

African Perspectives On Innovation, Digitalisation And Entrepreneurship In Africa: An Interdisciplinary Writing And Mentoring Programme.

Call for applications for early career researchers in South Africa, Lesotho, and Zambia to participate in a four-day writing workshop hosted at the Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS), University of Pretoria, and subsequent one-year mentoring programme, funded by Loughborough University through a British Academy International Writing Workshops grant 2023/2024.



JOHANNESBURG,
12 – 16 MAY 2025.

First-round application deadline:
October 30 2024.

Second-round application deadline:
24 January 2025.

The rationale

Since the early 2000s, innovation, digital technologies, and entrepreneurship have become crucial for Southern Africa's development. However, knowledge production has been skewed, with scholars from well-resourced Western institutions dominating knowledge production. Many Southern African academics face challenges getting published in high-impact (Q2 and Q1) journals, limiting the global reach of their perspectives. This program addresses these issues by supporting twenty early career researchers from various disciplines like Information Systems, Anthropology and Management from South Africa, Lesotho, and Zambia. Participants will enhance their academic writing and publishing skills through a four-day writing workshop and one-on-one mentoring for a year. They will also receive membership of the Interdisciplinary Network of Technology and Entrepreneurship Research in African Societies (INTERA) for peer feedback. Finally, selected participants can publish in and co-edit a special issue of the *Journal of the British Academy*.

Programme outline

Workshop

The preliminary programme of the workshop is as follows:

Day one:

Introduction to the International Publishing Landscape.

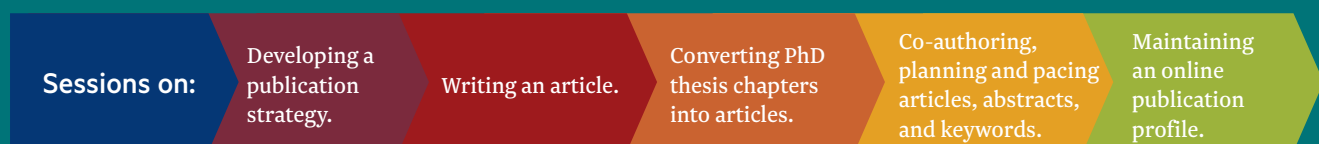


Networking with Researchers and Editors:

Stimulating networks and partnerships, including “Meet the Editor” sessions with journal editors and offering post-workshop online mentoring and roundtable seminars.

Day Two:

Writing an article for a high-impact journal.



Day Three:

Working day

ECRs will work on developing their article. Each ECR will have a 45-minute one-on-one session with their mentor to discuss and develop a Personal Publication and Development Plan. ECRs will provide feedback on their peer buddy’s work.

Day Four:

Grant applications and reflection.



Mentorship

Participants will receive several mentorship sessions during the workshop and three (online) one-on-one mentorship sessions in the year after the workshop. These mentorship sessions can be used to discuss publication and career progression, grant writing, and taking up editor roles in Information Systems, Management or Anthropology journals.

Participants will also be encouraged to apply for a one-year membership of INTERA. INTERA is an interdisciplinary,

transnational network that offers paper development workshops, mentorship and other career development opportunities to scholars studying digitalisation, innovation and entrepreneurship in Africa. As INTERA members, they will be encouraged to become role models and mentors to new master’s and PhD students and ECRs in the INTERA community and their countries of residence, contributing to long-lasting change in academic knowledge production.

Contributing To A Special Issue

As part of the programme, you will be asked to prepare a draft of a journal article and be ready to submit it to your assigned mentor for feedback three weeks after the workshop. Participants will also be able to contribute to developing a special issue for the Journal of the British Academy in the form of an article and/or co-editing. Participants interested in contributing an article will have to submit an abstract and title for their article in June

2025 and have the full article ready for peer review in August/September 2025. The expected deadline for revised articles is the end of 2025/early 2026, and the scheduled publication date for the special issue is 2026. The special issue will focus on reassessing the digital turn from an African interdisciplinary perspective.

The Speakers, Mentors And Organisers



The programme has been codesigned with a range of scholars. It will be delivered by:

Mumin Abubakre Loughborough University	Tessa Pijnaker Utrecht University	Helena Barnard GIBS	Marcia Mkansi University of South Africa	Jess Auerbach University of Cape Town	Tim Weiss Imperial College London	Amon Chizema Loughborough University
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Jan Phalane of South Africa's National Research Foundation will be a guest speaker during the workshop.

Selection criteria

Scholars must be



Undertaking a PhD or within seven years of completion of their PhD. If they are early in their PhD journey, they must provide evidence of substantive data collection or conceptual development towards their research projects.



Based in one of the following countries: South Africa, Lesotho or Zambia.



Passionate about research and writing from an African perspective.

We encourage applications from scholars in Anthropology, Management Studies and/or Information Systems. We also welcome applications from scholars working in related disciplines, such as History, Sociology and Entrepreneurship Studies, who can strongly engage with Anthropology, Management Studies or Innovation Studies.

We recognise that in academia, various inequalities beyond divisions between the Global North and Global South persist, such as limited opportunities due to age, race, ethnic background, disability, religion or gender. When applying for the workshop, applicants are encouraged to disclose this information so that the selection committee can consider equal opportunities during the selection process. We aim to select an equal number of men and women and, on a case-by-case basis, do our best to accommodate participants' specific needs, such as religious requirements or provisions made for disability.

