

Writing for Sustainable Development: Towards strengthening African grant and research writing for publication

Preamble

The University of Nottingham and the Zimbabwe Council for Higher Education, in partnership with the University of Zimbabwe, with funding support from the British Academy will hold a writing workshop at the University of Zimbabwe, Harare, Zimbabwe from 24-26 September 2019.

Higher education research, particularly by organisational management and comparative education scholars, acknowledges the underrepresentation of Africa in scholarly conversations and outputs with limited showing of works in reputable journals (e.g Mamdani, 2011; Sawyerr, 2004, Puplampu, 2015). While research output in Africa is growing it continues to represent only about 2 percent of global knowledge production (Mouton, 2010; Nkomo, 2015; Schemm, 2013). Further, the continent is argued to be lacking in home grown theories and conceptual prescriptions and suffers from having its students and researchers constantly resorting to mostly western-originated books and other scholarly resources.

Literature reveals the barriers to scholarly productivity as including: resource constraints under which many universities in Africa operate; the nature and state of research infrastructures; attitudes, values and behaviours which act as barriers to scholarly outputs; leadership and political culture as well as; the rapid changes and pressures under which universities currently operate within the broader context of global fast paced changes in the higher education sector in areas such as innovation, funding arrangements, networking and changing student demographics and financing systems (Mamdani, 2011; Ngobeni, 2010). Scholars also point to the continuing difficulty of many universities to overcome the lingering effects of colonial practices on the structure of higher education and the lack of research that centres on African problems and challenges. (Mamdani, 2011; Ngobeni, 2010). Consequently, many early career researchers within the region find it difficult to access and navigate opportunities for international publishing and for increasing the local, national and global impact of their work.

Aim

This workshop responds directly to these problems by offering targeted support to a selection of early career researchers from across the region, who will commit to sharing their experiences and learning with students and colleagues in their home institutions and networks. The workshop will strengthen the grant writing and impact publication capacities of early career researchers based at universities in the following six selected Sub-Saharan Africa countries: Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, Uganda, and Zimbabwe. It affords early career researchers an opportunity to work on their papers with the support of a team of journal editors in a focused, intensive environment.

Objectives

The workshop will seek to meet the following specific objectives:

1. capacity develop early career researchers in Sub-Saharan Africa with skills for quality research writing for publication as well as in grant writing;

2. democratise knowledge about the dynamics of international publication;
3. establish sustainable collaborations between leading early career researchers in the region and British institutions; and
4. increased understanding of Global North editors of how best to support and enhance the visibility of African scholarship.

The workshop will bring together selected early career researchers, senior academic mentors and journal editors as follows:

1. 30 early career researchers from the following six selected Sub-Saharan Africa countries: Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, Uganda, Zimbabwe, all which have existing research collaborations with the applicants;
2. 5 senior academic mentors including 1 UK scholar and 4 African scholars;
3. 6 journal editors who represent a mix of Global North and Global South journals.

The mix of North and South journals and organizers will allow for rich dialogues on relevant experiences of writing, publishing and applying for research grants regionally and internationally.

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Facilitators will be drawn from leading Journal Editors from the global North and the global South and Senior scholars as shown below:



Prof Tony Bush, University of Nottingham. UK. Editor: *Educational Management, Administration & Leadership*.



Prof Hermann Ndofor, Indiana University, USA. Associate Editor: *Africa Journal of Management*



Prof Stella Nkomo, University of Pretoria, South Africa. Former Editor: *Africa Journal of Management*. *ORCA Lead*.



Prof Simon McGrath University of Nottingham. UK. Former Editor-in-Chief: *International Journal of Educational Development*



Prof William (Bill) M. Foster, University of Alberta. Canada. Editor: *Academy of Management Learning & Education Journal*



Dr Evelyn Chiyeho Garwe
Deputy CEO
Zimbabwe Council for
Higher Education



Dr Juliet Thondlana
Lecturer & Researcher
University of Nottingham, UK



**Lead Editor & Facilitator:
Prof Tristan McCowan**

Prof Tristan McCowan, University College London. UK. Editor: *Compare*: a journal of comparative & international education.

Tristan's work focuses primarily on issues of higher education & international development. His research covers areas of access to, quality of & equity in higher education, and relates to a broad range of contexts, particularly in Latin America & Sub-Saharan Africa. He is currently conducting multi-country research projects focusing on higher education pedagogy, graduate destinations & the public good in Africa. Past work has also focused on citizenship education and human rights. Tristan's research interests also include alternative & innovative universities, & he is also involved in research on indigenous education in the Brazilian Amazon & Mexico.