



Research Mission

Research at the Amsterdam Center for International Law (ACIL) aims at a critical understanding of international law and its progressive development. International law significantly impacts on the everyday life of many people—whether they hope for protection through the laws of war, seek refuge from persecution, or buy products in Amsterdam whose production chain spans across the globe. International law, just like research at ACIL, aspires to contribute to a better world. At the same time, we also know that the law forms an important part of present instances and structures of injustice.

‘Promoting the critical understanding and progressive development of international law’

‘a plurality of methods to understand international law in its context’

Our research thus aims at the progressive development of international law and at supporting its effective rule. In order to do that, we typically need to start by critically reflecting on the roles that the law plays in its context, in the pursuit of justice and the perpetuation of injustice.

The life of the close to 7 billion people on the globe is vexed by a series of challenges—be it poverty, climate change or conflict, for example—that can hardly be tackled without international cooperation and the mechanisms of international law. The goals of a critical understanding and progressive development of the law are bound to require a plurality of methods and of formats, both fundamental and applied research, theoretical and practice-oriented work. One typically works better in proximity of the other. This is how the work at ACIL contributes to research of high academic impact and of societal relevance.

The Amsterdam Center for International Law

- creates a rich, stimulating research environment for its members and guests;
- initiates and encourages collaborations with other researchers and institutes at the national and international level;
- organizes lectures, workshops and conferences in order to support an exchange of views on individual and collective research;
- supports and facilitates efforts to seek and obtain external funding for its members and for researchers who would like to become members;
- contributes to research-based teaching in the LL.M. programme, and in the two-year Research Masters, in particular;
- engages students in the activities of the Center, inter alia through research traineeships;
- aims at the valorization of research so as to show its relevance for society and to bring it to bear on societal challenges;
- disseminates research output, knowledge and expertise to relevant stakeholders via different resources and networks, and via consultancy.