



Call for Applications: CARTA-PreventSVAC PhD Fellowships 2025

Background

The Consortium for Advanced Research Training in Africa ([CARTA](#)) is an initiative of eight African universities, four African research institutes, and eight non-African partners. CARTA offers an innovative model for doctoral training in sub-Saharan Africa to strengthen the capacity of participating institutions to conduct and lead globally competitive research. CARTA aims to produce a critical mass of high-quality graduates trained to address the complex issues surrounding health and development in Africa, retain them in the region, and provide them with a vibrant intellectual environment, as well as viable and challenging research and growth opportunities.

CARTA is proud to offer three PhD fellowships for staff members of partner institutions who wish to do research in the field of prevention of sexual violence against children (SVAC). **Only proposals in this area clearly focused on prevention will be accepted.**

CARTA-PreventSVAC PhD Fellowship

As part of its innovations, CARTA offers a collaborative doctoral training program in public and population health. This program has been developed in response to the great challenges faced by Africa's institutions of higher education in addressing the training and retention of the next generation of academics in the region. Specifically, CARTA seeks to fund candidates who will be future leaders in their institutions. That is, young, capable, and committed individuals who, in time, will ensure that their universities will be the institutions of choice for future generations of academics and university administrators wishing to make a positive impact on public and population health in Africa.

This call for CARTA PhD fellowships is open to staff members of participating institutions who are interested in conducting their PhD research on prevention of sexual violence against children. We welcome applications from any discipline, such as public health, demography, anthropology, communication, medicine, psychology, gender studies, and economics, among others, as long as the research question aims to contribute to increasing the understanding on prevention of sexual violence against children in Africa. CARTA is committed to gender equity in access to the training programs and governance structure and implements a series of interventions to support the progress of women in academia (see [CARTA's gender position](#)). Women are, therefore, particularly encouraged to apply.

Successful applicants will attend CARTA's innovative series of Joint Advanced Seminars (JASes) together with the fellows in CARTA Cohort 11. Both the development and delivery of these courses are jointly led by regional and international experts.

The seminars include didactic sessions, discussions, demonstrations, and practice computer labs. These activities collectively serve to:

1. Expose students to key theories and concepts, seminal readings, and research methods of disciplines relevant to public and population health;
2. Train students in critical research skills; and
3. Build and maintain a network of researchers for scientific collaborations, professional support, and mutually beneficial exchange of scientific resources.

JASes are offered once annually for four years to each cohort and build skills and conceptual depth from year to year. Each JAS runs for 3 to 4 weeks and some include on-line learning prior to the residential session. Specific topics covered in each JAS include the following (precise dates will be provided later in the fellowship):

- **JAS1 (March 2025)** builds critical thinking, technical skills, and other core research competencies, and introduces students to the essential concepts and seminal articles of the disciplines brought together under CARTA.
- **Inter-JAS (April-October 2025)** is an intense fully on-line academic writing course with mandatory assignments that must be submitted within the stipulated timelines.
- **JAS2 (November 2025)** focuses on data management and analysis. Fellows learn to use software packages for qualitative and quantitative data management and analyses. Practice sessions use real research data and current software packages for hands-on training
- **JAS3 (August 2027)** focuses on data presentation, the doctoral dissertation, and scientific writing and communication skills to facilitate results dissemination and policy engagement
- **JAS4 (March 2028)** addresses professional development including skills necessary to manage and teach large class sizes, raise and manage research funds, grant writing, and research management.

As an additional innovation, CARTA will introduce face-to-face and on-line training on researcher self-care and on doing research on contentious issues. This training will start in JAS1 and run through the whole PhD experience and will be offered to all fellows in cohort 11, with particular focus on the three CARTA-PreventSVAC fellows.

With this call, the CARTA program offers three PhD fellowships. They are open to staff members of CARTA African partner institutions **who plan to register for their PhD studies at their institution of employment and are eligible for fee waiver**. The fellowships, which are tenable at the CARTA African institutions, include the following benefits:

- The cost of the fellow's participation in the joint advanced seminars;
- A modest monthly stipend and moderate support for research activities;
- A laptop loaded with relevant software (1-time license only);
- Funds to attend one international conference; and
- Support to participate in training programs of choice.

