CODESRIA

Deadline: February 20, 2024

Meaning-making Research Initiatives (MRI) 2023-2024

Call for Applications

Info:
research@codesria.org

Founded in 1973, the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA) promotes research by African and Diaspora scholars in the Social Sciences and Humanities with the view to better understanding social phenomena in Africa. This commitment is rooted in the belief that a sound knowledge base about the continent is invaluable to collective ef-forts to foster opportunity and equity, rights and well-being in the continent.

In 2017, CODESRIA introduced the Meaning-Making Research Initiative (MRI) as its principal tool for research support, amalgamating the National Working Groups, Multinational Working Groups, Comparative Research Network, Transnational Working Groups and Postdoctoral Grants. The MRI is designed to facilitate research that contributes to agendas for imagining, planning, and creating African futures. A key objective of the MRI is to increase the legibility and visibility of the research supported by the Council.

The adoption of MRI marked a renewed commitment to the task of interpretation and explanation that saw CODESRIA produce ground-breaking work on thematic issues such as democratization and economic reform in Africa. MRI strongly encourages scholars to build upon the close observa-tion of African social realities, addressing key challenges in Africa through thorough analysis and understanding.The initiative is marked by reinforced support for researchers and their better inte-gration into the Council's work. MRI encourages scholars to explore diverse, innovative and alter-native ways to present their work beyond the traditional book, journal article or policy brief format.

Special call for Female Scholars

Submit an Application
https://submission.codesria.org

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Special call for Female Scholars

The discussion on the involvement and contributions of women as social scientists and knowledge producers has held a significant position in the African intellectual discourse. Indeed, the Council has prioritized the long-term goal of increasing the participation of female scholars in the work and governance of CODESRIA due to the often marginalized position of women in the African academic and research landscape. The incorporation of women into research endeavors conducted, both within and outside Africa, with a focus on themes linked to Africa, is intended not only to challenge what has been historically deemed significant in African societies

and communities but also to propose a reconsideration of fundamental research criteria. This encourages researchers to pay careful attention to the necessity of acquiring in-depth knowledge of social contexts, thereby averting distorted interpretations and analyses.

Since the early 1990s, CODESRIA has been dedicated to promoting intellectual contributions from female scholars on various themes, for instance on social theory and new analytical perspectives on the 'Global South.' This reflects a recognition of the need for epistemological diversity, alongside an 'archaeological effort' that can be deployed to question common theoretical and conceptual assumptions.

The Council has made significant progress in enhancing the participation of female scholars in its activities and operations in line with priorities outlined in its successive Strategic Plans. This commitment is further demonstrated by the consideration of gender in the initiatives it supports, such as the Gender Institute and the Gender Symposium. It has been particularly crucial to contemplate and propose innovative methodological approaches that can facilitate diverse and inclusive perspectives on women's historical and social experiences. However, there is room for improvement. This special MRI call is part of a set of measures implemented to build upon past achievements and markedly increase the involvement of female scholars in the activities and governance of CODESRIA during the 2023-2027 strategic cycle.

Key selection criteria: Projects funded under this initiative should meet most of the following criteria:

- Propose research on key aspects of African social realities that fall under CODESRIA's priority themes as outlined in the CODESRIA 2023-2027 Strategic Plan;

- Be grounded in a thorough exploration of the continent's societies, peoples, institutions, and contexts while paying attention to issues of diversity, including gender;

- Engage constructively and rigorously with African futures;

- Be theoretically ambitious with a clear goal of providing innovative ways of making sense of African social phenomena and Africa's place in the world;

- Explore multiple spatial, temporal and sectoral configurations where relevant to the process of meaning-making;

- Demonstrate familiarity with the knowledge already produced by CODESRIA on the subject researched;

- Be guided by clear questions, a sound methodology and conceptual framing.

The call invites applications from groups only. No individual awards will be granted. All projects should: 1) be headed by female scholars; and 2) have only women as members. Only in exceptional cases, and with proper justification, will the Council admit a group that has a majority of female applicants with a small number of male members. The members of a group may be from one country or multiple countries. In fact, we strongly encourage applications with members from different countries. Each group should have between 3 and 5 members and should take into account

CODESRIA's core principles of linguistic, intergenerational and interdisciplinary diversity. All members of a group should have a demonstrated ability to contribute meaningfully to the work of the group. The Council will offer up to USD 25,000 for each winning project.

Thematic priorities: All applications must engage with CODESRIA's 2023-2027 thematic priorities and cross-cutting issues:

1.**Higher education dynamics in Africa**
Role of higher education in economic and political transformation in Africa; the transformation of the African higher education landscape; higher education reform and innovations; higher education governance and leadership; governance and academic freedom; Diaspora engagements with African universities; valorization of Indigenous Knowledge Systems; outmigration and education; education funding; AU Commission and Agenda 2063 and higher education; massification, privatization and liberalization of higher education.

2.**The State and Democratisation in Africa: Trends and Prospects**
Reconnection with CODESRIA's work on democratization and related themes; link between power, peace, and security; institutional variations, histories and contexts; debates and critiques of procedural democracy; challenges of the liberal democratic model; substantive democracy and its operationalization; typology for comparative studies on the state and democratization; state, politics, and citizenship.

3.**Transformations in African Economies**
Economic policy-making in Africa; dependency and structural transformation; export economies and industrialization; informalization of economies; histories and evolution of labor unionization; public private partnership; multilateral governance; the idea of planning in current economic thinking; heterodox traditions and welfare policy; alternative economic theories; reinventing economic systems; structural and institutional challenges of development; interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary conversations on economic policy; policy sovereignty for Africa.

4.**Ecologies and Society in Africa**
Interactions between people and ecological systems; land, food sovereignty and poverty in the developing world; histories and trajectories of environmental interactions; complex interactions of the urban and the rural; mineral extraction and the transformation of habitats; structural transformations in agriculture and industrialization; conservancy practices, commodification and impact on societies.

Cross-cutting themes:
(1)History, Memory and Archive
(2)Gender
(3)Generations
(4)Rurality and Urbanity.

How to apply

Interested applicants should submit application packages containing the following required materials as Word documents. Please note that applications that lack any of the following elements will not be considered.

- A proposal with the following clearly titled sections: an introduction; statement and contextualization of research question; brief review of literature and/or competing hypotheses; study design and research methodology; theoretical and practical significance of the study; research plan, a summary of the budget. Proposals must be submitted as Word documents and should not exceed 10 pages (font type: Times New Roman; font size: 12; line spacing: double). Proposals should include concise budgets, considering the strict 16-month duration of these grants. Selected applicants will be invited to attend both a launch workshop and a completion workshop.
- Completed budget template: A completed version of the budget template attached to this call.
- Annotated plan of deliverables: One-page annotated table of contents for book or annotated plan for two scholarly articles.
- A cover letter should include information -names, email and physical addresses and telephone number- of the project coordinator and members.
- CVs of the members of the project.
- Institutional affiliation: A letter specifying the institutional affiliation of each member.

The deadline for submitting applications is **February 20, 2024.** Please use the CODESRIA online submission system via the following link https://submission.codesria.org/.

Notification of the selection results will be sent to applicants by **April 20, 2024.** If you have not received feedback by this date, please consider that your application has not been selected.