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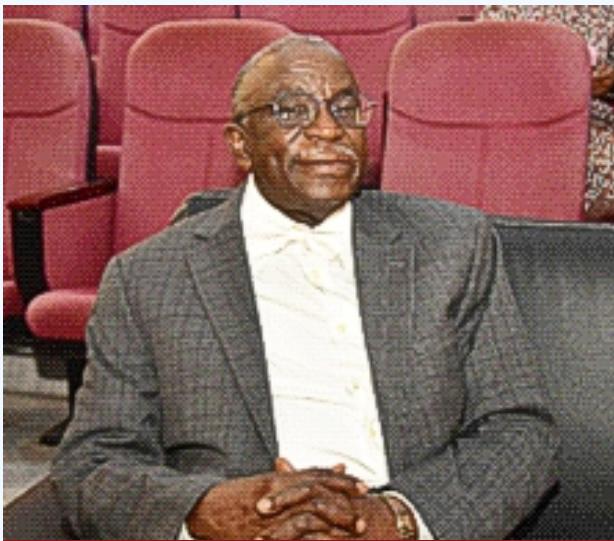
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Key Moments





Conveners Remarks



Jacob K. Olupona Ph.D. FNAL, NNOM

Hugh K. Foster Professor of African and African American Studies and Professor of African Religious Traditions. Chair of the Department of African and African American Studies
Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, USA

The IIAS has grown remarkably. I am impressed by the force of conviction shown by the senior faculty and the fellows, as well as the friends and institutions who have supported this cause. Together, we are transforming the successes we have had in the last nine years into an institution. Over the years, the IIAS has drawn an impressive number of major global scholars. They have reinforced the Institute through their commitment and dedication, absent of financial gains. By promoting cutting-edge research, these senior scholars have inspired emerging and prospective researchers. The engaging curricula cover a range of topics including academic writing, research organisation, academic leadership, new and emerging trends across the humanities and social sciences, new methodologies and theoretical frameworks, the process of publication in leading journals, and best ways of presenting one's work.

I am proud of the over 500 fellows who have benefited from these intellectual investments. The IIAS has garnered an impressive array of

alumni who are enriching Africa's academic landscape. Having been exposed to novel methodologies and trained in academic writing, these young scholars are positively changing the way scholarship is done on the continent. The issues and research problems they engage have a direct impact on policy and the academy. Fellows are selected annually following a widely disseminated call for applications. The potential they have shown during the Institute's sessions inspired us to establish annual Small Grants for fellows. They have been awarded every year since 2022. The grants have crucially assisted their awardees in their research, with a primary focus on facilitating their fieldwork.

A good number of the Institute's fellows have been promoted to senior ranks in the academy, as professors and associate professors. Some have been appointed to leadership positions as Directors of Research Units, Heads of Departments and Deans of Faculties. IIAS's intellectual investments are yielding remarkable fruit. I am confident that these fellows will make a strong impact on their universities, having benefited from the yearly sessions on academic leadership led by our senior faculty. These developments make me proud.

In recognition of the ongoing research done by fellows and faculty, IIAS has initiated a monthly webinar series that showcases studies in the Humanities and Sciences. These webinars offer consistent opportunities for young scholars to get feedback on their research from senior faculty and their peers. This peer review mechanism prepares research papers for publication in high impact journals internationally and locally. These webinars also showcase the multidisciplinary framework of all these scholars' recent work. Indeed, the annual Science Institute of the Science Institute recognizes that Humanities research is incomplete without input and collaboration from scientific disciplines and vice versa. The aim of the Science institute has been to foster

collaboration between the Sciences and the Humanities. This annual gathering connects fellows with intersecting research interests, leading to fruitful interdisciplinary interactions. A considerable number of keynote speakers and panel leaders have been active in promoting the Science Institute.

In the course of the past year, Senior Faculty of the Institute were honoured and celebrated nationally and internationally. Prof. Jacob Olupona was appointed as Hugh K. Foster Endowed Professor of African and African American Studies and Professor of African Religious Traditions in Harvard University and was celebrated at the Centre for Gender and Social Policy, OAU, Ile-Ife. Prof. Olutayo C. Adesina was honoured with the prestigious Global professorships award of the British Academy in the United Kingdom. Prof. Akanni Akinyemi was re-elected as the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research, Innovation, and Development) at the Obafemi Awolowo University. Prof. O.A. Oyeshile, one of the editors of the Institute's journal delivered the 550th Inaugural Lecture at the University of Ibadan. Prof. Morenike Oluwatoyin Ukpong delivered the 392nd Inaugural Lecture at Obafemi Awolowo University. Prof. Ukpong also delivered the 17th T. A. I. Grillo Distinguished Alumni Lecture at Obafemi Awolowo University. Also held this past year were the Retirement and Book Launch Ceremonies in honour of Professor Rosemary Olufunmilayo Soetan. Birthday ceremonies included that of Emeritus Prof. Funmi Togonu-Bickersteth, Prof. Olutayo Adesina and Prof. Afe Adogame.

