



CROSS-BORDER CONFLICT
EVIDENCE / POLICY / TRENDS

FEMINIST FRONTIERS: RETHINKING POWER AGENCY AND RESPONSE IN CONFLICT-AFFECTED BORDERLANDS

Q&A session – 02 September 2025

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Agenda

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- 2 Introduction to XCEPT
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An aerial photograph of a city, likely St. Louis, with a river winding through it. The image is dark blue with a grid of white lines representing streets. Ten red circular markers with white numbers are placed across the map. Marker 1 is in the upper center, marker 2 is to its right, and markers 3 through 10 are arranged in a horizontal line along the top edge of the map.

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Housekeeping

Q&A housekeeping



Please write any questions into the chat. You will not be able to unmute and ask questions verbally, so you must write your questions into the chat.



We will record this session and share it online afterwards.



We may not get to all the questions today, or there may be some that we are not able to answer immediately. In that case, we will make sure that we respond to those questions in writing within a few days of the clarification questions deadline.

An aerial photograph of a city, likely St. Louis, with a river winding through it. The image is dark blue with a grid of streets and a river. A large red circle with the number 2 is in the center. A horizontal row of ten red circles with numbers 1 through 10 is at the top.

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Introduction to XCEPT

About XCEPT



The Cross-border Conflict Evidence, Policy and Trends (XCEPT) research programme brings together world-leading experts and local researchers to examine **conflict-affected borderlands**, **how conflicts connect across borders**, and the **drivers of violent and peaceful behaviour**.

