MANUAL

FRIAS SUSTAINABLE GOVERNANCE SENIOR FELLOWSHIP FOR RESEARCHERS FROM AFRICA

Application deadline: September 13th, 2024, 13:00 H CET

Eligibility Requirements and Application Procedure

To be eligible, the candidate must fulfil all of (1) the formal eligibility criteria and (2) the basic academic quality criteria. (3) Applicants must carefully follow all given form requirements and length limits listed in the Application material section.

1. Formal eligibility criteria

   • Applicants can be of any nationality, but must be based in an African country.
   • Applicants must hold a doctoral degree.
   • Applicants must have a minimum of eight years of post-doctoral research experience at the time of the application deadline.
   • Applicants must have six months' research experience at academic institution(s) in a country different from the country of their first academic degree.
   • Applicants must have received a Master or PhD in an African country.
   • Applications are welcome exclusively from disciplines in the Humanities and Social Sciences with a thematic focus on sustainable governance.
   • Applicants must propose a research project that can be supported at the University of Freiburg. Thus, they must obtain a letter of cooperation from an academic partner at the University of Freiburg who will support the project during the applicants’ stay in Freiburg. The academic partner must be a professor at the University of Freiburg.
   • The research project must not involve topics that are excluded from funding due to ethical issues.
   • Applicants must adhere to word counts and page limits (see Application Materials).
   • Incomplete or late applications will not be considered.
2. Basic academic quality criteria

Minimum requirements for publication record: 5 peer-reviewed publications since January 1, 2015, including at least one with or as a co-author.

The publications can appear in different media, such as books, journals, repositories or websites, and can have different formats. These include monographs (counted as three publications), journal articles, articles on preprint servers, and contributions to anthologies. If available, please also provide a persistent identifier (e.g. DOI/Digital Object Identifier). An exception is made for papers that have already been accepted for publication, in which case the editor’s confirmation of acceptance must be enclosed.

Textbooks, reprints, book reviews and editorial publications as well as manuscripts not accepted for publication before the application deadline do not count.

Time off for family, medical reasons or non-academic professional activities will not be considered as part of the relevant period (see FAQ).

The project should not be of local interest only but should have sufficient potential for international transfer.

The proposed project must have a thematic focus on sustainable governance (see further explanation below).

There is no age limit for applying to the Fellowship Programme although the candidate’s achievements should be in line with their “academic age”.

Where two candidates are equally suitable for a post, candidates of the underrepresented gender in the relevant academic field shall be given priority.
**Sustainable Governance at FRIAS**

Governance is understood as a spectrum of formalised and informal rules that regulate public life, encompassing political, social, economic, and cultural practices. Thereby an academic understanding of governance inspects ‘the rules of the game’ and the interplay of actors. Research projects in sustainable governance include dimensions of political acceptance, reproduction, multi-scalar application, and global interconnectedness as well as temporality and historical experiences. They focus on sustainability-related matters like social and human rights, acceptance, cost-efficiency, the environment, local/global entanglements, climate change or other topics that touch upon the relation to resources and future developments in a broader sense. This includes past performances as basis for actual and future governance.

The applicants must explain how their work connects to this general understanding of sustainable governance in the abstract (max. two sentences) and in the project proposal.

**Application Materials**

The candidate applies exclusively via the online application portal ([senior scheme for researchers from Africa](https://www.frias.uni-freiburg.de/en)). We do not accept applications submitted by other means of communication. After final submission, applicants will receive an acknowledgement of receipt.

The following materials (in English) are required to be submitted with the application. Page and word limits may not be exceeded, formal structure requirements have to be fulfilled. **All required documents must be in PDF format.**

Information on the candidate and project (abstract, layman’s abstract, ethical issue table) have to be filled into the online application form. Additionally, the following attachments are required to be uploaded to the application portal:

1. **Project proposal** (max. 3000 words; including Bibliographical References, 4 graphs) must have the following structure:
   
   (1) Research field, title, and short abstract of the research project.
   (2) Aims, theoretical framework, and methodology of the project.
   (3) Work plan and feasibility (time schedule).
   (4) Innovative potential, originality, and relevance of the project.
   (5) Issues concerning research ethics.
   (6) Bibliographical references.
Candidates must clarify in their proposal how the research project connects to sustainability governance.

2. CV in tabular form (max. 2 pages). For the compulsory structure of the CV, please use the template.

3. Publication list: 5 peer-reviewed publications since January 1, 2015 (see Basic academic quality criteria), including at least one with or as a co-author.