Prof. Opeyemi Ekundayo was pronounced full Professor of Psychology, at the Obafemi Awolowo University, Professor Damilola T. Agbalajobi was pronounced full Professor of Political Science, Obafemi Awolowo University. She also gained a fellowship to the Global Forum on Democracy and Development in South America. Dr. Ayodun Stephen Ibidunni (2024 Fellow) was appointed Chair of the Southwest Director of Entrepreneurship Centre (DECs) of

Nigerian Universities. Dr. Morufu Bukola Omigbule was promoted to the rank of Reader. He also published a book titled *Rituals of Ilé-Ifé, Nigeria: Narratives and Performances of Archetypes*. Dr. Folashade Hunsu was pronounced full Professor of English at OAU. While Dr. Ademola Adesola published a book titled *Representations of Child Soldiers in Contemporary African Narratives*.

Fellows who were awarded international grants include Dr. Tolu Osayomi (2017 Fellow) who started and completed his Africa-Oxford Research Grant and Visiting Scholar programme at the University of Oxford. Chukwuemeka Oko-Otu (2023 fellow) completed his PhD viva at the University of Buckingham, United Kingdom. He also won a research grant from the Royal Historical Society, United Kingdom. Dr. Nlogu Ngozi Dorothy (2023 Fellow) was awarded the Association of Commonwealth Universities Career Conference Grant 2024 for emerging researchers. Dr. Tayo Owoeye, the IIAS Program Director, collaborated with Jambo Radio in Scotland to host a podcast on trending issues in Africa and Africans in the diaspora. Dr. Chiebere Victor Adim and Dr. Ngozika Obi-Ani were awarded Visiting fellowships at the African Studies Centre, Leiden in the Netherlands. The Hub Representative of the North Hub in Nigeria-Safiya Johnson Gatama organised the 1st North Hub Webinar Series whose Guest Speaker was Prof. Hauwa'u Evelyn Yusuf (Professor of Criminology and Gender Studies, Kaduna State University in Nigeria).

The Institute's Journal of Cultures and Ideas is an international and interdisciplinary journal that seeks to extend the scope of scholarly debate about Africa and African issues. The journal provides a platform for interdisciplinary debates on Africa in fields such as anthropology, history, sociology, archaeology law, economics, political science demography, psychology, development studies, education, gender, peace and conflict studies literature and urban studies. The journal also welcomes presentations from other disciplines in so far as they interrogate aspects of

culture and society. Empirical and theoretical studies that contribute to a better understanding of Africa and the African experience are welcomed. Special issues of the journal by Guest Editors will be published from time to time.

Considering the range of the responsibilities that the Institute has taken upon itself, it is working hard to erect structures on its acquired land to run all its functioning sections. Already, surveys and other pre-construction activities are ongoing. In its final development stage, the 10-acre land would accommodate a theatre for plenary sessions, a guest house for visiting academics, offices for the Institute's staff, and other structures meant to ease the organization

of the yearly summer and science institutes. Presently, the IIAS seeks donors and endowment opportunities to fund the construction project. With impressive human capital already developed, the Institute is strengthening knowledge production for Africa's advancement and its future.

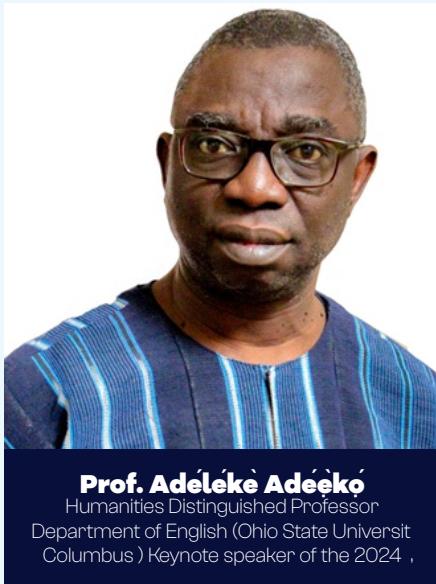
Professor Jacob Olupona

Convener, IIAS Summer Institute.



