



## Call for Project Proposals 2021

The **Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence** announces the availability of funds for new research projects with start dates between June 1, 2021 and January 1, 2022. We solicit proposals that complement our current research projects and/or open up new thematic avenues within our broader conceptual framework. Applications are expected to advance the Cluster's research agenda and visibly engage with our core concepts: multiplicity, relationality, and reflexivity. While all Cluster members are eligible to apply, we specifically encourage those who are not yet involved in Cluster-funded research to submit proposals that demonstrate how they will contribute to the further development of the conceptual and theoretical agenda of the Cluster.

Applications may come in two forms: **(1) short-term projects** of up to 24 months that mainly involve tangible means, research assistants, and sabbaticals; **(2) long-term projects** of up to 48 months that may employ early career researchers, especially doctoral students at the ACCs.

Priority will be given to projects that contribute to the Cluster's strategic objectives, as defined in the original Cluster proposal. These include, first and foremost, the strengthening of **interdisciplinary research** and **cooperation between the five Cluster partners** (UBT and the ACCs), the support of **early career scholars** (in long-term projects), and collaboration with **key researchers** mentioned in the Cluster proposal as well as **researchers from our preferred partner institutions** (Les Afriques dans le Monde, Bordeaux, France; Indiana University, Bloomington, USA; Universidade Federal da Bahia, Salvador da Bahia, Brazil; the BIGSAS partner universities). Projects should also feature a **reasonable gender balance**.

Apart from proposals that connect to the thematic fields covered in the Research Sections, we welcome projects that widen the scope of the Cluster by **exploring new thematic territory**. We also encourage engagement with **intersectional and critical diversity** approaches. In the light of restricted mobility caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, we explicitly invite applications that **build on existing data** and advance **new approaches to digitisation, databases, and archiving**.

As for all research activities funded through the Cluster, the award criteria listed in § 30 of the Cluster Statutes apply. Please note that all proposals need to show how the project members are able to generate sufficient data in case that the restrictions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic continue to limit transnational or transcontinental mobility (e.g., through collaboration with project partners already based in countries where fieldwork is planned).

### **(1) Short-Term Projects (6-24 months)**

With a view to broadening the range of research formats in the Cluster and providing seed funding for innovative research, we welcome applications for short-term projects. These do not involve the hiring of academic staff, but may include funds for student assistants and cooperation partners, research travel, equipment, as well as "teaching buyouts." Separate applications are required for publication costs, conference trips, and workshops featuring guests. Please note that the Cluster will publish calls for short-term projects on a regular basis. For proposals submitted in response to the current call, it will be strategically advantageous if they reach their spending peak in 2021 rather than 2022. Projects that rely on long-distance travel need to sketch a "Plan B" as long as pandemic-related restrictions are in place.

Proposals for short-term projects will be based on an online template, to be made available in mid-January 2021, with a **submission deadline on February 15, 2021**. Projects that fall into the purview of a Research Section need to be accompanied by a letter from the RS representative at the respective institution. The applications will be vetted by the Management Board, which may draw on expertise within and outside of the Cluster to make informed decisions. Applicants will be notified of the outcome by the end of April 2021.

## **(2) Long-Term Projects (24-48 months)**

This project format is designed to accommodate research that stretches over longer time periods. For projects involving doctoral students, 48 months is supposed to be the standard duration, because this is the period defined as the appropriate time to degree in the Cluster proposal. In exceptional and justified cases, projects may employ postdoctoral scholars. Holders of doctoral degrees who are Cluster members may apply for research projects where they act as project directors and include funds for their own salaries in the budget. Especially welcome are projects that accommodate PhD students at the ACCs, who may enrol in sandwich programs with BIGSAS. In addition to proposals that fall within the purview of one of the Research Sections, we also accept proposals that have a bearing on more than one Research Section (though one of them should be identified as the main reference). Projects that explore new themes beyond the Research Sections are highly encouraged, provided they convincingly show how the proposed topic will help in charting new thematic territory for the Cluster.

Prospective applicants are asked to **notify the Cluster's Management Board** of their intention to submit a proposal. Notifications need to include the name(s), academic discipline(s), and affiliation(s) of the applicant(s), the title and duration of the proposed project, an abstract of ca. 250 words, information about staff needs as well as a budget estimate. In the case of projects connected to one of the six Research Sections, the notifications first need to be submitted to the respective Research Section representatives, who will forward them collectively to [africamultiple-calls@uni-bayreuth.de](mailto:africamultiple-calls@uni-bayreuth.de) **no later than February 15, 2021**. Given the varying costs incurred by employing doctoral students at the five partner institutions, the Cluster should be able to fund between three and five doctoral students per RS, with an average of one position per RS in Bayreuth. Other items eligible for funding include research assistants and cooperation partners, research travel, equipment, and "teaching buyouts." As already mentioned, separate applications will be required for publications, conference trips, and workshops. Notifications for projects that do not fall into the purview of one the Research Sections may be submitted directly to the same email address by the same deadline.

The Management Board will review the notifications and contact the Research Sections and, if required, the applicants with provisional feedback. Applicants will then prepare their proposals for online submission **by April 6, 2021**. In the meantime, using the information provided in the notifications the Management Board will recruit two external reviewers per proposal. Once the evaluations are in, the recommendations of the reviewers and of the Management Board will be forwarded to the Academic Committee for the final decision in the course of the summer term 2021.

In case of queries, please contact [africamultiple-calls@uni-bayreuth.de](mailto:africamultiple-calls@uni-bayreuth.de).

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