CALL FOR APPLICATIONS:
2022 Research Development Group
for early-career scholars from African institutions
Submission deadline is April 10

The American Political Science Association (APSA) is pleased to announce a Call for Applications from early-career scholars based in Africa who are interested in attending the 2022 APSA Annual Meeting as part of a Research Development Group. Organized by the African Politics Conference Group (APCG), the program is an opportunity to advance research towards publication, participate in the APSA annual meeting, and develop scholarly networks. Costs of participation will be covered through a grant from The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation.

The 2022 APSA Annual Meeting will take place in Montréal, Québec (Canada) September 15 to 18, 2022. Prior to the start of the annual meeting, selected participants will attend a full-day seminar on Wednesday, September 14 to discuss and receive critical feedback on an article-length manuscript in progress. Papers will be circulated in advance to allow time for thorough reading. In addition to focused discussions on each paper, the seminar will address strategies and advice for publishing in peer-reviewed international journals and other professional development topics. Over the next several days, participants will be expected to attend panels of interest and take part in the Annual Meeting program. APCG will assist participants in developing personalized schedules to promote linkages with different organized sections, related groups, and other scholars.

Participation in the Research Development Group is open to early-career scholars who are currently based in Africa (those whose primary institutional affiliation is in the US or Europe are not eligible for this program). Up to eight applicants will be selected. APSA will cover most costs of participation for invited scholars, including roundtrip airfare, hotel accommodation, and conference registration fees. Visa fees are not covered. Please note that we are planning for an in-person seminar at this time; however, we may transit to a virtual program due to coronavirus restrictions, if necessary.

The theme of this year’s RDG is “Political Trust in Africa’s Age of Coronavirus and Coups.” Applicants are encouraged, but not required, to submit research that relates to the theme. Papers exploring related topics, such as horizontal trust and social capital, would be welcome.

Theme Statement
Vertical trust connects citizens and officials empowered to act in the public interest. It also links patrons to clients, whose relationships entail reciprocal expectations or obligations. The pandemic and ecosystems of fake news have also highlighted the fragility of popular trust in expertise, including scientists and public health officials. The 2022 Research Development Group seek papers exploring the changing nature of vertical trust in Africa and the implications for democratic governance. Our expansive understanding of trust includes confidence in electoral commissions, the military, legislatures, police, or generalized trust in government. It also encompasses trust in medical professionals, church leaders, the media, or traditional rulers.

This year’s convenors are Professors Carl LeVan from American University in Washington, D.C., Yahaya Baba from Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto-Nigeria, and Abdu Mukhtar Musa of Islamic University Omdurman in Sudan. The RDG seeks to explore the interlocking effects of recent transformations in state-society relations unfolding manifest in phenomena such as secondary effects of the Coronavirus, popular demands for good governance manifesting in protest, and the return of military regimes as democratic backsliding has given way to outright coups. Has the pandemic...
strengthened or undermined confidence in public officials? Does trust in government rise and decline alongside other types of vertical trust? Have fiscal strains disrupted clientelist networks, weakening reciprocal bonds between patrons and clients in ways that have been unexpectedly conducive to democracy? And what are the consequences for modern African ideals of governance, given that democracy itself implies a measure of mistrust in order to motivate accountability and participation?

As part of its examination of vertical trust, we are seeking papers that explore regime transitions and pandemic politics in Africa. Such papers could, for example, consider:

- whether some health regulations have weakened political rights, undermining civil society as a counterforce against anti-democratic or populist elements;
- vertical trust as a feature of scientific communication and public health messaging around the pandemic;
- the changing dynamics of trust across different types institutions, for example comparing trust in the military, the police and the parliament to trust in doctors, public health officials and the media;
- how evaluations of the domestic policy response to the pandemic factored into overall assessments of trust in government. Papers making conceptual contributions, for example identifying distinctions between generalized confidence and particularized trust, or considering the broad theorized relationships between trust and misinformation, are also welcome.

**Application Instructions**

Applicants must be working on an article-length research project that is at a stage of development which would benefit from intense discussion and critique. The manuscript should be intended for publication in a peer-reviewed academic journal (drafts which are intended for dissertation chapters or white papers will not be accepted). Research should not be an excerpt from an already completed work. Solo-authored papers are preferred. We encourage research submissions that are related to the theme statement described above.

Applications must be in English and include:

1. The completed online Application Form.
2. A detailed, recent Curriculum Vitae/resume.
3. An abstract (1,000 words maximum) summarizing the work-in-progress you intend to develop and share for feedback at the conference. The abstract should outline the main theme of the paper, its methodology, and the data/fieldwork on which it is based. Submissions should not be an excerpt from an already completed work or one that has already been accepted for publication. Research submissions may be derived from an ongoing dissertation but should function as a stand-alone piece. If selected, you will be expected to submit your complete paper of 5,000 – 8,000 words, plus references, no later than August 1.
4. A list of 3-5 scholars you would like to have discuss your paper.

**The deadline to submit applications is Sunday, April 10, 2022.** Additional information can be found on the online Application Form at [https://apsa.wufoo.com/forms/2022-africa-research-development-group/](https://apsa.wufoo.com/forms/2022-africa-research-development-group/). Selected applicants will be notified of their invitation in late-April. For more information, contact swirth@apsanet.org.