

Call for Applications

The British Institute in Eastern Africa and the British Academy Knowledge Frontiers Symposium

Friday 27 – Sunday 29 March 2020
Nairobi, Kenya

Introduction

1. The British Institute in Eastern Africa and the British Academy are inviting applications for early career researchers in the humanities and social sciences to attend a research collaboration symposium on the broad theme of ‘Truth, Justice and Peace’.
2. The symposium aims to incentivise and establish international engagement and collaboration between early career researchers from Eastern Africa and the United Kingdom from a broad range of disciplines within the humanities and social sciences, encouraging the exchange of ideas across both disciplinary and national boundaries.

Purpose and Focus

3. Recognising that the humanities and social sciences are critical to unpicking the assumptions and illustrating the complexities of histories, societies, cultures and polities, this symposium will aim to draw on the broad range of disciplines and expertise present to explore the way that traditional notions of truth, justice and peace can be conceptualised in the 21st century. How can a re-examination of the categories and concepts traditionally used to discuss issues of truth, justice and peace in Africa and beyond lead to a more nuanced approach to these major issues? How might we understand, for example, the conception, articulation and representation of transitional justice mechanisms past and present in relation to narratives of dignity, shame, and identity? In what ways could understanding different conceptions within various individual, local, community and societal frames be meaningful, or in conflict with, approaches to building sustainable, inclusive peace? How might these processes be affected by new forms of knowledge and communication, digital and otherwise, as well as by changing repertoires and arenas of the performative?
4. In addition, culture, heritage and memorialisation – understood not only as visual and material culture, but also as identity, language and faith transmitted over time – can be both inclusive and peaceful as well as exclusive and marginalising. The weaving of dignity into our understanding of exclusion, inequality and stability, and their relationship with different conceptions of ‘peace’ as condition or goal is a complex issue. It can involve very different ideas of the rights of the individual, and of the community, in relation to understandings of culture, heritage and memory, in combination with underlying structural factors and the political economy of a given context. How might we understand, for example, the conception, articulation and representation of concepts such as reconciliation and justice, in relation to the complexities surrounding notions of ‘truth’ and ‘peace’? And to what degree can the exploration of these complexities be assisted through the expression and representation of truth, justice, and peace in both literature and visual art? How might these representations be considered in comparative and/ or historical context? How are conceptions of truth and justice narrated, and how are these narratives utilised in movements towards peace?

5. This symposium will aim to draw on the broad range of disciplines and expertise present to explore the way that truth, justice and peace are conceptualised, how literatures of place, origin and ownership narratives are developed and executed through transitional justice and peace processes, or how senses and histories of identity may be implicated in the pursuit of truth, justice and peace.
6. The symposium format will allow for extensive discussion and debate, with considerable time set aside for this and wider networking opportunities.
7. The symposium will also provide an opportunity for participants to learn more about the work of the British Institute in Eastern Africa and the British Academy.

The Symposium

8. The symposium will bring together up to forty early career researchers (understood as up to seven years after obtaining a PhD) based in the UK and Eastern Africa from across the humanities and social sciences to discuss key questions around the theme of 'Truth, Justice and Peace'. The symposium is designed specifically to encourage collaboration and networking between early career researchers. In advance of the symposium, participants will be able to discuss their research and exchange ideas among themselves; begin to discuss the session themes; and make connections for possible future activities.
9. In order to incentivise long-term collaboration and networking, seed funding will be made available for which participants can apply. These collaborations must be international in their composition and can be either partnerships or groups. Time will be set aside on the final day of the forum for a 'sandpit' style session in which participants write up their proposed collaboration and submit applications by the end of the session. The application form for seed funding will be circulated in advance of the symposium to ensure participants are fully aware of the opportunity and requirements.
10. In addition to funding several collaborative proposals, the symposium will aim to provide opportunities for a range of other outputs. Participants, for example, could contribute to a publication focused on the symposium theme, either through individual papers or in partnership with other symposium participants, record audio outputs or write posts that will be compiled into an online blog series dedicated to the symposium.

