

Africa Oxford Initiative



Annual Report 2018

“As a global university, Oxford has collaborations across the world. We have a particularly special and long standing commitment to engage with our partners and colleagues across the African continent..”

*Prof Louise Richardson,
Vice Chancellor,
University of Oxford*



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Message from the AfOx team

The Africa Oxford Initiative is a platform for 'all things Africa in Oxford'

The Africa Oxford Initiative has the vision of making Africa a strategic priority for the University of Oxford and this past year has brought us closer to this goal. Since our launch in 2016, AfOx has provided a platform for 'all things Africa in Oxford', while facilitating the establishment of equitable and sustainable collaborations between African researchers and colleagues based at the University of Oxford.

The year 2018 was very exciting for us, as the following pages will highlight. We saw the growth of the AfOx network to over 700 members working on a myriad of collaborative projects between Oxford and African institutions. The AfOx academic database records almost 300 academics from Oxford with established collaborations in 200 institutions across 30 African countries. We have seen great expansion of our core researcher mobility schemes- the AfOx Travel Grants and the Visiting Fellowships. The AfOx insakas have become popular events with talks ranging from astrophysics to contemporary art.

We have had fantastic support and enthusiasm from colleagues across Oxford and our partner institutions in Africa. We are extremely grateful for the support from the AfOx Steering Committee as well as University administration. We also want to thank our colleagues from The Oxford Research Centre in the Humanities, (TORCH), African Studies Centre, Faculty of Law, Nekton Oxford Deep Ocean Research Institute, St Peter's College, Jesus College, All Souls College, Wolfson College, Hertford College, Brasenose College, Christ Church College, St Edmund Hall and Somerville College, for partnering with us for the AfOx Visiting Fellows Program.

Going forward we will continue to build on the AfOx strategic plan and look forward to working with all of you in supporting a coherent university-wide strategy for equitable engagement with Africa.

AfOx Strategic Priorities

FACILITATING NEW COLLABORATIONS

Running the Africa-Oxford travel grant scheme



BUILDING NETWORKS

Visiting Fellowships to support PhD students and post-doctoral researchers in African institutions

RESEARCH FUNDING

Facilitating major funding applications for research or teaching activities which link African institutions with Oxford



INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERSHIP

Promoting research excellence through collaborations with African institutions

ACADEMIC GUIDANCE & MENTORSHIP

Providing academic & mentorship support to African students & researchers in Oxford



MEETINGS & EVENTS

Organising & supporting high quality events of varying sizes & audiences with a focus on Africa

COMMUNICATIONS

Building and maintaining a high quality communications platform



SCHOLARSHIPS

Increasing the number of African students pursuing postgraduate degrees in Oxford

Connecting researchers for impactful collaborations

Effective research partnerships fundamentally depend on people meeting each other to ensure that ideas are genuinely co-developed

AfOx provides travel grants to support the establishment of new academic and research partnerships between Africa and Oxford.

Our travel grants allow academics from the African continent and the University of Oxford to spend time with each other to undertake joint research. Joint applications are submitted between two or more researchers to meet in either Oxford or an African institution and work on a collaborative project.

Since our inception in 2016, we have given a total of 126 travel grants. In the last year, we awarded 62 travel grants to African researchers and Oxford academics.

The grants facilitated new collaborations between the University of Oxford and 53 African institutions across 22 African countries in various research fields such as economics, medicine, zoology, mathematics, archaeology and international development.

