

Open Call for 2 doctoral grants associated with ERC Starting Grant AfDevLives

The Centre of International Studies (CEI) at Iscte - University Institute of Lisbon (Portugal) announces the opening of a competition for 2 (two) doctoral grants in the area of African Studies or related fields. The positions are offered in the context of the ERC Starting Grant “AfDevLives: The Afterlives of Development Interventions in Eastern Africa (Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique)” (Ref. 101041788), hosted by CEI-Iscte and led by Dr. Yonatan N. Gez.

AfDevLives studies the legacies of development interventions and their long-term impact on local communities. The successful candidates will pursue their doctoral thesis at CEI-Iscte (starting in October 2022), where they will be fully integrated into the project’s interdisciplinary research team and activities, and assume an active role in advancing the project’s academic and non-academic objectives. Team members will be based in Lisbon and will conduct multiple rounds of extended fieldwork in Eastern Africa (Kenya/Tanzania).

Scientific area: African Studies or related fields

1. Application

The competition is open between April 15th and May 31st 2022 (midnight).

Applications and supporting documents will be submitted to both doutoramentos.cei@iscte-iul.pt and afdevlives@gmail.com, and will carry the subject line “ERC_doctoral grant_[candidate’s name]”. Incoming applications will receive an acknowledgement of receipt. To ensure the reception of their file, candidates are encouraged to make sure that their application has been acknowledged.

2. Type and duration of grant

The doctoral grant is intended to finance the realisation, by the grantee, of research activities leading to the obtention of a doctoral degree in a Portuguese university.

The research activities will take place at the Center for International Studies (CEI) at Iscte – University Institute of Lisbon, which will be the grantee’s host institution, and will be developed within the scope of Project AfDevLives. Grantees will enroll in a relevant PhD program at Iscte (e.g., African Studies, International Studies).

3. Grant Recipients

The doctoral grant is intended for applicants who meet the conditions necessary to enroll in a relevant

doctoral program at Iscte.

4. Eligibility

4.1 Eligibility criteria of the applicants

Applicants may be: Citizens of Portugal or other Member States of the European Union; Citizens of third countries; Stateless persons; Political refugees. Special consideration will be given to equally qualified candidates from Africa/the Global South, as well as from Ukraine.

4.2 Eligibility criteria of the applicants

Necessary requirements:

- Master's degree or equivalent in the social sciences or in the humanities
- Willingness to relocate to Lisbon for the duration of the PhD and to conduct extended fieldwork rounds in Eastern Africa (Kenya/Tanzania)
- Good interpersonal skills and ability to work in a team
- Excellent knowledge of English

Assets:

- Background in social anthropology, development studies, or related fields
- Experience conducting ethnographic fieldwork, preferably in Africa/the Global South
- Good knowledge of the international development sector through academic education and/or employment history
- Experience participating in collaborative research projects
- Experience applying creative research methods (e.g., photography and film, storytelling, mapping, drawing, performance). Significant artistic/practical experience in such areas will also count as an asset.
- Good knowledge of Eastern Africa
- Knowledge of relevant languages including Swahili, Portuguese, and/or other languages spoken in Eastern Africa

Applications must include the following documents:

- Cover letter (two pages) explaining the candidate's relevant background and skills as well as their interest in the project
- Comprehensive CV including academic qualifications and output wherever available (scholarships, distinctions, publications, conference presentations, etc.)
- University grade sheets and proofs of academic degrees. Copies of additional diplomas and training certificates, as well as proofs of employment history, are welcome, but not mandatory.

- Two writing samples (e.g., MA dissertation, university papers, popular articles, academic publications if available, etc.)
- Two letters of recommendation. In the interest of confidentiality, referees may submit their letters directly to the project's email address (afdevlives@gmail.com). Letters should be addressed to Dr. Yonatan N. Gez (Project PI) and the evaluation committee.

The application will be written in English. All application material, including letters of motivation and recommendations, must be submitted in PDF format.

With regards to the eligibility criteria mentioned above, please bear in mind that eligible candidates must conclude their master's degree or equivalent by October 2022. If applicants do not yet have a certificate proving the conclusion of their academic degree, a declaration stating that they will complete their studies in time will be accepted. In any case, the grant can only commence after the applicant presented a valid proof of completion of studies.