LEADING STORIES FROM THE 2024 SUMMER INSTITUTE

BUILDING COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE: INTERDISCIPLINARY COLLABORATION AND ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP IN AFRICA



ANIMATING THE INTELLECT IN AFRICA OF THE TWENTY FIRST CENTURY

In twenty-first century Africa, intellectual life must produce development-oriented results through the activities of discovery, invention, description and prescription. This was underscored by Professor Adeleke Adeeko in his keynote address at the 8th Summer Institute at Ile-Ife in Nigeria, Professor Adeeko emphasised what he called "Thick Prescriptions/Thin Descriptions". He highlighted fundamental activities that should bind academics and professionals in the continent. In his argument, these two categories of intellectuals should adopt four aspects of the intellectual lifestyle: discovery, invention, description and prescription.

Exploring Discovery and Invention as Intellectual Goals

Professor Adeeko began by identifying discovery and invention as the two main goals of intellectual life. He explained that academic work navigates two broad yet interconnected pathways. Invention involves the fabrication and installation of new ideas, processes, or objects. Inventions are created by combining existing elements in novel ways, often using existing tools. Invention stems from the creative will to solve a problem or to fulfill a need, driven by a restless, mindful, and active imagination. Professor Adeeko identified discovery as locating or uncovering existing truths or phenomena. It is often accidental or incidental, revealing what already exists but is yet to be known. He illustrated this point by referencing historical figures like Mungo Park and Christopher Columbus, who are often celebrated for their discoveries, even though the lands they found had always existed. According to Professor Adeeko, both discovery and invention result from creative will and the ability to conjure new ideas, objects, or thoughts into existence. He highlighted the paradox that while invention creates new realities, discoveries reveal aspects of existing realities, leading to the advancement of knowledge.

The Role of Description and Prescription

Professor Adeeko delved into the concepts of description and prescription, describing them as essential tools for intellectual work. Description involves recording or depicting what is already present, aiming to present occurrences, units, sequences, combinations, and attributes of observed phenomena accurately and truthfully. Descriptive work ensures intellectual honesty by focusing on what is. He then identified prescription in contrast to description. Prescription outlines what ought to be. It is often predictive and normative, setting expectations and guiding actions. Prescriptive statements suggest changes or improvements based on descriptive findings. He argued that both prescription and description are vital in academic work. However, he urged scholars to remain self-aware and self-critical, constantly questioning their assumptions and the implications of their findings. He encouraged academics to avoid taking prescriptive shortcuts that are not grounded in accurate descriptions of existing realities.

Ethical Leadership and Interdisciplinary Collaboration

Addressing the theme of leadership, Professor Adeeko proposed a practice-defined rather thancharisma-based approach to leadership. He argued that true leadership emerges from collaborative and ethical academic practices aimed at well-articulated goals of discovery and invention. Professor Adeeko emphasized the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration, urging scholars to break free from disciplinary silos. He explained that complex problems require multidimensional and multidisciplinary approaches. He illustrated this point with examples from his own experiences, including a missed opportunity to collaborate on an MRI brain scanning project to investigate the neurological effects of Yoruba praise poetry. Underscoring the value of interdisciplinary research in driving innovative discoveries and inventions, he challenged scholars to be adventurous, inventive, and collaborative, embracing new methods and perspectives to advance knowledge.

African Context and Ethical Considerations

A significant portion of Professor Adeeko's keynote addressed the importance of ethical considerations in academic work, especially in the African context. Intellectual work in Africa has often been shaped by external prescriptions that fail to resonate with local realities. Professor Adeeko emphasised the need for African scholars to critically evaluate imported ideas and prescriptions, ensuring that they are grounded in the realities of local contexts. He challenged scholars to go beyond merely adopting foreign models, inventing and discovering ideas that are relevant and meaningful to their communities. To illustrate this injunction, he referenced Reverend Philip Kweku, the first non-European ordained in the Anglican Church, whose prescriptive judgments about his community were disconnected from the realities he observed. Professor Adeeko used this example to caution against the uncritical adoption of external prescriptions, urging scholars to align their academic work with the lived experiences and cultural contexts of the communities they study.

Call to Action: Inventive and Ethical Scholarship

In his closing remarks, Professor Adeeko called for action from academics and researchers. He encouraged them to embrace interdisciplinary collaboration to solve complex problems and create innovative solutions. He also insisted that they engage in ethical scholarship, grounding prescriptions in accurate descriptions of existing realities, especially in the African context. Adopt adventure and inventiveness, he enjoined, approaching research with a spirit of invention and discovery, daring to challenge conventional boundaries and methodologies. Practice self-awareness and self-criticism by continuously questioning the assumptions, methods, and ethical implications of academic work. Professor Adeeko's keynote concluded with a reminder that academic work is fundamentally interconnected and collaborative. He urged scholars to pursue intellectual honesty through accurate descriptions while daring to invent.



