchers, who in turn facilitated contacts with policymakers in the region. I conducted several interviews with South African experts and former policymakers on regional integration and political instability, including a conversation with the former Executive Secretary of the Southern African Development Community. Local contacts through DARU and the ability to meet with interviewees in South Africa were essential for conducting this research. In addition, I was able to collect a variety of qualitative evidence on regional integration and violent conflict from archival research at UCT; these resources would not have been available online or outside of the Southern African region.

This research yielded important insights from regional analysts and policymakers into my research questions: how do regional intergovernmental organizations in Southern Africa perceive the impact of violent conflict and tensions between member states, and how do they respond to it? I used information from this research in an article manuscript that I completed in Fall 2015 and that is currently under review at a peer-reviewed journal. Information from interviews and archival resources has also been useful for designing systematic follow-up research that I am currently conducting with the help of three undergraduate research assistants. This research collects more information on the vested interests and leverage of intergovernmental organizations over member states. Altogether, the research supported by the Rockefeller Incentive Fund Award and my subsequent work will help me make a stronger case to apply for extramural grants for my research project on the leverage of international organizations in interstate disputes.