4. Copy of the PhD diploma; if the writing system/script used in the diploma is not Latin (for instance, Cyrillic, Chinese), an official translation is requested.

5. Letter of cooperation by an academic partner at the University of Freiburg who will support the project during the stay in Freiburg. The academic partner must hold the title of a professor.

Selection Procedure

The selection process is highly competitive and strictly merit-based (expected success rate: ~ 15% of all eligible applications). It involves three steps:

1. Eligibility and basic quality check

To be eligible for application, candidates must fulfil all of (1) formal eligibility criteria and (2) the basic academic quality criteria.

The formal eligibility and the basic quality check are conducted by the FRIAS Board of Directors under the supervision of the Scientific Advisory Board (SAB). The SAB is comprised of renowned senior scientists from outside the University of Freiburg and is responsible for the selection of applications for fellowships.

Applicants are informed about whether they have passed the basic eligibility check.

2. International peer-review by external experts

In the second stage, eligible proposals are forwarded to external experts who evaluate and provide a written assessment of the applicant’s research project and CV. These experts are selected based on criteria defined by the German Research Foundation (DFG):

- no formal affiliation to the university
- familiarity with the area
- distance from the applicant (non-bias)
• broad overview of the research landscape
• experience as a referee
• international expertise

Evaluation criteria

The evaluation considers the following standardised criteria:

1. Academic excellence of the applicant (weighting 40 %):
   1.1. Excellence of the candidate in terms of career development
   1.2. Excellence of their contribution to the research field

2. Excellence of the proposed project (weighting 40 %):
   2.1. Quality of the proposed project and the proposal
   2.2. Innovativeness of the proposal

3. Experience and capability of the applicant (weighting 20 %):
   3.1. Is the candidate well qualified to conduct the research project?
   3.2. Can the candidate be expected to benefit from a FRIAS fellowship?

Finally, all reviewers are asked to give a clear rating on the application:

• **Excellent** – relevant criteria are fully met and exceeded
• **Very good** – relevant criteria are fully met
• **Good** – relevant criteria are met, but with shortcomings
• **Fair** – while relevant criteria are met, weaknesses are clearly visible
• **Clearly below average** - relevant criteria are not sufficiently met

3. Final selection by the external FRIAS Scientific Advisory Board (SAB)

FRIAS Fellows are ultimately selected by the FRIAS SAB. Both the FRIAS Board of Directors and the SAB are responsible for compliance with highest standards of academic quality in research programmes and selection processes.

Based on the original proposals and the expert reviews, a board of Africa Centre for Transregional Research (ACT) members and FRIAS will rank the list of applicants preliminarily. The SAB creates a final ranking list. The top candidate on the list is directly selected for funding and offered a Senior Fellowship at FRIAS. The applicants not selected in the final round will be informed accordingly. Additionally, there will be a waiting list in case the selected applicant does not accept the fellowship.
Upon request, applicants will receive summaries of the anonymised assessments of their proposals.

**Calendar of implementation of the current selection process**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>Publication of the call for applications</td>
<td>01 July 2024</td>
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<tr>
<td>Submission deadline for applications</td>
<td>13 September 2024</td>
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<tr>
<td>Basic eligibility check</td>
<td>September 2024</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peer-review</td>
<td>October 2024 – January 2025</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final selection by SAB</td>
<td>February 2025</td>
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<tr>
<td>Notification of selected fellows</td>
<td>March 2025</td>
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<tr>
<td>Start of fellowships</td>
<td>01 September 2025</td>
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**Financial Aspects**

Successful applicants will become FRIAS Fellows with all the corresponding rights and obligations for the requested funding period. Fellows with an employment contract at their home institution will receive a mobility allowance if applicable to compensate them for the extra costs of their stay in Freiburg. A reimbursement of teaching replacement costs throughout the fellowship up to the level of a W2 professorship is possible. Fellows without an employment contract at their home institution will obtain an attractive salary (W2, 100%). Each Fellow will additionally receive a research cost contribution and will be reimbursed for the travel costs of the inbound and the outbound journey.

**Redress**

Complaints or a formal redress can be sent either to the FRIAS Managing Director or to the University of Freiburg’s Representative for Academic Self-Regulation at any stage of the application/selection process until two months after notification of the final selection results. However, in general, the referee reports and decisions of independent experts are not overruled.

**FRIAS Managing Director**
Dr. Annette Doll
FRIAS, Albertstr. 19, 79104 Freiburg i.Br., Germany
annette.doll@frias.uni-freiburg.de

**Representative for Academic Self-Regulation**
The representative investigates the concreteness and significance of the allegations in
accordance with plausibility criteria and informs the responsible governing bodies if he
deems further action to be necessary. He is bound to strict confidentiality. This is an
official and independent position working on the basis of an official university statute.

