



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 efforts 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 observation 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 integration into the Council's work. MRI encourages scholars to explore diverse, innovative and alternative ways to present their work beyond the traditional book, journal article or policy brief format.

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

CODESRIA

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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.

Individual and Group Initiatives: MRIs could be either individual projects, or group initiatives. Groups may consist of researchers from one or multiple countries and should ideally comprise between 3 and 5 members. In fact, we strongly encourage applications with members from different countries. It is essential for groups to take into account CODESRIA's core principle of gender, linguistic, intergenerational, and interdisciplinary diversity. Each group member should have a demonstrated ability to contribute meaningfully to the collaborative work of the group. The Council offers up to USD 10,000 for individual projects and up to USD 25,000 for group projects.

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; academic freedom and popular struggles; Diaspora engagements with African universities; valorization of Indigenous Knowledge Systems; outmigration and education; education funding; Agenda 2063 and higher education; massification, privatization and liberalization of higher education, universities and their changing associational life.

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 trans-

formations 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 questions; 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.