Snapshot of fellows during Prof. Adéleke Adeeko's Keynote address

GROWTH IN RESEARCH: TAKING IT PERSONAL

Growth in academic research is an uphill task that cannot be accomplished without a significant dose of personal conviction. This was the argument of Professor Afe Adogame, who led one of the sessions on "Growing with your Research" at the 8th Annual Summer Institute. He shared his personal experiences and valuable lessons learned throughout his academic journey, emphasising perseverance, self-confidence, and strategic career goals. Reflecting on his early days, Professor Adogame admitted feeling reluctant to introduce himself as a student of Religious Studies, especially when surrounded by peers who were pursuing conventional fields like medicine, law, or pharmacy. He explained how societal expectations initially made him ashamed of his academic field of study. However, with the benefit of hindsight, he expressed immense retroactive pride in his choice. His journey demonstrates how any field of study, no matter how unconventional, can lead to impactful and rewarding academic achievements. Professor Adogame highlighted how his academic life transformed during his master's program at Obafemi Awolowo University, where he was mentored by distinguished scholars like Professor Jacob Kehinde Olupona. Sharing his international experiences, Professor Adogame revealed the challenges he faced while attending academic conferences in Europe often encountered colleagues repeatedly at global academic that his African long-standing narratives his presence at such both fundamental and

Guided by his mentor, he chose to respond to resilience. "Just keep keep publishing," his advice to heart, consistently produced gaining international Reflecting on his prolific University of Edinburgh, shared how his sometimes sparked facing skepticism, his high-impact publications received widespread recognition worldwide, solidifying his academic reputation.

He closed his address by urging young scholars to resist the temptation to conform or engage in office politics. Instead, he advised them to focus on their goals and maintain unwavering commitment to their research pursuits. "Don't go with the crowd. Stand out, be productive, and let your work speak for you," he concluded.



**Snapshot of Prof. Afe
Adogame speaking at the
2024 IIAS Summer Institute**

and the United States. He subtle biases, with questioning his presence events. He later realised perspective challenged in African Studies, making international meetings significant.

late Professor Okukwu, he these biases with quiet doing your research and mentor advised. Taking this Professor Adogame high-quality research, recognition and respect. publishing career at the Professor Adogame exceptional productivity controversy. Despite

ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP VIA SOUND SCHOLARSHIP

Academic leadership is not a title thrust upon those who are academics, but a trajectory and product of sound scholarship and commitment to intellectual life. Sharing strategies and insights towards achieving academic leadership at the 2024 Summer Institute, Professor Afe Adogame emphasised that the journey to academic leadership is not attained in a hurry but through a gradual process that requires deliberate effort and strategic planning. He highlighted that young academics need to develop strategies in two critical areas: research and writing. What scholars research and publish significantly contribute to their status as academic leaders. "You don't have to be a vice chancellor or research director to lead in your field. Your contributions through research and writing can establish your leadership," he noted.

He challenged academics to reflect on their long-term goals by asking themselves, "What do you want to be known for in five to ten years?" According to him, academic leadership is built on consistent and meaningful contributions rather than connections or favoritism.

Addressing PhD graduates and candidates, Professor Adogame encouraged them not to let their dissertations gather dust but to transform them into books or journal articles. He warned about the risks of leaving unpublished works vulnerable to intellectual theft, where others might exploit the ideas embedded in them. "Publishing your dissertation protects your intellectual property and establishes you as a thought leader in your field," he stated. He urged scholars to think strategically about disseminating their research, ensuring consistency and visibility in their academic contributions. Professor Adogame also emphasised the importance of networking and joining professional guilds. He advised scholars to attend at least two conferences annually, including international ones that are supported by travel grants. Sharing his personal experience, he revealed that consistent participation in conferences significantly contributed to his visibility and recognition in the academic community.



Snapshot of Prof. Afe Adogame with fellows and participants of the 2024 Summer Institute

RECONCILING AFRICA, AFRICANS, THE DIASPORA AND AFRICAN SCHOLARS

Researchers often overlook the importance of intentional communication in their methodology. Professor Adogame explained that media could be leveraged both as a data collection tool and as a data source, especially in today's digital age. For instance, social media platforms, online communities, and virtual events can serve as rich data fields, particularly in the post-COVID era where virtual interactions have become the norm. Professor Adogame discussed the emergence of virtual methodologies, which gained prominence during the COVID-19 pandemic. He illustrated this by citing examples from his research on online religious communities, such as virtual churches that exist exclusively online without physical gatherings. He explained the importance of distinguishing between "online religion" (communities that solely exist online) and "religion online" (traditional religious groups using online platforms for dissemination). He also highlighted the complexities and challenges of virtual methodologies, including ethical considerations and credibility issues. For example, researchers need to critically evaluate the authenticity and reliability of online sources.