Super resolution microscopy for cancer diagnosis

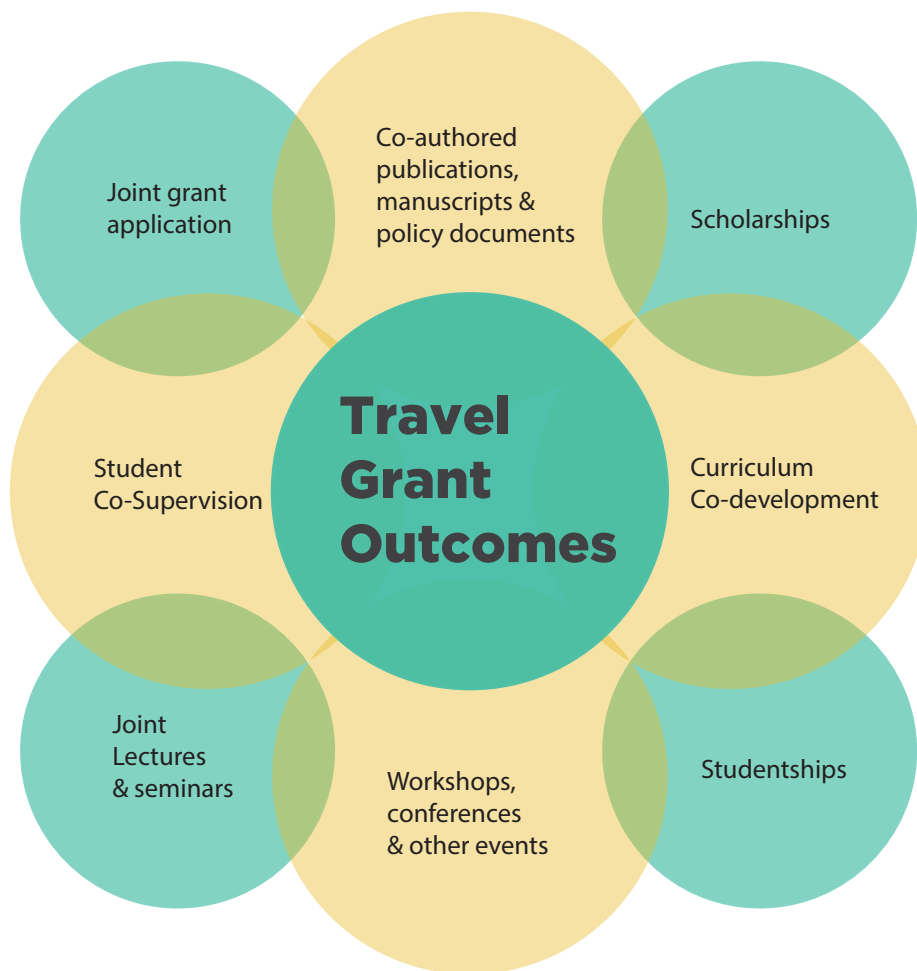
Haitham Shaban, National Research Centre

Egypt: *"I came here to build a new bridge between my home institution in Egypt & the University of Oxford for cutting-edge research in studying genetics and cancer cells. I got the opportunity to use facilities like microscopes and genomic tools here in Oxford that we currently do not have in Egypt. In one word, my experience at Oxford has been amazing."*



Lothar Schermelleh, Department of

Biochemistry: *"Haithum's expertise was an excellent fit to our research. We have developed ways to visualise DNA and chromatin in details as it wasn't possible before. We approached our research from two different perspectives, and that was very beneficial. I am very grateful to AfOx to enable such a visit that really mutually benefited both of us. I am sure our work together will continue even when after Haithum leaves. "*



