

Candidates sought for PhD in 'Leadership in Africa's Development'

The University of Africa, a private university within JSE-listed ADvTECH, is on track to start producing new authorities on leadership on the continent and is calling for candidates from across Africa to join the programme.



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“The PhD in Leadership in Africa’s Development is a work-based PhD programme. We expect practising executives to bring their experience and insights, with the aim of bringing into harmony the discord that currently exists in the borrowing of management concepts from elsewhere and inserting them into local African settings,” says Prof Mandi Rukuni, Professor Extraordinaire at the University of Africa.

Beyond the benefits for individual executives who participate, the programme has a broader aim to develop African management theory from the research and theoretical formulation of the practical experience and wisdom of African executives.

Professor Rukuni, who also heads the Barefoot Education for Africa Trust, and is one of the top global leaders in the field of African management, says the programme was developed after more than a decade of leadership training, during which he realised that there was a need for the mostly American theories to be informed by local societal culture.

“I started designing courses in line with this realisation and, as time went by, started mentoring senior executives across the African continent. This made me realise that there is both the existence of much tacit knowledge and a need for high-level research. The result is this work-based, research-driven PhD. It includes a large dose of peer learning and a multi-disciplinary interrogation of leadership.”

Launched at The University of Africa in 2015, the PhD Programme is now coming into its own, with the capacity to accept more candidates into the programme.

“The impact of the programme in coming years will make a significant difference on the continent. We are all used to international management theories but we now seek to capture African management and leadership theory in a body of work that will hopefully one day culminate in formal African management theory. Currently, most local executive leadership development and training programmes require substantially more in the line of African management principles - especially those principles scientifically tested with local data and evidence. We also need African professors in management to author more relevant textbooks.

“There is sufficient evidence from published literature that it is a global experience that societal culture does impact on organisational culture and vice versa. This PhD programme therefore draws on leadership theories from the US, Europe, Japan and elsewhere, and requires that students test these theories on their explanatory power in Africa, with the epistemological agenda to test the theories for the African setting. They are also required to bring in additional theses from African concepts, philosophies and experience.”

September colloquium in Lusaka

The programme will host a colloquium in Lusaka on 14-15 September 2017. Those interested in registering for the programme are required to hold a Master's Degree from a registered and accredited university or higher education institution, have relevant management experience of more than five years and must submit a pre-proposal for selection. The proposal should indicate the proposed research area or topic, the background and context to the topic, a problem statement, a literature review of at least 15 published research articles, and an indication of the methods envisaged. Candidates are expected to complete the programme within 3 years.

For more information, visit www.universityofafrica.net/SitePages/Post-Graduate%20Studies.aspx.

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