In the final segment of his speech, Professor Adogame discussed strategic output and dissemination as key components of effective media communication. He emphasised the importance of planning dissemination strategies from the proposal-writing stage, urging researchers to think about their desired impact and the best platforms to reach their audiences. He explored various dissemination channels. Social Media - recognised as a powerful tool for reaching wider audiences, social media platforms offer researchers the opportunity to share their findings in accessible formats. However, he cautioned against citing informal platforms like WhatsApp in academic publications. Professor Adogame encouraged researchers to explore electronic journals, blogs, radio, and TV interviews as credible avenues for dissemination. He noted that participation in public discussions could enhance researchers' visibility and contribute to public knowledge. Despite the digital shift, traditional outlets such as newspapers and magazines remain relevant for reaching certain demographics. He urged researchers to utilise a combination of print and digital platforms for maximum impact.



Professor Adogame concluded his keynote by reiterating the importance of having a well-rounded communication strategy embedded throughout the research lifecycle from conceptualisation to

WANTED: TECH-SAVVY RESEARCH COMMUNICATION

Integrating tech-savvy communication strategies with research methods, methodologies and research content constitutes a fundamental aspect of academic research and knowledge production. The virtual domain offers, in the words of Professor Adogame, an interesting opportunity for creative data sourcing and interpretation.

Creative and strategic communication of one's research and research output via social media is a strong strategy for knowledge creation and dissemination: where and how research is represented are as important as what is presented. At the 8th Annual Summer Institute, renowned academic Professor Afe Adogame spoke on "Media Communication for Researchers," highlighting the critical role of strategic communication in enhancing research impact and engagement. Professor Adogame underscored the importance of intentionality in media communication for researchers. He noted that in today's technology-driven world, researchers must develop well-thought-out communication strategies to effectively disseminate their findings. He challenged scholars to consider their target audience from the start, asking the pivotal question, "Who am I writing for?"

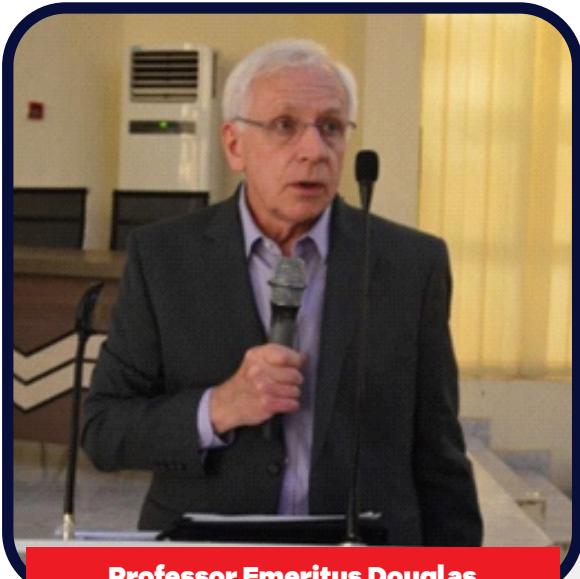
He stressed that effective communication begins with identifying the intended audience, which could include multiple groups such as academics, policymakers, or the general public. He urged researchers to adapt their language and messaging to suit different audiences, noting that complex academic jargon may alienate non-specialist readers. For example, if addressing market women or farmers, researchers should use simple, relatable language to convey their findings. Interdisciplinary research requires strategic communication tailored to various academic fields. This involves avoiding discipline-specific terminologies and making the research accessible to readers from diverse backgrounds. According to Professor Adogame, this approach not only broadens the reach of research findings but also enhances their societal impact. The keynote address further explored the integration of communication strategies with research methods and methodologies. Professor Adogame clarified the difference between the two, explaining that research methods relate to data collection and analysis tools, such as ethnography, interviews, focus groups, and archival research. In contrast, research methodology refers to the underlying philosophy guiding these methods.