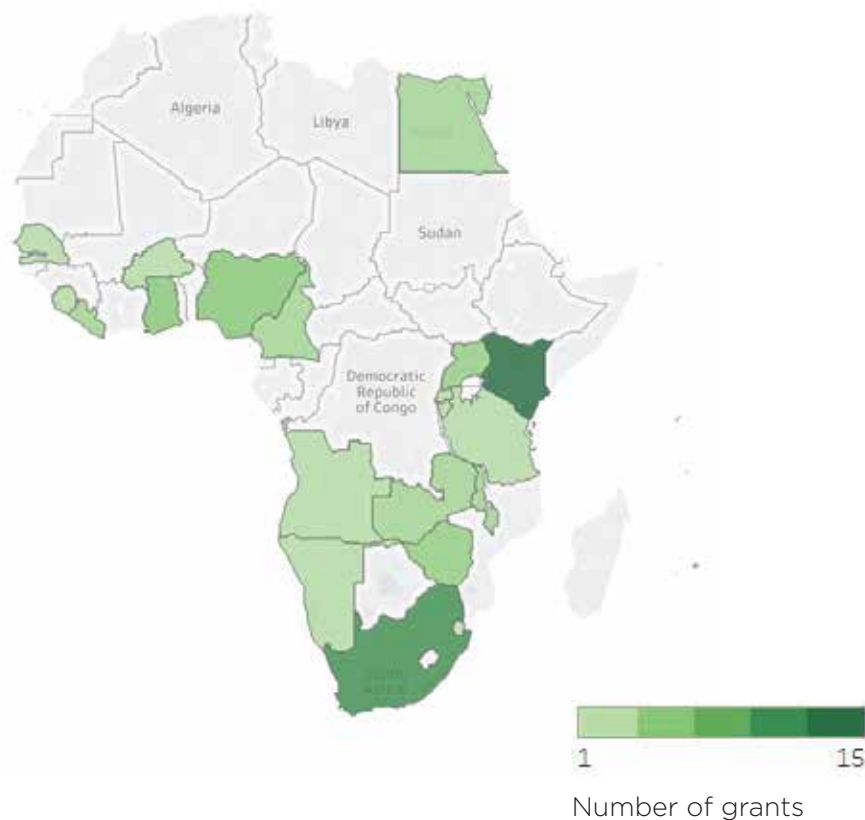
Power from Below: Identity translation and efficacy in colonial Lagos

Tunde Decker, Osun State University, Nigeria: *"I came to Oxford to further my research on the thought processes of the poor. 8 weeks in Oxford have been wonderful for me. I have been to the Weston, Social Sciences and Africa Studies Centre libraries and have found immense resources that cannot be found anywhere else in the world. I have found 4000 pages worth of archival material. I have delivered a paper at the University of Cambridge and I have broadened my network. Oxford has been an inspiring city and University. I have met wonderful people, attended conferences that have reshaped my conceptual viewpoints and broadened my horizon."*



Wale Adebani, African Studies Centre: *"Tunde was impressive and exemplary in the way he spent his time and the manner in which he embraced the abundant research opportunities in Oxford during the period of his AfOx fellowship at the African Studies Centre. I am glad that the AfOx travel grant provides opportunities for current and potential future collaborations between us and our institutions."*

Distribution of travel grants awarded



Evidence-based change: Exploring the synergies between research and activism with participatory visual methods

Maureen Kelley, Associate Professor of Bioethics: *"The AfOx travel scheme is such a valuable way of bringing together African researchers to explore cross-disciplinary work together. We were delighted to host Dr. Gill Black from Sustainable Livelihoods Foundation in Cape Town, South Africa. Her organisation's creative, community-based participatory work on public health was an inspiration for us and our students. Having her with us for an extended visit allowed for numerous conversations and sparked new ideas for collaborative work across our institutions."*



Gill Black, Sustainable Livelihoods Foundation, South Africa:

"The travel grant provided me access to cutting-edge academic research, resources and literature that I may not have had access to otherwise. I had conversations with Oxford academics who appraised my work, and made me think of my work in a constructively critical way. I had conversations that challenged my thinking and made me think in different ways about what I do."

Building networks for research leadership

AfOx provides opportunities for career development & leadership in international collaborative research

The AfOx Visiting Fellows Program enhances international academic mobility, exposure and network building for exceptional African researchers. Multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary in nature, the program supports African scholars and researchers working in any discipline to spend 4-8 weeks in Oxford to work on collaborative research with Oxford based colleagues.

In 2018, we received 75 applications for the AfOx Visiting Fellows Program. The 13 selected fellows visited Oxford to work with their collaborators and were hosted by our partner colleges.

Our Fellows came from Ghana, Kenya, South Africa, Nigeria, Egypt, Ethiopia and Uganda. Their research projects were in the fields of Philosophy & Classics, Public Health, Political Science, Education & Youth Empowerment, Cardiology, Biochemistry, Physics, Religion, History, Pathology, Community Health and Law.



