WISER INVITES APPLICATIONS FOR 8 TWO-YEAR  
POSTDOCTORAL POSITIONS (2020-2022)

Thanks to generous funding from Carnegie Foundation (USA) and the Gerda Henkel Foundation (Germany), WISER is launching a major interdisciplinary and multi-regional research program called REGIONS2050: MOBILE SPACES, POROUS BORDERS, AND PATHWAYS OF REGIONALIZATION.

Coordinated by Professor Achille MBEMBE, the Program includes 40 researchers and straddles the traditional divide between Francophone, Anglophone, Arabophone and Lusophone scholarly communities. It also transcends the divide between Sub-Saharan Africa and North Africa while reconnecting the African continent to the Southern Atlantic and Indian Oceanic worlds.

THIS MULTI-REGIONAL RESEARCH PROGRAM'S GOAL is to unlock the paradoxes of regionalization in a setting, the African continent, shaped by multiple porous borders and mobile spaces. Instead of assuming that regionalization is tied to state territoriality, it examines the ways in which frontiers and horizons - spatial, material, cultural and imaginary - are increasingly produced by the intersection of cross border flows, networks and informal institutions that are not delineated by states only, but also by technological devices of all kinds and by movement as such.

The Program’s aim is to foster a new understanding of the ongoing geographies of regionalization that arise from: (1) the intensification of mobility, flows and circulation in a context of porous borders, mobile spaces and technological transformations; (2) the accelerated extraction and use of natural resources that has been taking place in Africa over the last century and a half, its historical pathways and the socio-ecological transformations it has unleashed; (3) the mutations in causes of illness (epidemics and the increase of non-communicable diseases) and the way the crisis of climate is reshaping the human/ecological/environment relationships.

In this Program, the two concepts of the mobile space and porous borders serve as broad conceptual indexes that will be used to distinguish between (1) different types of mobilities/circulation/speed and different types of borders; (2) the cultural and institutional forms generated by such movements; and (3) the technological, ecological and spatial reconfigurations that arise in the context of increasing informalization and transnationalization of life forms and processes.

WE INVITE APPLICATIONS FOR 8 (eight) two-year POSTDOCTORAL POSITIONS. Each fellowship will be funded up to R250,000 per year (medical insurance included), to which will be added R10,000 for research. The successful candidates are expected to join the Institute in Johannesburg remotely in October 2020 and in person, subject to the pandemic crisis, from February 2021.

They will be expected to: (1) fully participate in the research program and in its publications; (2) take part in the scientific events and other activities relevant to their research (advanced seminars, workshops, round tables, experimental syllabus); (3) produce 3 podcasts or op-eds per year; (4) publish 1 peer-reviewed article and per year and (4) one final chapter to be included in an edited volume.

WE SEEK CANDIDATES with different skills and training backgrounds (including in health, natural and environmental science and in technology studies) who are willing to work on highly innovative research projects (borders, mobility, speed, circulation of people, objects, ideas and technological devices, ecological transformations, regional transport systems, markets and small towns, cross-border practices, media and digital corridors; cultural and literary scapes; logistics, multi-species interactions; health ecologies and pandemics; trans-regional extraction, enclaves and offshoring etc.).

Fellowships are opened to international candidates. African and diasporic candidates are strongly encouraged to apply.

REQUIREMENTS

Applications should include:

- A letter of motivation (2 pages maximum)  
- A short CV (2 pages maximum)  
- A highly innovative research proposal (4 pages maximum)  
- A certified copy of the Ph.D.  
- Two reference letters  
- A written sample of academic work

DURATION

The program runs from October 30, 2020 to October 30, 2022.

DEADLINE

Applications should be sent electronically to: Najibha Deshmukh, Senior Administrator, Wits Institute for Social and Economic Research (najibha.Deshmukh@wits.ac.za)

The deadline for application is August 31, 2020. Results will be published on September 5, 2020.

The research program includes 4 Clusters: (1) Sahel/Sahara/Mediterranean; (2) Congo Basin; (3) Southern Atlantic/Indian Oceanic Africa; (4) African Technoscapes.

A candidate is only allowed to apply in one Cluster.