

AAP AFRICAN FUTURES RESEARCH LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

Cohort 4 Call for Applicants

The Alliance for African Partnership (AAP) is seeking applicants for the third cohort of the AAP African Futures Research Leadership Program. This competitive visiting scholar program supports **early career women researchers** from the AAP consortium to work for one year at MSU under the mentorship of faculty members from MSU and their home institution, focusing on building skills in research for impact, writing scholarly and/or policy publications, disseminating of research results, and developing grant proposals. Scholars will also participate in a structured professional development program while building bridges and lasting connections with MSU contacts and across their cohort.

The main objective of the African Futures Research Leadership Program is to strengthen the capacity of a cadre of African researchers to return to their home institutions and become scientific leaders in their community, establish long-term partnerships with MSU faculty, co-create innovative solutions to Africa's challenges, and in turn become trainers of the next generation of researchers.

The AAP Management Team requests applications from early career researchers to participate in the next cohort, with work to begin in September 2023 (travel to begin at end of August). The visiting scholar will receive a salary, visa application support and round-trip travel from their home institution. The scholar and mentor team will receive a small grant for research and professional development activities including conference attendance and publication of manuscripts.

Potential Research Areas

Selected scholars will work in one of AAP's six priority areas:

- Agri-food systems
- Water, Energy, and Environment
- Culture and Society
- Youth Empowerment
- Education
- Health and Nutrition

The early career researcher will be paired with a MSU mentor and commit to working with the MSU mentor and the home institution mentor for the duration of the program.

Program Benefits

- Professional development activities – these will center on working with the early career researcher as they join the university, to establish their professional trajectories, to build

their research, writing, and publishing skills, and to support them to move through various stages of review, promotion, and growth.

- Leadership activities – this will center on a research leadership retreat to expose scholars to the key competencies of research leaders, the work that research leaders engage in, personal reflection on their characteristics and career goals to help determine the pathway to advancement to research leadership.
- Collaboration networks – the early career researcher will be co-mentored by an MSU faculty member and a faculty member from their home institution. Each mentor will have the opportunity to visit their counterpart for one week during the duration of the program. The scholar will also gain access to AAP’s broad network of researchers at MSU, on the continents and beyond. Proposed activities should ultimately lead to potential long-term collaborations between MSU and the partner institution.

Expected Outcomes

Each scholar and mentors are expected to produce the following outputs, at minimum, by the end of the program:

- Submission or evidence of publication of one to three joint manuscripts
- At least one grant proposal application
- At least one conference presentation

Collaborations with mentors are meant to be long-term and continue after the end of the program. Scholars are encouraged to network with MSU faculty beyond their mentor while at MSU. Scholars are expected to submit regular progress reports to AAP and their home institution focal point. Failure to meet program and mentor expectations can result in early dismissal.

Eligibility

1. Citizen of an African country in which AAP operates
2. Completion of a PhD degree within the last 10 years
3. Employed as an Academic Staff member at one of the AAP African consortium universities including Egerton University, Makerere University, University of Dar es Salaam, Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources, University of Botswana, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, University Cheikh Anta Diop, University of Arts and Humanities, Bamako, United States International University-Africa, and University of Pretoria
4. Have documented approval of leave or sabbatical to participate in the program for one year
5. Have a mentor at their home institution that will serve as a collaborator and mentor when they return to their home institution
6. Research must be in one of the AAP priority areas
 - a. Early career researchers may only submit one proposal to AAP in this round of funding

Application Requirements

Applicants should provide the following documents as part of their application package:

- An up-to-date curriculum vitae (CV) that provides a chronological review of their professional accomplishments
- A letter of interest that demonstrates how their research interest and experience is aligned to the AAP research priority area (1 pages)
- Name of a potential mentor at MSU (AAP will support identifying MSU faculty)
- Two publications in refereed journals related to their research area
- Two professional references that detail the relationship to the applicant and provide specific examples of their assessment of the expertise of the applicant's research area
- A letter from the mentor at their home institution indicating willingness to serve as a collaborator during the program, travel to MSU for one week of collaboration discussions, and mentor the early career researcher when they return to their home institution (1 page)
- A written endorsement from the applicants' Head of Department approving one-year leave (1 page)
- A letter of support from the AAP Focal Point for the scholars application (1 page)

Selection Criteria:

- Professional merit, scientific ability, potential career impact and future collaboration goals with MSU faculty (based on CV, letter of interest, publications, Head of dept and home mentor letters, and two reference letters)
- Assurance and availability of resources from the home institution for a designated, funded position for the early career researcher upon completion of their fellowship (expressed in letter from head of Dept at the home institution)
- Commitment to return to their home country following completion of training (expressed in a letter of interest)
- The selection committee will ensure the best match of outstanding candidates and MSU mentors.
- Additional selection factors may include diversity in scientific research areas and geographic origin

Submitting an Application

Applications with required materials should be submitted via [the application portal](#)

Application deadline: January 31, 2023

Final selection: March 1, 2023

Expected arrival date: August 25, 2023

Expected end date: July 31, 2024

Questions

Please contact José Jackson-Malete at jacks184@msu.edu or 517-884-8587 with any questions.