



MOI UNIVERSITY AFRICAN CLUSTER CENTRE



Call for Abstracts

Moi@40: Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences in the Digital Age

Moi University, Eldoret, 30 – 31 May 2024

The 40th anniversary of Moi University is a fitting occasion to interrogate the place of the arts, humanities and social sciences in the present age. The establishment of Moi University as the second university in Kenya was very deliberately sensitive to the historical conditions in late 20th Century Kenya and to the aspiration of Kenya's political leadership to propel the country out of the economic weakness that made it part of the third world. The development needs of a majority rural Kenyan population were the driving forces for the forging of the institution. Expectedly, in the light of the vision of its founding, which was undergirded by a belief in the instrumentality of education, Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) disciplines were centered in the curriculum of the university. Even so, the crafters of the institution also understood that the arts, humanities and social sciences have an important role to play in the envisioned project of modernity. For this reason, they provided space for the inclusion of disciplines in the arts, humanities and social sciences in the university curriculum. The understanding seems to have been that by improving the human beings that make up the nation *as human beings*, that is, in their ethics, people skills, creative critical thinking, and so forth, these disciplines would contribute to the holistic progress of the country. A lot has happened to Kenya and the world since the mid-1980s when Moi University was established. The cold war ended, and a unipolar but intensely globalized world ensued. The digital age is matured. The world has survived a couple of global health pandemics and several other serious health events. The earth's climate is changing. Although rapidly urbanizing, Kenya is still characterized by economic weakness that firmly situates it in the category of developing nations. The country's political leadership is obsessively plotting ways to move it into a middle-income country. Over the same 40 years, the privileged position of STEM disciplines in discourses of appropriate education in the Kenyan context specifically but also globally has been consolidated – and this has been buttressed by the funding that has followed the various disciplines. This is the context in which the Moi University African Cluster Centre of the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence is convening a two-day workshop that will critically revisit the discussion of the place of the arts, humanities and social sciences in the present age. We invite critical reflections on the career(s), uses and possible futures of disciplines in the arts, humanities and social sciences in the digital age.

How to submit abstracts

Send a concise abstract of no more than 300 words as a Word document attachment to africanstudiesconference@mu.ac.ke. The abstract must clearly set out a thesis statement and specify the theoretical frame and method deployed. It must be relevant to the workshop theme. **The submission deadline is Friday, 10 May 2024.** It is required that the abstract includes the presenter's institutional affiliation. The decision on the abstracts will be communicated to individual authors by 20 May 2024.