Prof. Dr. Uwe Blaurock
University of Freiburg, Fahnenbergplatz, 79100 Freiburg, Germany
uwe.blaurock@jura.uni-freiburg.de

Ethical Issues

The FRIAS Senior Fellowship Programme for Researchers from Africa considers both the
need to ensure freedom of research as well as the need to protect the physical and moral
integrity of individuals and the welfare of animals.

In order to identify ethical issues at an early point in the application process, all applicants
are required to fill in the “ethical issues table.” Furthermore, applicants are requested to
explain in detail in the project outline any ethical issues arising from their proposed
research. Applicants should explain how these will be addressed.

A preliminary screening during the eligibility check also examines potential ethical issues,
even if they were not pointed out by the applicant. In addition, experts in the international
peer-review procedure are asked to indicate relevant ethical issues raised by the
proposal.

If the application successfully passes through the formal selection procedure, the project
proposal is then referred to the University’s Ethics Committee (EC) in case any potential
issues are identified. The same procedure applies if ethical issues arise during work on a
given project. The EC issues a decision that may include requirements and restrictions.
This decision is binding under the employment contract and different laws. As soon as
the decision is issued and if it does not impede the project, the fellowship is offered to the
applicant. If the requirements and restrictions are extraordinarily difficult to fulfil, the SAB
has the authority to reject an application on these grounds.

On the basis of the European Commission's Code of Ethics for Researchers the following
fields of research cannot be funded:

- Research activities directed at human cloning for reproductive purposes.
- Research activities intended to modify the genetic make-up of human beings that
could make such changes heritable (apart from research relating to cancer treatment
of the gonads, which may be funded).
- Research activities intended to create human embryos solely for the purposes of
research or stem cell procurement, including the technique of somatic cell nuclear
transfer.
• Research that leads to the death of human embryos.

Ethical issues also include the avoidance of any breach of research integrity, which means, in particular, avoiding fabrication, falsification, plagiarism or other kinds of research misconduct. In grave instances and after due process has established wrongdoings, fellowship offers may be retracted and current fellowships may be revoked.

Frequently asked questions about the Senior Fellowship Programme

How do I apply?

Applicants complete and submit the online application form (senior scheme for researcher from Africa) by September 13, 2024, 13:00 H CET. After registration you can edit the application form, upload the required annexes, and complete the ethical issues questionnaire. It is highly recommended to start the application early enough to become familiar with the technical processing.

What if there are difficulties in accessing the online application site?

If you encounter difficulties in submitting your online application, please contact the Institute by email (sugovafrika.fellowships@frias.uni-freiburg.de).

Are there specific research priorities?

Application is exclusively open for researchers from the Humanities and Social Sciences. Furthermore, the research project must have a clear connection to the topic of sustainable governance. Projects of an open nature (e.g., preliminary projects intended to lead to larger third-party funding) as well as those of a concluding nature (for instance, leave of absence for the publication of research results gathered earlier) can be supported within this funding period.

Will working space be provided?

FRIAS will provide fully furnished offices for double occupancy, and whenever possible, single occupancy.

Do I need to find an academic host at the University of Freiburg?

The applicant needs to identify an academic partner at the University of Freiburg (including letter of cooperation) prior to submission of the application. The academic partner must hold the title of a professor.
How is time off for family, medical reasons or non-academic activities calculated?

The time period of the basic academic criteria can be extended (5 publications since January 1, 2015), if the applicant has a documented time off because of family or medical reasons.

Maternity time off is calculated with 18 months per child, whereas in case of paternal or medical time-off, the documented timeframe is relevant. The time off must be accrued during the time period that is relevant for the eligibility criteria.

Do fellowships need to start September 1, 2025?

Fellowships should be conducted within the period (7 months) between September 1, 2025 and August 31, 2026.

Is there support for fellows with families?

Our FRIAS Fellow Service team assists families in finding suitable accommodation in the Freiburg area considering their needs regarding price, size, and location. Together with the University of Freiburg’s Family Service, we provide information on the German system of childcare and schools. Fellows are supported in finding appropriate childcare facilities and in the process of enrolling their children at day-care centres, kindergarten, and schools. Every effort is made to provide individually adapted solutions when general options are not suitable. Moreover, fellows with children receive further financial support through state child benefits (‘Kindergeld’).

Do you have further questions?

Please feel free to contact us: susgovafrica.fellowships@frias.uni-freiburg.de