Key activities during Fellowship

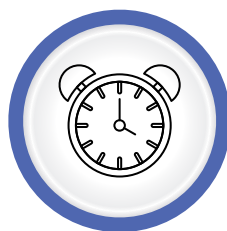
Research (experiments, literature reviews & data analysis)

Preparing book chapters and manuscripts

Delivering seminars and lectures

Engaging with academics in Oxford

Formulating new research proposals



Making the most of their time

Learning new techniques

Attending workshops, conferences & seminars (external & internal)

Engaging with African students and staff in Oxford

Meeting other AfOx fellows

Visiting colleges, museums and more



Key outcomes of the Fellowship

Joint authorship of papers & manuscripts

Joint Grant applications

Co-supervising graduate students

Curriculum co-development

Joint Lectures or seminars

WHAT OUR FELLOWS SAID



I COMMEND THEM

The Director, Coordinator and all staff of the AfOx team deserve to be commended for the successfully managing groups of academics from diverse backgrounds for four to six weeks during summer. This is a programme that has great potential for mutually beneficial interaction between scholars in African Universities and Scholars at the University of Oxford.



I WAS THRILLED

with the fact that my time at University of Oxford coincided with the "Interdisciplinary Research towards Tackling the SDGs in Africa". It was very refreshing and insightful to learn about the impactful and collaborative research which is ongoing across the continent." I was well informed about other funding opportunities available which I can also take advantage of.



TIME TO THINK

time to read, engage and write. Time set aside for these activities is becoming a rare (and yet so important) commodity in academia. In addition, as a working mother, it was really appreciated that all my needs were met (food, accommodation, library facilities etc) so that I could focus on the research, even into the late evenings if I so chose.



Research Funding

AfOx leverages its considerable expertise of the dynamic African academic landscape to mobilise resources for Africa-focussed research

Accelerating Achievement for Africa's Adolescents Hub

The University of Oxford has been awarded £20m by UK Research and Innovation to run the Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF) hub 'Accelerating Achievement for Africa's Adolescents Hub' led by AfOx Steering Committee member, Prof. Lucie Cluver.

The multidisciplinary project aims to transform the landscape of service provision and interventions for vulnerable adolescents and children in Africa. We are partnering with universities and numerous NGOs and national governments across Africa to deliver this project.

We are very proud to be part of this hub along with researchers from Oxford's Departments of Social Policy and Intervention, Tropical Medicine, the Blavatnik School of Government, English, Economics and Psychiatry. We will also work with alongside international partners including UNDP, UNICEF and the World Health Organisation, governments across Africa, donors such as the Global Fund and PEPFAR, NGOs and young people themselves, to identify and test a range of 'accelerator synergy' service combinations, from across health, education, social and economic sectors.

Trade, Development and the Environment Hub

We are delighted to support a member of the AfOx Steering Committee Prof. EJ Milner-Gulland and colleagues at the Department of Zoology involved in this hub.

This Hub includes economists, trade modellers, political scientists, ecologists, development scientists, large companies, UN bodies and NGOs who will work together across supply chains to influence trade related policy and practice. It will also produce research to help ensure that trade becomes a driver of positive change in the world, with biodiversity loss halted and people permanently lifted out of poverty.

The Hub will support 5 AfOx Fellows per year over 5 years to come to Oxford to work on topics at the intersection of trade, development and the environment.

Molecular Epidemiology for Vaccination Policy (MEVacP)

We will also work with Prof. Martin Maiden and Dr Odile Harrison (Department of Zoology), and Prof. Angela Brueggemann (BDI) on a NIHR funded MEVacP project that aims to enhance the surveillance of bacterial meningitis in the African meningitis belt. AfOx will support the project in training African researchers and clinicians in the analysis of bacterial whole genome sequence data, molecular diagnostic assays for the detection of meningitis pathogens and training in data interpretation.

Centre for Infectious Diseases Research Zambia (CIDRZ)

In 2018, we secured support for work led by the CIDRZ on immunisation against Hepatitis B in health workers. Dr Roma Chilengi, Chief Scientific Officer, CIDRZ and Dr Melissa Kapulu, Post-Doctoral Researcher at KEMRI-Wellcome Trust are leading the work.



“**Investing** in Africa’s
young **scientists** is
investing in the future
of the continent.”

