

APSA Africa Workshops: 2012 Program Update and FAQs

Betsy Super and Andrew Stinson, *APSA International Programs*

Regular readers of the International Programs section of *PS* will be familiar with APSA's Africa Workshop program, an academic conference series funded by the Andrew W. Mellon foundation, now going into its 5th annual iteration. This summer, approximately 30 scholars from across Africa and the United States will gather at the University of Botswana in Gaborone for this year's workshop "Local Communities and the State in Africa."

In the fall of 2012, the International Programs office will distribute a call for applications from US and Africa-based faculty interested in serving as leaders of the 2013 workshop. In this section, we include answers to Frequently Asked Questions from prior applicants.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE AFRICA WORKSHOP?

Each year, the Africa Workshop program brings together approximately 24 scholars from across the African continent for a 2 or 3 week seminar or short-course centered on a substantive theme of interest to Political Scientists. Each workshop consists of a unique program that centers on a syllabus featuring classic and cutting-edge Political Science research on a substantive or theoretical problem in Political Science, and includes lectures, discussions, topical presentations and debates, guest speakers, peer review sessions, professional development seminars, and local field trips. Participants are encouraged to present and refine manuscripts for publication, and build professional connections with other scholars. Led by a joint team of US and African faculty, the workshop also includes four advanced PhD students from US-based universities to further the comparative discussions and seed long-term

global research collaborations. Ultimately, the program aims to enhance the capacities of political scientists in Africa and build lasting networks between African scholars and their colleagues in the United States.

IS THIS JUST FOR POLITICAL SCIENTISTS WHO DO RESEARCH ON AFRICA?

No. Though some past workshop leaders have been Africanist scholars, APSA welcomes proposals from political scientists with interests from across the discipline. Each year's program focuses on a unique substantive theme. For example, the 2010 workshop concentrated on gender; the 2011 team discussed comparative institutions; and the 2012 program includes a special focus field research methods.

HOW ARE THE WORKSHOP LEADERS SELECTED?

Workshop leaders are selected by APSA's Africa Project Steering Committee, who consider the proposed location, theme, and leadership team of each application.

WHAT DO THEY LOOK FOR IN AN APPLICATION?

Successful applications will address a substantive theme within political science that has not been discussed in previous Africa workshops. The proposed location should have the capacity to host an academic conference and offer local resources that serve to complement the workshop's theme. The leadership team should be composed of two US-based and two Africa-based researchers (including one from the proposed host institution) who specialize in the themes of the workshop and will be able to provide intellectual guidance to workshop participants.

WHAT KIND OF SCHOLARS PARTICIPATE IN THE WORKSHOP?

Though the program is geared towards early-to-mid-career political science faculty, participation is open to all social science researchers with an interest in the workshop's theme. Past cohorts have included scholars with a range of experiences, including faculty who have yet to complete their PhD, as well as those working outside of academe.

WHAT ARE THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF A WORKSHOP LEADER?

Workshop leaders are expected to assume full responsibility for the academic and substantive content of the two-week program. Working collaboratively with the leadership team, and in frequent communication with APSA, leaders will develop a detailed reading list and syllabus for the workshop, serve as principal reviewers for applications submitted by prospective workshop participants, organize and lead the workshop's academic and social events, and participate in the compilation of the *Workshop Proceedings*—the official record of the workshop.

WHO PAYS FOR THE WORKSHOPS?

All direct costs for the Africa Workshops, including transportation, meals, accommodation, and stipends, are funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. APSA also provides an in-kind contribution to the project though staff time and overhead costs.

HOW DO I FIND OUT MORE?

Additional information can be found online at the Africa Workshop webpage: www.apsanet.org/~africaworkshops/. Additional questions may be addressed to APSA's Africa Workshop Coordinator, Andrew Stinson at astinson@apsanet.org.