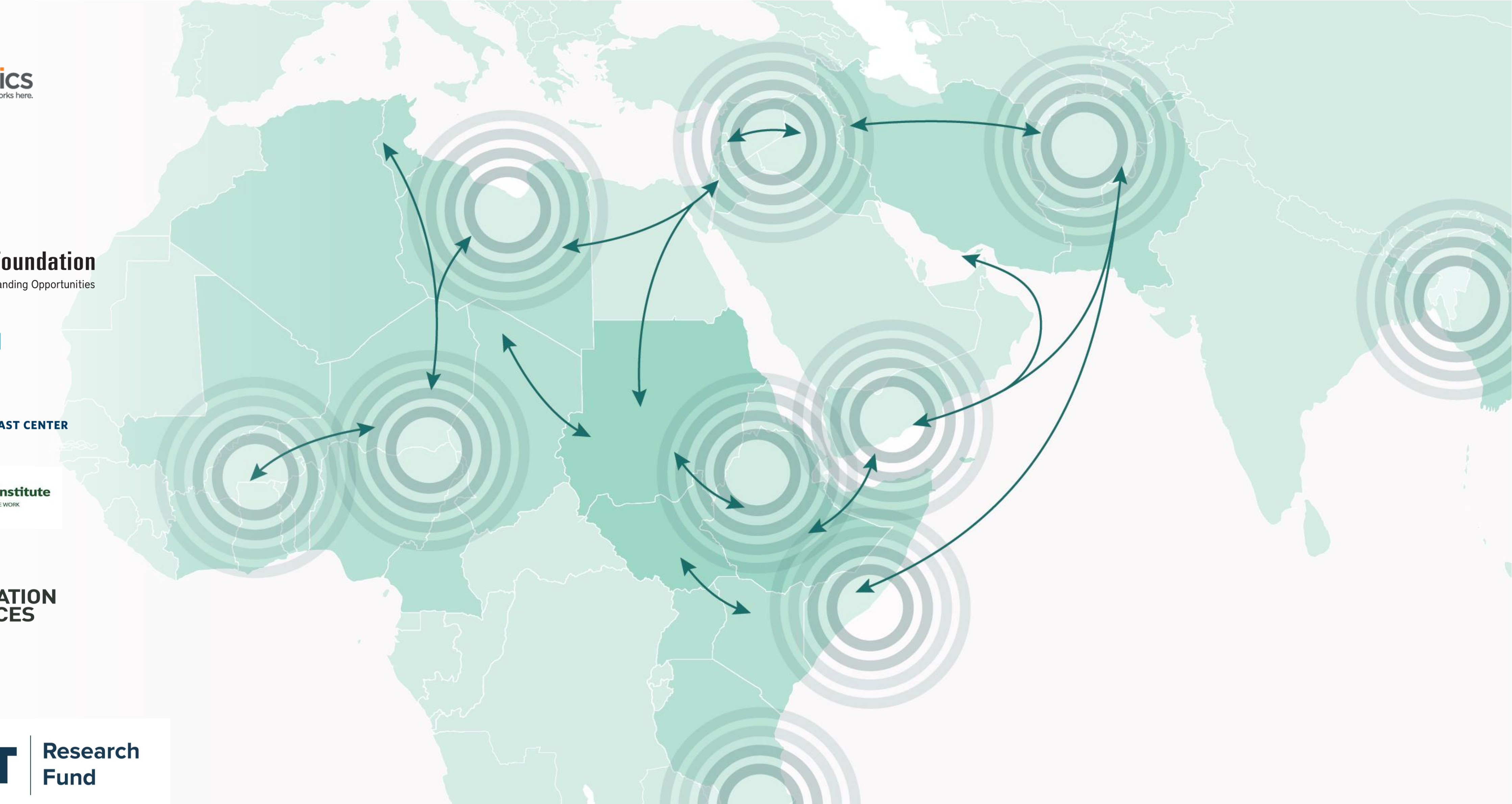


Funded by UK International Development, XCEPT offers actionable research to inform policies and programmes that support peace.



The programme includes the **XCEPT Research Fund** (XRF) to commission high-quality new research.

Research on borderlands, how conflicts connect across borders, and what drives violence





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About this funding opportunity

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Why a feminist lens on conflict-affected borderlands?

- Past XCEPT and academic studies in conflict and borderland studies often use gender **descriptively** (focusing on women's vulnerabilities) rather than **analytically** (examining underlying power structures that enables gendered dynamics).
- Feminist perspectives highlight how gender intersects with race, class, sexuality, and other identities to shape experiences, agency, and resistance. They go beyond documenting harm **to interrogate the systems that produce violence and the forms of transformative agency that emerge.**

About this Funding Opportunity

Papers should take a feminist approach to exploring conflict-affected borderlands, addressing ONE of the themes below:

- Ways in which **ideas and practices of masculinity and femininity** shape power structures and conflict in borderlands.
- How gender shapes **agency** within conflict-affected borderlands and how this is reflected in the ways communities or actors navigate, resist or transform structural conditions.
- The potential for feminist approaches to inform more **just and transformative peacebuilding** in borderlands.

Key info

Likely total number of awards	3
Value of each award	Up to £15,000 GBP
Length of each award	6-9 Months
Submission deadline	Monday 15 September 2025, 10:00 BST
Estimated Start Date	October 2025

Geographic scope

The proposed research should concentrate on conflict-affected borderlands in XCEPT's core geographies, including:

- The Middle East, especially Syria, Lebanon, Iraq and Yemen
- The Horn of Africa, especially Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia and Ethiopia
- Coastal West Africa and the Sahel
- Afghanistan and Pakistan
- Myanmar

Research may focus on a single region or span multiple regions. Proposals that address other geographies will be considered, with particular interest in research that offers comparative value for XCEPT's core areas of focus

Expected outputs

- **Main output:** High-quality paper for a peer-reviewed journal (open-access)
- **Public output:** Blog, commentary, or similar piece to share insights with policymakers, practitioners, and borderland communities.
- **Dissemination activities.**

Expectations for research quality

XCEPT is a public good research programme and we expect our researchers to meet the standards of high-quality research:

- **New and novel**
- **Use rigorous and robust research methodologies**
- **Adhere to internationally recognised ethical standards**
- **Explicitly mobilise a feminist lens across the research questions and approach**

An aerial photograph of a city, likely St. Louis, with a river winding through it. The image is overlaid with a dark blue filter. Ten red circles, each containing a white number, are arranged in a horizontal line at the top. A larger red circle with the number 4 is positioned in the upper center of the map.

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Who can apply?

Who can apply?

Papers may be authored individually or co-authored. To be eligible for this opportunity, the lead author must meet the mandatory criteria below

- **Hold a PhD** in a relevant discipline (Gender Studies, Political Science, International Relations, Economics, Development Studies, or a related field)
- Have at least **one publication in a peer-reviewed journal**

There are no formal qualification requirements for co-authors.

Who can apply?

- Researchers based in or from countries in the **Global South** are strongly encouraged to apply.
- We expect to **enter into a contract with an individual**.
- Applicants must indicate in the abstract submission whether **ethical review** is required from an Institutional Review Board.
- Applicants may submit more than one proposal, but no author will receive more than one award. Each proposal should be submitted separately.



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How to apply?

How to apply?