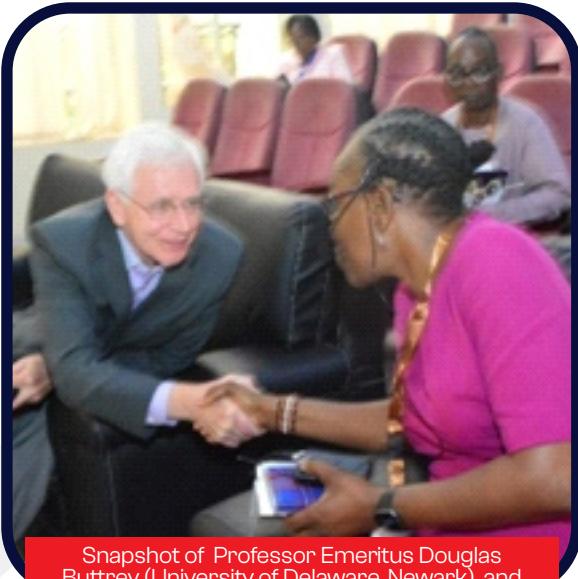
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Professor Adogame concluded his keynote by reiterating the importance of having a well-rounded communication strategy embedded throughout the research lifecycle from conceptualisation to dissemination. He highlighted that effective communication is not just about publishing in academic journals but also about making research findings understandable and relevant to non-academic audiences. He challenged researchers to go beyond conventional dissemination methods and explore modern digital tools while maintaining academic integrity. Strategic communication and intentional dissemination are essential for enhancing the societal impact of academic research.



Professor Emeritus Douglas Buttrey
Buttrey (University of Delaware, Newark)



Snapshot of Professor Emeritus Douglas Buttrey (University of Delaware, Newark) and Prof Bolanle Oboh (Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic & Research, UNILAG)



Prof. Moradewun Adejunmobi (U.C. Davis) -On screen and Prof. Matthew Olasupo (OAU)



Dr. Mirian Ngozi Alike, Nnamdi Azikwe University.



Snapshot of a Stretching Break During the 2024 Summer Institute

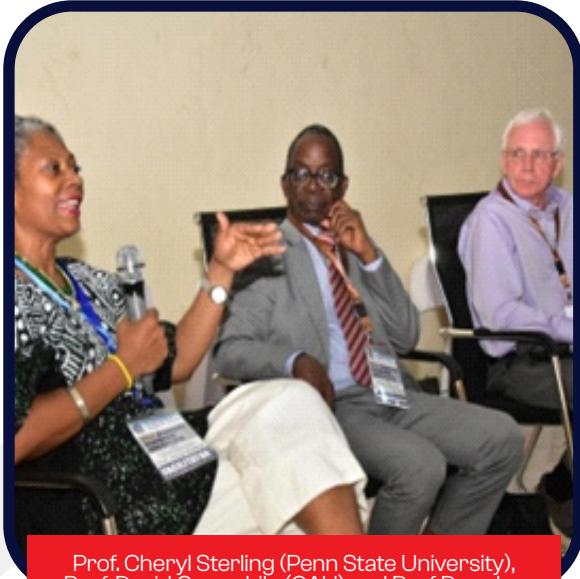
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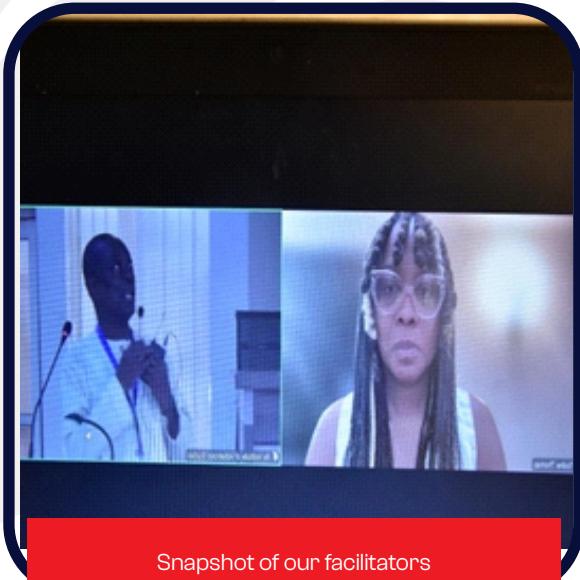
Dr. Mirian Ngozi Alike and Prof. Olutayo Adesina



Prof. Cheryl Sterling (Penn State University),
Prof. David Ogungbile (OAU) and Prof Douglas
Buttrey (University of Delaware, Newark)



The 2024 fellows



Snapshot of our facilitators



Interactive Session among Fellows

REPORT





The Annual Tour of Ile-Ife and Visit to the IIAS Permanent Site



Chronicles of the 2024 Summer Institute Sessions

The IIAS 2024 Summer Institute offered scholars a broad range of capacity building and motivational sessions on self-development, leadership and academic integrity, research, truth finding and storytelling, academic communication, the African research landscape, Resources, Artificial Intelligence, technology and the Curriculum and historical research, collaboration and networking, as well as the cultural episteme.

