



Call for Participants:

Academy for African Urban Diversity

The African continent is rapidly urbanizing. If this point is agreed upon by a wide variety of actors—from media, to governments, UN agencies, development banks as well as scholars—there is far less consensus about what this process will mean for Africans. The Academy of African Urban Diversity aims to bring together doctoral students to debate and theorize the political, social and economic processes surrounding Africa’s growing and diversifying cities. The Academy aims to counter the narrow empiricism that characterizes many studies of urban Africa by pushing participants to think relationally and theoretically about the social, economic and political assemblages and processes generated by rapid urbanization and human mobility. As regional and global crossroads, African cities refract broader geo- economic and political trends, often in innovative, anticipatory and unexpected ways. What new political orders and subjectivities are produced in fast-growing and diverse cities? How do urban residents reformat social relations across time and space, folding in practices of solidarity as well as indifference? If urbanization denotes processes of establishing and distributing public and common goods, how are under-resourced cities positioning themselves to meet the needs of the rising urban populations? In what ways are rights—to land, to the city, to political participation, to expression—constituted or re/shaped in relation to formal and informal modes of urban governance? When are differences—of gender, generations, class, ethnicity, or migration history—made to matter, and in what ways?

AAUD will bring together a cohort of 8-10 post-fieldwork doctoral students exploring diversity in African cities to refine their research focus, promote professional development, and build trans-national scholarly communities. Half of each cohort will be reserved for scholars enrolled in doctoral programs at African Universities, while the other half is open to scholars of urban Africa based elsewhere. Each cohort will meet in two intensive workshops. The first week long workshop, to be held at the University of Witwatersrand from **November 4-8, 2019**, combines advanced seminars on theories of the urban, migration, and diversity by leaders in the field; peer workshopping of dissertation plans; professional development; and international networking. In the second workshop, held in Europe, one year on, fellows convene to present their work and organize a seminar for the incoming cohort of fellows to kick off the next round.

The AAUD supports a new generation of scholars in the humanistic social sciences pursuing research that advances knowledge about mobility and urban diversity in Africa. We welcome applicants from all social sciences disciplines, including but not limited to anthropology, contemporary history, sociology, political science, economics, human geography, urban studies, and planning. We also encourage applicants from other disciplines who engage expressly with urban theory. Applicants should have completed data collection by the time of the academy, and be in the initial phase of the write-up period. While we push for theoretical engagement, projects should be empirically grounded.

Applications should be written in clear, intelligible prose, for a selection committee that is multidisciplinary. Dissertation summaries should display a thorough knowledge of the major concepts and theories in applicants' discipline and related fields and should include a bibliography relevant to the research. In their letter of interest, applicants should specify why they wish to attend the academy, and how they expect it to further their progress in completing their dissertations.

To apply, please go to <https://s-lotus.gwdg.de/mpg/mpgs/aaud2019.nsf/application>. Please prepare the following materials for the application

- CV
- Letter of interest (outlining stage of completion and what you hope to contribute to and gain from the academy)
- Summary of dissertation project (6-800 word)
- Bibliography of 10-20 relevant texts
- Contact information for two professional referees who will be asked to submit letters addressing your project, and how your work would benefit from the academy.

Applications will be accepted until **15 May, 2019**. Late applications will not be reviewed. Please upload all supporting documents as a single PDF file.

Eligibility

- Must be currently enrolled in a PhD program.
- Must have completed an extended period of empirical research not more than 12 months before the academy begins and is expected to submit a completed dissertation within 12 to 18 months of the first Academy date.
- Ability to converse and write in English, the academy language
- Must be willing and able to travel to South Africa and Germany on the academy dates

The Academy for African Urban Diversity is a joint project of the African Center for Migration and Society at the University of Witwatersrand, the department of Geography at University of Durham and the Department of Socio-Cultural Diversity at the Max Planck Institute for the Study of Religious and Ethnic Diversity.

For any inquiries, please email to aaud@migration.org.za.