To apply, applicants should prepare and submit the following documents:

Application Forms including:

- A Research Abstract (400 words)
- A Research Development and Publication Plan (300 words)
- An Indicative Budget

Annexes:

- CVs of lead researcher and co-authors
- Proof of peer-reviewed publication

The completed Application Form, CV(s) and proof of peer-reviewed publication must be submitted as a word document via email to XCEPT-Fund@chemonics.com by **Monday 15th of September at 10:00 BST**. Applications must indicate in the subject line of the email the following “C2-G051 Feminist frontiers + [Name of applicant]”.

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**How will we assess
your application?**

Scoring criteria

Applications will be evaluated by a Selection Committee based on the criteria below. **Please note that this award criteria should be considered as a guide only.**

Evaluation criteria	Scoring
Quality and originality of the research idea, including clarity of the research question(s), conceptual framework, applicability of findings to broader contexts, and potential to expand the field	40
Relevance to the themes, questions and XCEPT focus geographies described in this call	20
Feasibility and credibility of the research and publication plan	15
Experience and track record of the researcher(s)	25
<i>Total score</i>	<i>100</i>



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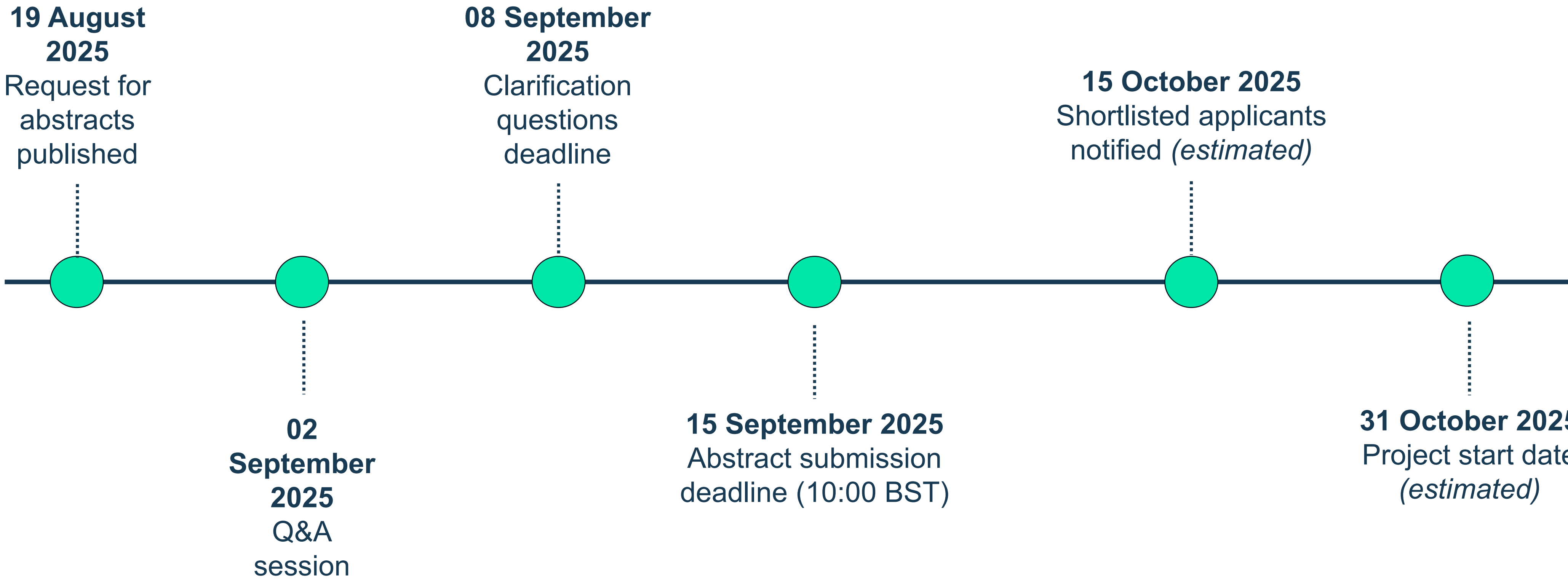
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Timeline

Timeline



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XCEPT support for Fund awardees

Tailored support for Fund awardees

- Research management and implementation
- Research engagement and policy uptake
- Quality assurance and expert consultation
- Publications support and research communications
- Joining the XCEPT research community



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Q&A

XCEPT

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Contact information:

XCEPT Fund team – XCEPT-Fund@chemonics.com