

Call for Applications: Postdoctoral Research Fellowships at Makerere University

Action-oriented Research for Locally Led Adaptation Policy and Practice

Makerere University's Department of Geography, Geo-informatics and Climatic Sciences in partnership with Quadrature Climate Foundation and Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre are seeking two fellows for Quadrature Climate Foundation (QCF) Fellowship Programme. This is a two-year post-doctoral programme fully funded by QCF, which is an independent charitable foundation working for a greener and fairer future. Applications for the two-year post-doctoral fellowship are invited from individuals with demonstrated interest and expertise in locally led adaptation to climate change research. This initiative is a unique and excellent opportunity to expand the network of interested individuals with researchers and decision-makers, as well as deliver action-oriented research to inform policy and practice. Depending on their interest, each applicant should choose one of the two thematic areas offered under the fellowship program:

1. Knowledge co-creation for locally led adaptation to climate change
2. Decentralized decision making for effective climate change adaptation and resilience

The Fellow working on the Thematic Area 1: knowledge co-creation for locally adaptation will explore collaborative learning processes (including informal learning) for climate change adaptation among smallholder farmers with focus on Uganda, with linkages to related work in Bangladesh, Mozambique and Nepal. The overall intention is to generate understanding of how decision making processes, across scales, can be linked to local and context specific knowledge systems and process for epistemic just adaptation. The key research questions are:

- What does the process of co-creating knowledge for locally led climate change adaptation look like in a rural smallholder farming setting of a Least Developed Country (LDC)?
- What are the possibilities, promises and pitfalls of knowledge co-creation for locally led adaptation planning?

The research will intentionally contribute to methodological and practice advances in co-creation of knowledge for locally led climate change adaptation.

The research on Thematic Area 2: decentralized decision making for effective adaptation and resilience will undertake scientific interrogation of a climate finance mechanism that has been designed for locally led adaptation and resilience in Uganda. The Fellow will largely focus on testing selected assumptions behind the design of the mechanism. The key questions are:

- How does effective locally led climate change adaptation and resilience building investment decision making look like in practice?
- What works and how does it work? What does not work and why?

Key considerations in the research will include local leadership, inclusion, context specificity, cross-scale, and capability strengthening. The targeted contributions of the fellowship include improved knowledge management for climate resilience planning and decision-making, strengthened evidence-based research-policy-practice dialogues, framework(s) for integrating local and experiential knowledges in resilience building investment decision making processes, among others.

The Fellows will be based, full-time, at Makerere University, Kampala as a core member of the team working on locally led adaptation and resilience. Their work will be conducted under the auspices of the Least Developed Countries Universities Consortium on Climate Change (LUCCC) through which Makerere University is engaged in research and knowledge management collaborations. The Fellowships will focus on Uganda, but with deliberate linkages across LDCs, which might necessitate travels for in-person working meetings.

Roles and responsibilities of the Postdoctoral Research Fellow

The Fellow will be highly motivated to work with a transdisciplinary research team, grow their research expertise, engage with climate change researchers, decision-makers, practitioners and generate different categories of publications. Makerere University will mentor to the Fellow to provide professional development support. Where needed, the Fellow will participate in teaching and community outreach activities including knowledge sharing in ways that foster collaborative research for adaptation policy and practice.

Requirements:

- A PhD, awarded within the previous five years, in a related discipline (e.g., geography, climate and society, sustainability, adaptation governance, epistemic justice, climate finance).
- Knowledge and experience of locally led adaptation
- Experience in synthesizing and managing datasets and literature.
- Experience in, and knowledgeable of, participatory and collaborative action-oriented research methodologies and tools.
- Demonstrated ability to produce research information products for different audiences.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills in English
- Demonstrated interest and experience in transdisciplinary collaborations across-scales including with local communities, decision-makers and practitioners
- Experience in giving international oral presentations and interest in public communication for wide-ranging categories of audiences
- Data and information visualisation skills will be an added advantage

Application requirements:

Applicants should submit a single PDF with: (i) an application letter not longer than 2 pages that includes indication of theme of interest, a description of demonstrated research interests, research expertise, and an explanation of how they can work as part of the transdisciplinary research team in line with the fellowship objectives described above; (ii) a CV including a publication list; (iii) copies of academic transcripts and/or certificates; (iv) an example of written work; (v) email addresses of two references who have been directly involved in their PhD research.

Applicants must submit the PDF application document to colocal.caes@mak.ac.ug. Please type “LUCCC PDR Application: COLOCAL-Makerere” as the subject line of the email.

Closing date

Midnight (GMT+3) on 15th May, 2026 or until the position is filled.

Selection process

Eligible and complete applications will be considered followed by communication with short-listed applicants. Makerere University, in consultation with Quadrature Climate Foundation and the Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre, will conduct interviews of the short-listed applicants.

If you have not heard from Makerere University within two months of the deadline, please assume your application has been unsuccessful.

Contact details for enquiries about this post-doc fellowship: colocal.caes@mak.ac.ug

The Makerere University reserves the right to

- Disqualify ineligible, incomplete and/or inappropriate applications;
- Change the conditions of the award or to make no awards at all