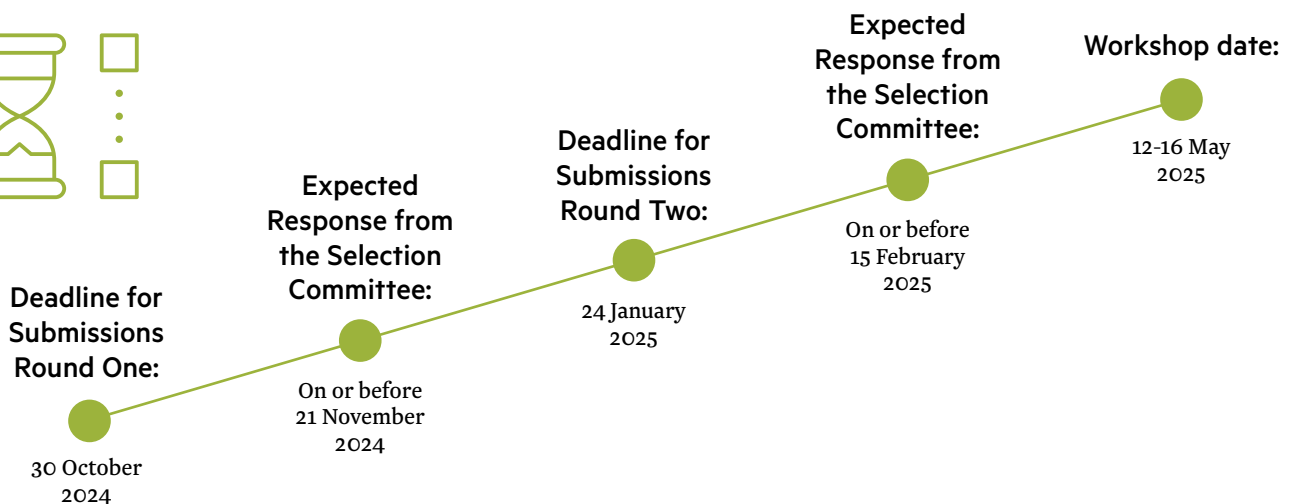
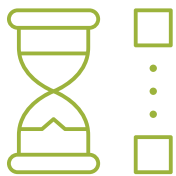
Scholars must confirm that they can work on an article during the workshop they do not have and will only seek to publish it elsewhere after the workshop. Scholars interested in participating in the special issue need to commit to publishing their work in the British Academy journal unless/until their submission is declined. We realise that publishing the special issue is a lengthy process, but the benefit is that this comes with extensive international peer review and recognition.



What costs will we cover?

We will cover all selected participants' transportation (flight or road) and accommodation costs during the workshop. We will also provide breakfast, lunch, snacks, and one workshop dinner. We can offer vouchers for childcare support during the workshop on a case-by-case basis.

Timeline



How to apply

Please fill in the attached application form and email it with a two-page CV (including received degrees, professional roles, awards/grants, and leading publications (if any) plus a 3000-word writing sample of the material you will be working on during the workshop to:

Tessa Pijnaker
t.pijnaker@uu.nl



Mumin Abubakre
m.abubakre@lboro.ac.uk.

If you have any questions, please contact Tessa Pijnaker and Mumin Abubakre.

Additional information

The programme's working language will be English. No hybrid participation in the workshop is possible. Participants must join in person for all four days. Participants commit to actively engaging in the mentorship programme, publishing the article developed during and after the workshop in a Q2 or Q1 journal, and filling in and submitting a brief mentorship form after each mentoring session. The workshop organisers are happy to produce letters needed for matters such as asking for leave from teaching, marking or admin responsibilities during the workshop.

Application form

Applicant Name:

Academic Position:

Academic Institution:

City/Town and Country of Residence:

Year of Completed PhD (if applicable):

Main Disciplinary Interest:

Anthropology

Management

Information

Other. In the case of others, please specify the following:

Please tell us more about your research interest (250 words):

What does an African perspective, in your view, contribute to the study of innovation, digitalisation and entrepreneurship? If possible, please illustrate this through an example you have encountered in your own (professional) life and/or through your research data (250 words):

What do you hope to get out of this workshop? Please describe your personal goals and objectives (250 words):

Have you faced any obstacles in your educational and academic development, such as ability, racial or ethnic background, gender, religion or socio-economic background? (250 words):

Do you have career development issues or goals you would prefer to address with a specific kind of mentor?*(250 words):

For instance, you might want to discuss:

- Specific disciplinary issues; therefore, a mentor with a specific disciplinary background is preferred.
- Specific personal issues, such as academia and parenthood or being black in academia, and therefore, prefer a mentor who can speak about these issues from personal experience.

*Although we cannot guarantee we can connect you to a mentor who will meet all preferences, we will seriously consider them in the matchmaking process.

YES	YES	YES	YES
NO	NO	NO	NO
Do you commit to peer reviewing at least two papers of fellow workshop participants and provide feedback during the workshop?	Do you commit to refraining from offering the article you will work on during the workshop to publication elsewhere until after the end of the workshop and/or until after this has been excluded from the unique issue publication process?	Do you commit to submitting a draft paper to your mentor several weeks before the workshop starts?	Do you commit to complying with all ethical guidelines and regulations and obtaining necessary approvals from relevant ethical review boards before conducting research involving human participants or sensitive data?

Please note that the mentors will develop a workshop code of practice for engaging with other participants' pre-publication research. It will be shared as part of the workshop resource packs and discussed on the first day of the workshop.

By submitting this form, your CV, and a 3000-word writing sample, you agree to the programme team processing your data. The data of unsuccessful applicants will be destroyed within two weeks of rejection, while the data of successful applicants will be stored until five years after the programme's end.