Providing opportunities
for **young** scientists will
help **to attract** and retain
them on the continent”

Prof Kevin Marsh
Director,
Africa Oxford Initiative

Institutional partnerships

Sustainable partnerships built on continuous knowledge exchange are critical for creating systemic change and improving the health and welfare of populations

Interdisciplinary Research towards Tackling the Sustainable Development Goals in Africa

In partnership with the African Academy of Sciences, AfOx hosted a three-day conference on the role of African research in delivering the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. The aim of the Conference was to give African researchers an international platform to highlight their research, share their ideas and build meaningful partnerships to scale up their work and impact.

More than 100 researchers from African institutions and the University of Oxford came together at the Conference where we held a series of keynote talks, simulation exercises, moderated panels and networking opportunities.

The networks established during the conference have resulted in multiple joint grant applications, collaborative research and mentoring relationships.



Student engagement and support

Targeted support enhances student experiences, promotes a sense of belonging and influences the academic success of emerging African leaders in Oxford

In partnership with the Oxford University Africa Society, we provide tailored support programs for prospective and current African graduate students.

Admissions live stream: Ahead of the graduate applications deadline we hosted an online open day for prospective applicants from African countries. In a live-streamed video, colleagues from Oxford's graduate recruitment and scholarship teams as well as current students answered admissions related questions from prospective students. The video was viewed almost 30,000 times and we received positive feedback from potential applicants. We will be hosting similar events for future admission cycles.

Essay writing workshop: One of the challenges faced by some African graduate students is the unfamiliarity with Oxford's academic style of writing. Coming from different writing cultures and ways of learning, adapting to the 'Oxford style' can be challenging. We facilitated an essay-writing workshop to discuss essay formats, references and how to synthesise information. Participants also had the opportunity to write mock essays and receive feedback from Oxford academics and senior graduate students.

African graduate mixer: AfOx co-hosted a networking reception with the Oxford University Africa Society. The aim of the reception was to help build a flourishing community, create networks and provide institutional support for African graduate students in Oxford. It was a chance for incoming and current African graduate students and academics to interact with each other in a relaxed and informal environment.

GRAIN- Graduate Research and Innovation Symposium: This provides a platform for African graduate students and AfOx academic visitors to interact and encourage action on current issues affecting the African continent. It is also an opportunity for graduate students to get advice from and network with African academics. AfOx-Law Visiting Fellow, Dr Busingye Kabumba and Mbalenhle Matandela (from the MSc. African Studies) hosted the first GRAIN on the topic: *To what extent does Uganda's rule of law protect or fail it's most vulnerable.*

The Oxford DPhil roundtable: Pursuing a DPhil degree in Oxford can be quite challenging. We hosted a roundtable for African DPhil students to discuss any concerns or questions they may have. Oxford academics from various departments were present at the roundtable and offered valuable advice on managing supervisor-supervisee relations, time management, mental health and career planning.



AFRICAN GRADUATE MIXER



ESSAY WRITING WORKSHOP



DPhil ROUNDTABLE



Meetings and Events

Throughout the year we leverage our convening power to host engaging conversations on Africa related issues

Alumni Engagement

In the spirit of forging equitable partnerships, the AfOx secretariat last year hosted several events on the continent. We visited Kenya, Nigeria and Ghana to engage with Oxford alumni, higher education leaders, policy makers and business leaders.

Oxford alumni engagement in Nairobi, Kenya

In partnership with the Oxford and Cambridge Society of Kenya, we were pleased to hold an 'AfOx in East Africa' networking session in Nairobi. The networking reception hosted by the Deputy British High Commissioner brought together government and academic leaders, colleagues from the African Academy of Sciences and Oxford alumni and gave us an opportunity to highlight the importance of building equitable research partnerships between African institutions and the University of Oxford.

Reflections on the power of knowledge in Lagos, Nigeria:

In partnership with The Oxford and Cambridge Alumni Network of Nigeria, we hosted an evening of networking and talks in Lagos.

Prof Wale Adebawji, Director of the African Studies Centre & Rhodes Professor of Race Relations gave a talk on *Enlightenment and African Subjectivity: reflections on the power of knowledge* that was followed by a networking reception co-hosted with Chevening Scholarship at the residence of the Deputy British High Commissioner.

