

PRESS RELEASE

The Africa Institute Launches Toni Morrison Fellowship, Announces New Faculty and Fellows



The Fellows at The Africa Institute (Left to Right): Ruun Nuur, Leanetse Seekoe, Mohammed Faroug, Semeneh Ayalew Asfaw, Abdourahamane Idrissa, Sara Yassi and Naminata Diabate

December 01 2022 (Sharjah, UAE) - The Africa Institute, a center for research, documentation, and study of Africa and its diaspora—has announced the launch of the [Toni Morrison Senior Fellowship in African Diaspora Literature and Cultural Studies](#) along with six new faculty appointments, and three fellows of its Creative Writing Fellowship, and one fellow each for its Postdoctoral Fellowship in Visual Culture; Performance Studies and Critical Humanities; Postdoctoral Fellowship in Social and Cultural Studies; and Ali A. Mazrui Senior Fellowship in Global African Studies.

The Africa Institute Research Fellowships Program provides junior and senior scholars of African and African diaspora studies with opportunities to focus on research projects and participate in ongoing scholarly and intellectual activities during their terms at the Institute. The new **Toni Morrison Senior Fellowship in African Diaspora Literature and Cultural Studies** is the Institute's second senior fellowship, named in honor of the prolific writer and first African American woman to

win the Nobel Prize in literature. The one-year residency program based in Sharjah is a milestone addition to the Institute's [Research Fellowships Program](#) dedicated to studying Africa and its diaspora in the humanities and social sciences.

The applications for all four fellowships are now open for the academic year 2023-2024. Recipients will be chosen based on the proposal's quality, and the applicant's demonstrated capacity to complete the project. The eligibility criteria and details can be viewed at [africainstitute.org](#). The deadline for applications is slated for December 20, 2022.

The Africa Institute's new faculty members will lead and develop research projects and Ph.D. programs specializing in African history, languages, literature, and more.

The new faculty members:



New Faculty at The Africa Institute (Left to Right): Christopher J. Lee, Jean Allman, John Thabiti Willis, Rachel Ama Asaa Engmann, Emery Kalema and Aliyu Mustapha Lawal

Christopher J. Lee, Professor of African History, World History, and African Literature; **Jean Allman**, Professor of History; **John Thabiti Willis**, Associate Professor of African History; **Rachel Ama Asaa Engmann**, Associate Professor of Archaeology and Anthropology; **Emery Kalema**, Assistant Professor of History; and **Aliyu Mustapha Lawal**, Lecturer, African Languages and Translation.

The new fellows:

Tejumola Olaniyan Creative Writers-in-Residence Fellowship, which invites a competitive pool of applications from creative writers including novelists, short story writers, playwrights, poets, and scriptwriters related to Africa and the African diaspora: [Leantse Seekoe](#), [Ruun Nuur](#), and [Sara Yassi](#).

Okwui Enwezor Postdoctoral Fellowship in Visual Culture, Performance Studies, and Critical Humanities, which is open to emerging scholars whose work focuses on visual and performance studies and intersections with discourses of art history, performance studies, and critical humanities: [Mohamed Faroug A. Ali](#).

Fatema Mernissi Postdoctoral Fellowship in Social and Cultural, which calls forward rising scholars in the field of social sciences with specific emphasis on gender, feminism, cultural studies, and visual cultures, as they intersect with African and African diaspora studies: [Semeneh Ayalew Asfaw](#).

Ali A. Mazrui Senior Fellowship in Global African Studies, which is open to senior scholars whose work shows emphasis on African and African diaspora studies and their intersections with social sciences and the humanities: [Abdourahmane Idrissa](#) and [Naminata Diabate](#).

About The Africa Institute

Established in 2018, The Africa Institute in Sharjah, UAE, is an interdisciplinary academic research institute dedicated to the study, research, and documentation of Africa and the African diaspora. As the only institution of its kind located in the Gulf—the historical nexus of African-Arab cultural exchange—The Africa Institute is uniquely positioned to expand its understanding of African and African diaspora studies as a global enterprise. The Africa Institute’s curriculum of postgraduate studies is designed to train the next generation of critical thinkers in African and African diaspora studies, and through its program of international symposia and conferences, visual art exhibitions and artist commissions, film and performance series, and community classes and outreach events, the Institute is expanding public understanding of Arab and African exchange within not only the scholarly community but also the local Sharjah community, the region, and around the globe.

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