

# REASSESSING THREAT ASSESSMENT

GRADUATE STUDENT WORKSHOP

The Tobin Project seeks applications from doctoral students undertaking new research related to its National Security work on the factors that contribute to threat assessment's success and efficacy. Doctoral students *from all disciplines* who are considering research on this *and related topics* are encouraged to apply.

The deadline for applications is January 31st, 2018.

The Tobin Project aims to foster innovative and rigorous research that addresses major challenges facing society. Tobin is currently organizing new work on the practices and principles that contribute to accurate, effective national security threat assessment. As part of this project, we are working with leading scholars to investigate early assessments of nuclear technology in the hope that a rigorous evaluation of past assessments will allow us to build a deeper and more practical understanding of reliable threat assessment methods. The Tobin Project seeks applications from doctoral students in a wide range of disciplines, including but not limited to political science and international relations, history, economics, psychology, and sociology.

## RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP AND WORKSHOP

Fellowship recipients will be awarded grants of up to \$1000 and travel to Cambridge, Massachusetts to share and develop their research-in-progress with the Tobin Project staff and other fellowship recipients. The fellowship grants are meant to partially or fully support research expenses and provide general support to graduate students working on topics related to the Tobin Project's research priorities. Any additional research costs should be noted in the budget and will be considered for funding if it is available.

Fellows will attend a two-day workshop in Cambridge, MA, where they will present their research-in-progress. The workshop will provide an interdisciplinary seminar-style environment for fellows to receive feedback on their research, with a particular focus on strengthening fellows' skills in formulating and refining core research questions. The workshop represents a rare opportunity to receive critical feedback on new research outside of a departmental environment. **The workshop will begin on the evening of Wednesday, April 25th, 2018 and conclude on the afternoon of Friday, April 27th, 2018. The Tobin Project will cover travel and lodging expenses.**

## APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

All applications should include the following:

- Curriculum Vitae
- Project title and short abstract (100-150 words)
- Research proposal (600-900 words). Please include the following in the proposal:
  - The question(s) your research aims to address
  - Research methodology and initial hypotheses
  - Connection to the Tobin Project's research
  - Expected output (e.g., journal article, dissertation chapter, etc.) and timeline
  - Potential impact of the project in the academic literature and/or the policy world
  - Budget

Please email application materials as a single PDF to [research@tobinproject.org](mailto:research@tobinproject.org). In the subject line, please indicate that you are applying to the Graduate Student Workshop.

# REASSESSING THREAT ASSESSMENT

*What differentiates accuracy from inaccuracy in national security threat assessment?*

While much work has been done to identify and evaluate potential threats to the United States, threat assessment *itself* remains relatively understudied. We know little about the processes and principles that contribute to assessment's accuracy, and we have trouble distinguishing between reliable assessments and lucky ones. This lack of knowledge undermines our ability to manage a wide range of issues, including threats posed by terrorist attacks and outbreaks of inter- and intra-state unrest; grand-strategic challenges in East Asia, Europe, and the Middle East; and broader social, economic, and technological trends that could affect US or global stability.

We seek to encourage greater understanding of assessment across a wide range of threats and as practiced by a wide range of actors. Successful applications might touch on:

- Historical cases of assessment and the factors that led to their success or failure;
- Organizational, institutional, individual, or other factors that affect the construction of national security threat assessments;
- Psychological and behavioral approaches to understanding threat perception and decision-making;
- Innovative predictive techniques for evaluating the likelihood and severity of threats;
- Risks created by changes in economic and political dynamics related to rising military and economic powers;
- Emerging technologies and their potential consequences for national and global security.

For additional information on our National Security research initiative, please visit:

<http://tobinproject.org/research-inquiry/national-security>

## THE TOBIN PROJECT

The Tobin Project, founded in 2005 on the belief that rigorous scholarship on major, real-world problems can make a profound difference over the long term, strives to be a catalyst for transformative research in the social sciences. The mission of the Tobin Project is to mobilize, motivate, and support a community of scholars across the social sciences and allied fields seeking to deepen our understanding of significant challenges facing the nation. Inspired by Professor James Tobin's belief that scholars have a vital role to play in the public sphere, the Project has built an interdisciplinary network of over 600 leading scholars across 80 universities, from Nobel Laureates to the most promising graduate students, who are together working to generate pioneering research on pressing problems of the 21st century. Currently the Tobin Project is focused on four core research areas: Economic Inequality; Government & Markets; Institutions of Democracy; and National Security. For more information, please visit [www.tobinproject.org](http://www.tobinproject.org)

The Tobin Project is a non-partisan organization recognized as a public charity under sections 501(c)(3) and 509(a)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code.

**THE DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS IS JANUARY 31, 2018.**

Please direct submissions and any questions to [research@tobinproject.org](mailto:research@tobinproject.org)