Eligibility

11. For the purpose of this symposium, early career is defined as being within a seven-year period of the award of the applicant's doctorate (or equivalent research experience).
12. Participants must be based at institutions in ODA-eligible countries in Eastern Africa or the United Kingdom.
13. Participants must have fluency in spoken and written English.
14. Participants must be able to travel on dates and times, and on flights or other modes of transportation chosen by the British Academy and the British Institute in Eastern Africa.

15. Attendance is mandatory for the entire symposium. If this is not met it will result in a participant not being eligible for the seed funding available.
16. UK-based attendees may only participate in two British Academy Knowledge Frontiers Symposia in any 24-month period.

Selection Criteria

17. Applications will be assessed against the following criteria:
 - Proven research interest and/or experience in the symposium's theme;
 - Commitment to interdisciplinary engagement and research;
 - Value of symposium to applicant's career development.

Application Process

18. Applicants should provide a completed application form (including a CV which should not exceed two pages).
19. Applications must be submitted by UK-based applicants online using the British Academy's Grant Management System (GMS), [Flexi-Grant@](#).
20. Applications must be submitted by Eastern Africa-based applicants by emailing a completed application form (including a CV which should not exceed two pages) to international@thebritishacademy.ac.uk. The application form can be downloaded [here](#).
21. The deadline for submissions is Wednesday 13 November 2019 at 17.00 (UK time).
22. We will seek to notify successful applicants by the end of December 2019.

Logistics

23. The symposium will take place in Nairobi, Kenya, from 27-29 March 2020. The costs of travel, visas and accommodation for participants will be covered following agreement in advance with the organisers.

Further Information

Further information is available from Chloe Williams at c.williams@thebritishacademy.ac.uk.

About the British Institute in Eastern Africa

As one of the UK's eight International Research Institutes, the British Institute in Eastern Africa (BIEA) is a regional hub for research excellence. The BIEA is proud of a geographical research remit that now spans much of the African continent. Research projects supported by the BIEA across the full remit of the humanities and social sciences, including at their intersections with cutting edge science, technologies and innovation, demonstrate the pioneering, multidisciplinary nature of the organisation. Research themes including biological

and physical sciences, e-infrastructure and data, environment, geosciences and energy, are complemented by a strong focus on social sciences, arts and humanities.

Since it was founded in 1959, the BIEA has grown and evolved to meet the changing nature and demands of the UK's research endeavour by developing our capabilities to encourage, conduct, and support research across multiple disciplines, whilst maintaining our role in promoting the UK abroad. From our headquarters in Nairobi, where researchers have access to our extensive research library, office spaces and academic facilities, the BIEA links academic networks spanning the African continent and a host of UK and other Higher Education Institutes. Our research, technical and administrative staff work to enable innovative research of the highest standards, and ensure public engagement remains an important, dynamic aspect of our operations.

The BIEA is the only research institution of its kind in Africa and provides unparalleled support for researchers from the UK, Africa and beyond in terms of infrastructure, intellectual networks and support. The BIEA's activities, reputation and networks serve as a constant reminder of the UK's interest in and commitment to multidisciplinary future and problem-oriented research led by the humanities and social sciences, on the African continent. Through facilitating relevant ground-breaking research across disciplines and through its presence and its ability to stimulate and enable collaborations between African and UK institutions, the BIEA promotes UK research on Africa in a unique and positive way.

About the British Academy

The British Academy is the UK's national body for the humanities and social sciences – the study of peoples, cultures and societies, past, present, and future. The British Academy's purpose is to inspire and support high achievement in the humanities and social sciences throughout the UK and internationally, and to promote their public value. We have three principal roles:

- A fellowship of distinguished scholars from all areas of the humanities and social sciences, elected by their peers, that facilitates the exchange of knowledge and ideas and promotes the work of our subjects.
- A funding body that supports the best ideas, individuals and intellectual resources in the humanities and social sciences, nationally and internationally.
- A forum for debate and engagement that stimulates public interest and deepens understandings, that enhances global leadership and policy making, and that acts as a voice for the humanities and social sciences.