Important note: The CARTA fellowships provide financial support for up to 48 months of study, which is accessible according to the guidelines on milestones and graduation ([see here](#)). The CARTA-PreventSVAC fellowships will NOT cover tuition fees, medical insurance, or travel support for fellows registered at a partner institution different from their own. Applicants must be staff of partner institutions and will be requested to show evidence of being eligible for fee waiver at the time of submitting the application. These conditions are non-negotiable.

The respective African partner institutions need to commit to continue paying fellows' salaries (or equivalent) as faculty members and to modify their workloads for the fellows. This is to enable them to fully participate in CARTA-organized activities pertaining to their PhD program and to concentrate on their PhD studies. The partner institutions will also need to commit to waive the fellows tuition fees when they register at the institution where they are employed. Fellows are encouraged to seek supplemental funding to cover additional costs of their doctoral program like additional research costs or further opportunities for training and scholarly exchange.

Eligible African Institutions

- Obafemi Awolowo University, Nigeria
- University of Ibadan, Nigeria
- University of Rwanda, Rwanda
- Makerere University, Uganda
- Moi University, Kenya
- University of Nairobi, Kenya
- Kamuzu University of Health Sciences, Malawi and its associates (through KUHeS)
- University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa
- African Population and Health Research Center, Kenya (only staff members with an agreement for the institution to cover fees and travel, or who can secure funds or a waiver at a CARTA partner institution and travel support – evidence required at the time of application)
- Agincourt Health and Population Unit, South Africa (only staff members eligible for tuition fee waivers at Wits)
- Ifakara Health Institute, Tanzania (only staff members with an agreement for the institution to cover fees and travel, or who can secure funds or a waiver at a CARTA partner institution and travel support – evidence required at the time of application)

Eligibility

- A Master's degree in a relevant field (MSc, MMed, MPhil).
- Prior admission into a PhD program is not required for application but awards are contingent on such admission being obtained at one of the participating African universities.
- Applicants for this program **must be full-time teaching or research staff at one of the participating African institutions** and should be committed to contributing towards building capacity at their institutions.
- Applicant's PhD research proposal must be related to prevention of sexual violence against children in Africa.

- Fellowships are only open to individuals who have not yet registered for a PhD or are in the very early stages (first year) of the PhD program and are yet to define their research proposal. Fellows seeking support to complete a PhD or secure an additional PhD are not eligible to apply.
- Applicants must commit to participation in all four annual residential Joint Advanced Seminars (JASes), and to engage in inter-seminar activities designed to keep fellows actively engaged and in continual communication with peers and mentors.
- Male applicants must be under the age of 40 years and female applicants under the age 45 years.

Application Procedure

1. Contact the CARTA focal person ([access list here](#)) at your institution to discuss your interest and clarify eligibility criteria.
2. Applicants are expected to submit a full application by **September 5, 2024** to **THE SECRETARIAT** via REDCap ([link](#)). The full application includes:
 - A full research proposal ([see the link to the form](#) to download and see the required fields and word limit)
 - Updated CV
 - Motivation letter (max 1000 words)
 - Letter of support from their institutional HoD committing to modify the workloads for the fellows, to enable them to fully participate in CARTA-organized activities pertaining to their PhD program and to allow them to dedicate part of their time to their own PhD research.
 - A scanned copy of their contract with the CARTA partner institution
 - Evidence of eligibility for fee waiver once they are registered at the institution where they are employed. For those at IHI and APHRC, a letter from the institution committing to cover full tuition fees and travel support to the institution of registration
3. CARTA partner institutions will confirm eligibility of the applicants by **September 8, 2024**.
4. Scientific review of the proposals will take place between **September 8 - 20, 2024**.
5. Final fellowship decision will be communicated by the CARTA Secretariat by **November 1, 2024**.

Applications will be accepted ONLY through REDCap ([link here](#)). All applicants are encouraged to access the system and start their application before writing anything down. Make sure the system is working and take note of all the required fields. No late or incomplete application will be considered under any circumstance. Deadline for submission is **Thursday September 5, 2024, at 5pm EAT. Sharp.**

Important Dates

- September 5, 2024: Deadline for submission of proposals and application materials
- November 1, 2024: Announcement of final fellowship decisions
- January 10, 2025: Enrollment for pre-JAS activities (on-line)
- March 1, 2025: Commencement of fellowship and in-person JAS1 (4 weeks)

CARTA Focal Persons

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