

Executive summary

The vision of The Global Philosophy of Religion Project 2 (GPR-2) is to transform the philosophy of religion into a truly global and diverse field of inquiry fit to address contemporary challenges. Following on from its successful first stage (The Global Philosophy of Religion Project, or GPR-1), generously funded by the John Templeton Foundation, the current project will bring new voices to bear on longstanding questions about spiritual reality.

GPR-1 concentrated on foundational metaphysical questions within traditions that have a creator God. GPR-2 will instead particularly focus on human purpose, the meaning of life, and what it is to live well, including ‘down-stream’ questions connected to religious practice. It will consider what role (if any) fundamental spiritual realities like God or other divine entities play in addressing such issues. It will expand to cover all religious traditions, including traditions which are at the crossroads between religions, philosophies, spiritualities and ways of life, such as Buddhism and various East Asian philosophies (e.g., Confucianism and Taoism), as well as the position that can be described as the “spiritual but not religious.”

GPR-2 will support academic research in these areas, and will also include funding streams in teaching and training, and in public engagement and impact. It will pilot science-engaged global philosophy of religion to test whether interdisciplinary collaborations with scientists advance philosophical investigation of the “Big Questions,” particularly when they are addressed from a multi-faith perspective.

By enabling high-quality work across varied religious traditions and geographical regions, GPR-2 aims to bring about concrete progress on central questions of human existence.