Self-Development

One of the sessions examined the ways in which fellows can maximize the opportunities provided by the IIAS. One of the speakers, **Dr Tayo Owoeye**, emphasised the importance of personal and professional engagement as a strategy for unlocking opportunities within the Institute and beyond. He used the acronym DIY (Do It Yourself) to encourage participants to take proactive steps in utilizing their skills to advance their lives and careers. Participants were enjoined to adopt a critical approach to issues in their fields and place importance on active personal and professional development. The session stressed the importance of self-reliance by being committed to oneself.



Professor Adogame emphasised that scholars should prioritize their academic development through extensive reading. He noted the importance of networking within academic circles, asserting that a lack of

networking can lead to what he termed "academic suicide." He discussed the value of effective grant writing, the importance of academic networking, and the need for scholars to actively seek out and utilize available resources to support their research endeavours. He also introduced the fellows to the art of abstract writing, highlighting its critical role in securing research grants.

Dr. Nkatha Kabira led the session on elevator pitches and self-pitches. The session was designed to equip the fellows with strategies to deliver concise, impactful narratives that resonate with their audience. Dr. Kabira mentioned that a successful pitch is characterized by the combination of passion and precision. She emphasized that while passion conveys enthusiasm and commitment, precision ensures that the message is clear and impactful. She noted that a pitch should be succinct yet powerful, able to convey the key message within a short time frame.

Dr. Sheila Otieno highlighted that self-awareness is essential for success in the diaspora, noting that understanding one's strengths and weaknesses helps in navigating challenges effectively. She advised cultivating a strong reading habit early, as it enhances writing skills. **Dr. Sheila** stressed that scholars should publish only when they have something significant to contribute, prioritizing quality over quantity. She also encouraged participants to stay informed about current trends through the press and other sources. Finally, she highlighted the importance of expressing ideas clearly and compellingly, ensuring that one's work stands out and adds meaningful value to the field.

Dr. Wale Olaopa highlighted the challenges of academia in Nigeria but stressed that persistence and hard work are crucial. He shared his experience of overcoming difficulties during his M.Sc. in Nigeria before finding a more supportive academic environment in South Africa. There, his supervisor offered strong support, even helping to facilitate his family's

attendance at his graduation.

Dr Nkatha Kabira underscored the value of building a global network through platforms like IIAS, which fosters a sense of family across borders. She highlighted the importance of understanding one's identity and background, sharing her journey of self-discovery as a Black, Christian African woman. She also noted how knowledge and education have profoundly shaped her personal and professional growth.

Dr. Ademola Adesola highlighted the importance of continuous self-investment to avoid stagnation and keep the mind active. He advised scholars to be well-rounded rather than narrowly focused. He pointed out the demands of working abroad and stressed the need to stay engaged with one's field. Maintaining connections with colleagues in Nigeria and attending relevant conferences helps scholars remain informed and connected.

Dr. Tayo Owoeye highlighted the importance of working towards becoming the person you aspire to be, even without a clear path. He encouraged openness to learning from both professors and peers. While having specific career goals is valuable, he advised that fellows remain open to unexpected opportunities, as they can lead to growth and success.

Prof. Jacob Olupona noted that both character and academic learning are vital. He encouraged active engagement with issues and maintaining integrity. Success involves not only publishing but also showing kindness in professional relationships. The panel stressed self-awareness, persistence, and networking, highlighting the importance of character, continuous learning, and maintaining strong connections both at home and abroad.

Academic Leadership and Integrity

Prof. Afe Adogame stressed the importance of taking charge of one's academic journey. He advised the Fellows not to let their thesis gather dust in their department offices but to actively pursue publishing their dissertations and turning them into books.

Prof. Jacob Olupona emphasized the importance of mentorship, inclusivity, and supporting younger colleagues in academia. He

encouraged confidence, integrity, and speaking truth to power.

Emeritus Prof. Funmi Togonu-Bickersteth emphasized that academic leadership starts now, through integrity, resilience, and proactivity. She encouraged Fellows, especially women, to embrace responsibilities, attend meetings, publish widely, and keep learning. She stressed the value of mentorship, attending conferences, and staying engaged in their fields. Leadership, she noted, is demonstrated through actions, not just positions held.