AfOx launch at the University of Ghana, Accra

Building on a long-standing relationship with Ghana, we had the opportunity to introduce AfOx in Ghana, in a ceremony attended by the Hon Dr Matthew Opoku Prempeh, Minister of Education, and Prof. Ebenezer Oduro Owusu the University of Ghana Vice Chancellor. Oxford Alumni and renowned entrepreneur Elikem Kuenyehia delivered an opening keynote. Along with the Oxford University Africa Society, we deliberated with policy makers, higher education leaders and Oxford alumni on ways of expanding the research collaborations in Ghana and increasing opportunities for talented students to study at Oxford.



Insakas

The AfOx insaka is a gathering for sharing ideas and knowledge about Africa-focused research. We invite speakers from varied disciplines and academic backgrounds to present their work and their ideas, which is followed by discussions and networking.

We are grateful to all our speakers for their stimulating presentations and to St. Cross College for hosting the insakas.

Last year we hosted 6 insakas and 12 speakers. The insakas featured diverse talks on topical issues ranging from the fourth Industrial revolution to astronomy. In partnership with Northeast Africa Forum, we also hosted a special insaka edition for the launch of Nanjala Nyabola's book *Digital Democracy, Analogue Politics: How the Internet Era is Transforming Politics in Kenya*.

May 2018



J C Niala, University of Oxford;

"History Hidden in Plain Site' African Soldiers in WW1 & The seeds of Colonial Resistance"

Peter Horby and Nzelle Delphine Kayem;

"Clinical Research Preparedness for Outbreaks in Sub-Saharan Africa"



June 2018



Dr Faith Osier,

South-South Malaria Antigen Research Partnership;
"People versus Parasites: Learning to Win Against Plasmodium Falciparum"

Chimwemwe Phiri;

"Representations of Disease. Investigating the Medical History of Malawi Through Object and Photograph Collections'"



October 2018



Prof Samson Kambalu:

Cinema and the General Economy



Prof Stefan Dercon:

Africa and the Fourth Industrial Revolution

November 2018

Suzanne Wanjaria:

'Clearing the Water':

Integrating scientific research into museum public programs



Paris Stefanoudis:

Nekton Mission 2: Mysteries of the Deep Ocean



February 2019

Book Launch



Nanjala Nyabola

Digital Democracy, Analogue Politics
How the Internet Era is Transforming Kenya

March 2019

Tolullah Oni:

From health systems to building systems for health



Malcolm McCulloch :

Is energy bad for Africa?



Engagement and Outreach

An active communications platform is essential in promoting our activities and increasing the scale of our impact

Engaging with a wide range of partners is central to our aim of creating links between African institutions and the University. With a large proportion of our target audience located in the African continent, communications plays a major role in AfOx.

AfOx Website

AfOx has a vibrant website and social media channels through which we share news, events, stories, opportunities and other information about Africa related research and activities in Oxford.



2,300 monthly
website users



Website views
from 107 countries



2,000 monthly
new website
users

AfOx Social Media

We have more than 3,000 followers on Twitter and over 1,400 followers on Facebook.



22 subscribers
1,400 views



3,440 followers
140,000
monthly
impressions



1,450 followers
100 monthly
page visits



313 followers
30 monthly
page visits



67 followers
30 monthly
page visits

Afox Podcast

This year we also introduced the AfOx Podcast Series for the global AfOx community to be able to tune into our insakas and other events that we host in Oxford.

Follow our podcast from anywhere in the world via:

<http://podcasts.ox.ac.uk/series/africa-oxford-initiative-insakas>



AfOx Newsletter

We highlight our activities and achievements and signpost other related opportunities to our wide network via the AfOx quarterly newsletters. To be informed or to be featured in our newsletters, please get in touch with us at afox@ndm.ox.ac.uk.

Academic Database

We are building an extensive database of academics and researchers based at the University who have research interests or other academic collaborations in African countries. We are also building an equally resourceful database of our African collaborators

To view or join our database, please visit our website: <http://www.afox.ox.ac.uk/database/>

269
Oxford
Academics

103
Oxford
Departments

30
African
Countries

187
African
Institutions

Moving on to 2019

As Africa assumes an ever more important global role, it will be crucial to make a deliberate commitment to work together for our sustainable future

In the coming year, we will continue to build on core AfOx programmes and networks. One of our key aims will be to work with partners across the University of Oxford to increase scholarship opportunities available for African graduate students.

