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Call for Applications

The Merian Institute for Advanced Studies in Africa (MIASA) offers
Up to five Individual Residential Fellowships
for 3-6 months each at the University of Ghana
for the Academic Year 2026/2027

Application deadline: 15 September 2025, 23:59 UTC

The Merian Institute for Advanced Studies in Africa (MIASA) is dedicated to research in the Humanities and Social Sciences. The overarching theme of MIASA is 'sustainable governance' from a genuine interdisciplinary and critical perspective, whereby 'governance' is understood in a wide sense, namely as the interplay of informal and formal rules for steering public affairs, embedded in social, material and cultural practices of everyday life. Our main research axes are sustainable peace, sustainable democracy and sustainability transformation, but we are also interested in a wide range of intersectional sub-topics, such as landownership and acquisition, migration and mobility, restitution of colonially acquired cultural objects, African cities, human rights, and other related themes. MIASA is committed to reduce global asymmetries in knowledge production, to promote female scholarship and to bridge cultural divides. The institute offers time and space for supporting innovative academic research of top international quality. All MIASA fellowships are residential and mainly focus on onsite reflection, discussion and writing. In addition, MIASA facilitates networking and collaboration amongst leading researchers from Germany, Ghana, other parts of Africa and Europe and elsewhere in the world. The institute is located on the beautiful campus of the University of Ghana (UG) at Legon (Accra), and has been implemented in collaboration with the University of Freiburg, the Goethe University of Frankfurt, the German Institute for Global and Area Studies (GIGA) and the German Historical Institute Paris (GHIP). It is funded by the German Federal Ministry of Research, Technology and Space (BMFTR) with co-funding from the University of Ghana.

The present call is for up to 5 individual residential fellowships of minimum 3 and maximum 6 months each for the academic year 2026/2027. The call is open to scholars (both on junior and senior levels) who have been awarded their doctoral degree at least three months before the start of the fellowship. Starting dates for individual fellowships are handled flexibly. The earliest possible starting date for a fellowship is 1st of September 2026. The latest possible date for the end of a fellowship is the 31st of August 2027.

Individual fellowships allow researchers to conduct a project of their own choice, connected to MIASA's thematic research areas. Projects can be at conceptional stage, mid-term phase or final stage (analyzing

data, writing up findings). Fellowships are residential with only short absences possible for activities such as conference participation and field work. Data collection cannot be the main purpose of a MIASA fellowship.

The fellow selection is made by MIASA's distinguished international Academic Advisory Board. In a strictly merit-based selection process, the individual fellowships are awarded to researchers of top academic quality with an innovative and high-quality research topic. The all-important selection criteria are the academic excellence of the applicant and the fellowship proposal. MIASA is also committed to gender balance.

MIASA supports academic exchange across existing boundaries: between disciplines, between different cultures and countries, between established and early-career researchers. Furthermore, MIASA engages in activities opening the research community to society, politics, and the arts. Individual fellows are part of this community, and benefit from the lively research environment of the University of Ghana. Applications for individual fellowships should indicate how the research project contributes to the activities at MIASA and, more broadly, to the academic life on Legon campus.

Fellowship

The successful applicants become MIASA fellows with all the corresponding rights and obligations for the requested funding period. For fellows affiliated with an institution, the fellows' salary or teaching substitution costs are met by MIASA for every full fellowship month and paid directly to his/her home institution (maximum 6925 EUR/month). In cases where this is not possible, an individual grant based on the candidate's salary at his/her home institution can be offered (but maximally 6925 EUR/month). Fellows may be eligible for a post adjustment to a minimum fellowship amount on a case-by-case justification. Fellows without employment receive an individual monthly grant. For fellows from outside Accra, MIASA pays an accommodation allowance of up to 1500€/month and reimburses travel costs at the beginning and the end of the fellowship. MIASA fellows who come with family members to Accra can receive a family allowance. Fellowships are funded by the German Federal Ministry for Research, Technology and Space via the University of Freiburg.

The Institute provides its fellows with office space on the University of Ghana - Legon campus. A full-time presence of fellows at MIASA for the entire fellowship period is required. Periods of leave need to be approved by the MIASA directors in advance and must not exceed 1/6 of the fellowship duration.

Application

Applications will be accepted in English and French. The completed application form together with the information indicated below has to be uploaded on the application platform. After submission of the documents, applicants receive an acknowledgement of receipt with contact details and a copy of their submitted documents. Incomplete or late applications will not be considered.

Please respect formal requirements:

- Formatting: font Arial, 11 pt, line spacing 1.5, all margins 2.5 cm.
- Page limits may not be exceeded.

Applications must include the following information:

1. Front page with general information on the applicant (1 page):
 - a. Title, name (last, first), e-mail address, link to webpage.
 - b. Date of doctorate.
 - c. Current position/affiliation, institution and business address (name of institution/city/country). Please indicate if you are affiliated with a German research institution/university at the moment of application.
 - d. Research field.
 - e. Title of fellowship project.
 - f. Abstract of the fellowship project (max. 150 words).
 - g. Preferred dates for the fellowship at MIASA (within the time frames offered by MIASA).
 - h. The two most important reasons why you apply for a residential fellowship at MIASA.
2. Project proposal (max. 5 pages):
 - a. Project title (max. 50 characters).
 - b. Abstract of the fellowship project (150 words).
 - c. Aims, theoretical framework and methodology of the project.
 - d. Work and time plan (note: the fellowship requires being present at MIASA, University of Ghana).
 - e. Innovative potential, originality and relevance of the project.
 - f. Added value of conducting research at MIASA and the University of Ghana.
 - g. Bibliographical references (max. 1 page in addition to the 5 pages of the proposal).
3. CV in tabular form (max. 2 pages).
4. Publication list highlighting the most important publications (max. 2 pages).

Please note: no cover letter is required, but a front page.

All four documents have to be submitted as pdf and uploaded separately on the application platform.

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Application platform: https://mobility.frias.uni-freiburg.de/mobility/BewerbungServlet?identifier=FRIAS&kz_bew_pers=L&kz_bew_art=IN&aust_prog=MIASAone&sprache=en

Successful candidates will be informed in February 2026.

For further information, please contact: miasa@act.uni-freiburg.de

Proviso: Fellowships are offered with the proviso that the Federal German Ministry of Research, Technology and Space (BMFTR) will grant funding for MIASA's final phase from September 2026 until February 2030.