5. Evaluation Criteria

Candidates that meet the application conditions will be scored on a scale of 0 to 100 based on the submitted documents (cover letter, comprehensive CV, university grade sheets and proof of degrees, writing samples, and letters of recommendation). Assessment will be made based on the following evaluation criteria:

Criterion A: Relevant experience (academic and/or professional) and hard skills: 40%

Criterion B: Academic merit: 30%

Criterion C: Motivation and soft skills: 30%

Short-listed candidates will be invited for an online interview.

6. Evaluation

The evaluation panel will be established by the closing of the call and the composition of the members will be shared with the applicants by the beginning of the evaluation process.

7. Publication of results

The results of the evaluation will be communicated via email to the address used by the applicant to submit the application and/or the email address indicated in the application.

8. Review and appeal procedures

After communication of the provisional list of the results of the evaluation, the candidates will have a period of 10 working days to request a review of the preliminary results should they so wish, in accordance with Articles 121 of the Code of Administrative Procedure. The final decision shall be given after the analysis of any request for review.

9. Payment

The payment of the scholarship will start after the candidate returns the duly signed scholarship contract, which must occur within a maximum of 15 working days from the date of its receipt.

10. Grant components

A monthly maintenance allowance is awarded at the grantee in accordance with the table in Annex I of the RBI (<https://www.fct.pt/apoios/bolsas/valores>), with a value of 1,144.64€. The grant may also include other components, in accordance with Article 18 of the RBI and the amounts provided for in Annex II.

All grantees receive personal accident insurance in relation to research activities. All grantees who are not covered by any social protection scheme may exercise the right to social security by adhering to the voluntary social insurance scheme, in accordance with the Code of Contributory Schemes of the Social Security System, with Iscte being responsible for charges resulting from those contributions, in accordance with Article 10th of the EBI.

11. Payments of grant components

Payments due to the grantee are made by bank transfer to the details provided by the grantee.

12. Non-discrimination and equal access policy

CEI-Iscte promotes a policy of non-discrimination and equal access, so no candidate may be privileged, benefited, impaired or deprived of any right or exempt from any duty, because of their ancestry, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, family situation, economic situation, education, origin or social condition, genetic heritage, reduced working capacity, disability, chronic disease, nationality, ethnic origin or race, territory of origin, language, religion, political or ideological convictions, and trade union membership.

13. Legal framework

The current competition is governed by this Notice Call, by the FCT Research Scholarship Regulations, approved by Regulation no. 950/2019, published in the II Series of the DR of December 16, 2019, by the Statute of the Research Fellow approved by Law No. 40/2004 of August 18, in its current drafting, and by other applicable national and European legislation.

14. Queries:

For technical, procedural, and institutional queries: doutoramentos@iscte-iul.pt (Cláudia Araújo)

For questions concerning Project AfDevLives: afdevlives@gmail.com (Yonatan N. Gez)

About the project

International development involves ideologies and activities ostensibly directed towards the improvement of well-being of populations in the Global South. Mainstream development interventions emphasize forward-looking ideas of progress and advocate for novelty. In so doing, however, the sector is often myopic, as evidenced by countless unintended consequences that stretch beyond interventions' official life cycle. Whether deemed success or failure, such interventions leave behind a long trail of tangible and intangible traces. Project AfDevLives explores how development interventions' representational and material remains are experienced, employed, and re-appropriated by local actors over time, and how such active immanence of the past affects people's life-worlds. It weaves together three temporal gazes: prospective (development's blueprints); retrospective (sediments of the past, shorthanded as interventions' 'afterlives'); and present-time lived experience. Consciously de-centering formal development discourse and temporalities, the project develops and applies a phenomenological framework oriented around embodiment and intertwinement of people, objects, and space. Using an interdisciplinary approach centered on social anthropology, research will be conducted in Kenya, Tanzania, and Mozambique, neighbouring Eastern African countries that are among the highest recipients of development aid and whose past and present balance continuities and ruptures. The project will unfold via an iterative process involving four complementary work packages: Movement, Image, Storytelling, and Synthesis. Working across work packages, countries, and case studies, the project will pursue three categories of objectives: conceptual (methodological toolkit), empirical (based on extensive ethnographic fieldwork), and practical (aimed at the development sector, local heirs of interventions, and the public at large). The project will result in a robust set of outputs.

Additional references:

<https://blog.cei.iscte-iul.pt/erc-grant-yonatan-development-east-africa/>

Gez, Yonatan N. 2021. "The Afterlives of International Development Interventions: A Site-Specific Approach." *Journal of Development Studies* 57(9): 1511-1526.