The African Union envisages a future based on knowledge driven economies, which will need a massive expansion in high quality tertiary education. Africa accounts for around 25% of the world's student age population, which is estimated to rise to 50% by 2050. Against this background, major global universities have strong reason to support Africa's academic and research institutions. Currently African students make up only 3% of the graduate population at Oxford.

We will be working with colleges, departments and funders to maximise opportunities available and generate new funds to support African students, specifically graduate students in Oxford. We are working towards an ambitious target of increasing the number of graduate students from Africa to 10% in the next few years.

We are excited about other new initiatives planned for 2019. In May, AfOx is hosting the inaugural Focus on Research Africa (FORA) conference. FORA will bring together experts from both Oxford and our partner African institutions from multidisciplinary fields to share knowledge, ideas and solutions on varied Africa-related issues and to discuss the importance of equitable research collaborations and good practices that make a research collaboration successful.

We will also be welcoming 20 AfOx Visiting Fellows this year. Stay tuned to our website and social media channels to keep up to date with their research.

The Africa Oxford Initiative is above all a participatory network - so we encourage everyone in Oxford with an interest in Africa and in African research and academic collaborations to get in touch with us. Send us information about your research, events, projects and news, and do not hesitate to give us feedback or to share ideas with us.

We also encourage academics and researchers in institutions based in Africa who are interested in or currently collaborating with colleagues in Oxford to get in touch with us. Write to us at afox@ndm.ox.ac.uk. We look forward to hearing from you and meeting you at AfOx events throughout 2019!

The Africa Oxford Initiative team



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AfOx Steering Committee

Prof Wale Adebawale, Rhodes Professor of Race Relations, St Antony's College

Prof Elleke Boehmer, Professor of World Literature in English, Wolfson College

Prof Lucie Cluver, Professor of Child and Family Social Work, Wolfson College

Prof Patricia Daley, Professor of the Human Geography of Africa, Jesus College

Prof Sir Charles Godfray, Hope Professor of Entomology, Jesus College

Mrs Carole Souter, Master of St Cross College

Prof William James, Professor of Virology, Brasenose College

Prof EJ Milner-Gulland, Tasso Leventis Professor of Biodiversity, Merton College

Dr. Samson Kinyanjui, Director - IDeAL & Head of Training, KEMRI|Wellcome Trust

Dr. Robtel Neajai Pailey, Leverhulme Research Fellow, ODID

Dr Arlene Holmes-Henderson, Postdoctoral researcher in Classics education

Prof Sarah Rowland-Jones, Professor of Immunology, Christ Church College

Prof Balazs Szendroi, Professor of Pure Mathematics, St Peter's College

Nina Tomlin, International Strategy Office

Frewyeni Kidane, Development Office

Kojo Botsio, President of Oxford University Africa Society

Esther Agbolade, President of the African Caribbean Society

“We want to provide an enabling environment for researchers that is conducive for entrepreneurship, innovation and leadership, leading to the sustainable development of the continent.”

*Prof Nelson Torto,
Executive Director,
African Academy of Sciences*





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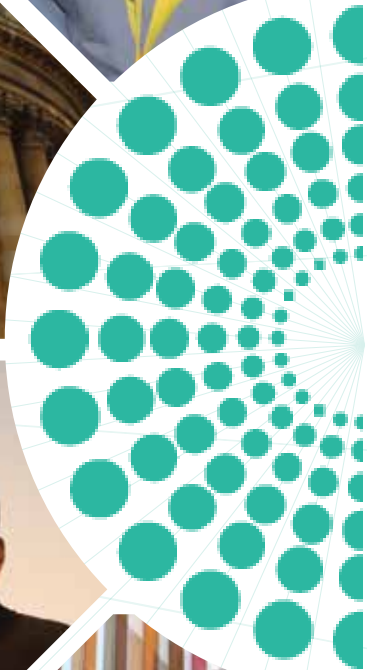


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