

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

What does AFRIAK stand for?

AFRIAK stands for the African Fellowships for Research in Indigenous and Alternative Knowledges. The programme is supported by the Mastercard Foundation and was formally launched in November 2024.

What is the objective of AFRIAK?

AFRIAK seeks to train and support a new generation of young African researchers - especially young women - to produce knowledge grounded in Indigenous, local, and alternative knowledge systems, in collaboration with academic mentors, AFRIAK Intellectual hubs and Indigenous knowledge keepers.

ELIGIBILITY

Is there an age limit?

Yes. AFRIAK is designed to support young Africans. As such, the maximum age limit for each application cycle is 35 years. For the 2026 AFRIAK application cycle, only applicants born in 1991 or later (i.e. 35 years and below) are eligible to apply.

Who can apply?

African nationals (aged 35 and below).

Do applicants have to reside in Africa?

Yes. At the time of application and for the duration of the fellowship, fellows are expected to be resident in an African country.

Can non-African nationals apply?

No. AFRIAK only accepts applications from African nationals.

Do I have to be affiliated to an institution to apply to AFRIAK?

No. AFRIAK accepts applicants who are either:

- (i) Based in formal research and knowledge institutions or Indigenous knowledge research centres in Africa, or
- (ii) In possession of formal education qualifications (a Bachelor's degree as a minimum) and can adequately demonstrate active engagement in activities that draw on the application of Indigenous/local knowledge perspectives

Do I require a PhD to apply?

No. The minimum qualification is a Bachelor's degree

Does my research need to fit into one of the outlined thematic areas?

Yes. AFRIAK accepts concept notes that address any of the following fourteen thematic areas:

1. Indigenous Knowledge (IK) and methods of knowing.
2. Indigenous medical science and practices.
3. IK and the creative sector
4. IK and systems of entrepreneurship.
5. Agriculture and agri-foods systems.

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6. Mobilizing digital systems for IK in Africa.
7. Indigenous pedagogies and curriculum development.
8. IK in social capital development.
9. Indigenous technologies and sustainable development
10. IK, climate change, and ecological sustainability.
11. IK heritage in nutrition.
12. Indigenous languages and science.
13. IK, religion and spirituality science.
14. IK, governance systems and state-building.

Since CODESRIA is a social sciences and humanities Council, do I need to be in the Social Sciences or humanities field to apply?

No. AFRIAK accepts applicants from all disciplinary backgrounds, provided that their concept notes align with any one of the programme's thematic areas.

What languages can I submit my application in?

AFRIAK currently accepts applications in English, French and Portuguese.

APPLICATION TYPES

Can I apply individually or as a group?

Yes. Both individual and group applications are welcome.

What are the requirements for group applications?

Each group must contain a minimum of 3 and a maximum of 5 members with at least 70% of the group members being young women.

Should all the group members meet the eligibility criteria?

Yes. All group members must meet the outlined eligibility criteria, failure to which the entire group will be disqualified.

FELLOWSHIP STRUCTURE

How long is the Fellowship?

Seven (7) months.

What activities are included?

The Seven (7) months will be dedicated primarily to research within the fellow's own context, including, fieldwork, a residency at one of AFRIAK's intellectual hubs, and where required participation in workshops, convenings and dissemination activities.

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What is an intellectual hub?

AFRIAK Intellectual hubs are centres, institutes or institutions that serve as CODESRIA's active partners in the co-creation of Indigenous Knowledge (IK). They support research training, mentorship, convening, and the advancement of policy uptake of IK research, while also sustaining knowledge networks among different actors working on IK, including fellows recruited under AFRIAK. The hubs also work closely with indigenous knowledge keepers to facilitate knowledge exchange, ground fellows' research in lived and community-based knowledge systems and ensure that Indigenous perspectives meaningfully inform research processes and outcomes.

Is the Fellowship fully funded?

Yes. For the duration of the Seven (7) months, fellows will receive a monthly stipend to facilitate their research work.

Do Fellows receive mentorship?

Yes. As part of the fellowship, AFRIAK fellows receive guidance from assigned academic mentors to support their research and advance their scholarly development in the field. In addition, during their residency at the intellectual hubs, fellows will engage with indigenous knowledge keepers whose role is to contribute Indigenous knowledge, expertise, and lived experience relevant to fellows' research.

SUBMISSION PROCESS

How do I apply?

All applications MUST be submitted via the submission portal that has been provided in the call for proposals

When is the application deadline?

15 February 2026 at 23:59 GMT.

Can I submit an application via email?

No. Only applications submitted through the submission portal will be considered.

Will all applicants be notified?

Only successful applicants will be notified.

Who can I contact in the event I have additional queries?

All AFRIAK queries should be directed to: afriak@codesria.org