Prof. Jacob Olupona noted that both character and academic learning are vital. He encouraged active engagement with issues and maintaining integrity. On leading others in the academia, Prof. Jacob Olupona emphasized the importance of being kind to students and others, especially in cross-cultural contexts. He encouraged consistent reading and intellectual development as essential habits for academic growth. He further stressed the need to invest time and effort in one's academic pursuits. He then advised against arrogance and urged participants to remain humble and true to themselves. Fellows should have a strong understanding of their field, remain versatile, and not allow others to dictate their career paths; these qualities are essential for successful academic leadership. Prof. Olupona emphasized the need for leaders to have a succession plan in place to ensure that their contributions and achievements do not crumble after they leave their positions.

Research, Truth finding and Storytelling

Prof Ayodeji Ogunnaike emphasised that scholars' objective of searching for truth is noble but that truth as a concept is abstract and fluid, often shaped by context and personal

experience. Unlike facts, truth is not easily transmitted but is deeply understood through experience and storytelling. Prof. Ogunnaike highlighted the importance of storytelling as an art form, essential in conveying experiences and truths.

Prof. Adogame distinguished between Searching and Researching. He stated that searching involves looking into, examining, uncovering, and finding information, whereas research is a careful and diligent search that includes systematic inquiry, collecting information, organized study, and creative and systematic work to investigate unknowns. Prof. Adogame's session provided a comprehensive understanding of research fundamentals, the importance of having a clear strategy, and the differences between methods and methodologies. The focus on intentionality, positionality, and self-reflection emphasized the importance of a thoughtful and reflective approach to research.

Further, Professor Victor Counted urged the scholars to focus on conceptualizing abstract ideas and translating them into researchable variables. Prof. Counted explained the importance of conceptualization in research. He emphasized that an idea becomes researchable only when it is clearly defined and conceptualized. This involves breaking down a broad concept into specific, manageable parts that can be explored in a research context.

Prof. Dianne Stewart and Prof. Tracey Hucks engaged in a profound discussion about the intersection of storytelling and narrative in research. They highlighted the importance of storytelling in academia, emphasizing how narratives shape and inform research processes and outcomes.



The session also touched on the role of collaboration in academic work, particularly in emerging fields. The speakers underscored the importance of courage in pursuing collaborative research, especially in emerging fields where uncertainty is high. They reflected on the concept of being "sister intellectual soulmates," sharing gravitas and wisdom through meaningful mentoring relationships.

Professor Sterling emphasized how African literature has become a powerful tool for examining and challenging historical and contemporary injustices. The session highlighted how African authors are addressing these issues through their writing, using literature as a medium to connect African experiences with global movements for equality and human rights. Prof. Sterling also discussed the role of African literature in shaping and reshaping narratives about the African continent and its diaspora, stressing its importance in the ongoing conversations about race, identity, and belonging in the transnational age.

Academic Communication

Dr Samantha Lakin underscored the need for academics to communicate their findings in ways that can influence policy decisions and shape public discourse. The first and most important step in writing for policy is understanding your audience. This involves recognizing the level of knowledge, interests, and needs of policymakers or other stakeholders. Tailoring your language and approach to this audience is essential for effective communication. Dr. Lakin concluded by reaffirming that the value of academic research lies in its ability to offer solutions to complex policy issues. By writing effectively for policy, scholars can make significant contributions to societal progress. Dr. Lakin stressed the need for intellectual communities where interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary, and transdisciplinary inquiries can occur. These communities can be regional or sub-regional practice groups that bring together scholars and practitioners from different cultural backgrounds to address common goals and challenges. She said that cross-cultural collaborations enrich research by incorporating

diverse perspectives and approaches, leading to more comprehensive and innovative solutions.

Prof. Afe Adogame, Prof. Douglas Buttrey, and Prof. Taiwo Soneye emphasized that symbolic communication plays a crucial role in how we convey and interpret messages. Understanding the symbols and signs used in communication is essential for effective representation. Ethical considerations are also vital in how we communicate, particularly in the media. Finally, the way we choose to represent information has a significant impact on public perception and understanding. The session thus highlighted the importance of being mindful of our media habits.



The African landscape in Research

Prof. Ayodeji Ogunnaike pointed out the lack of focus on Africa within the scholarly field of Psychology. He stressed the importance of considering cultural values when assessing happiness and human flourishing, particularly within African traditional religions. Prof. Ogunnaike also discussed the need to harness local knowledge to inform global science, emphasizing that flourishing is defined differently across various African cultures.

Dr Christopher Smith highlighted "Why academia and industry should collaborate." Dr. Smith and the fellows explored several answers to this question, including the need for innovation, practical experience, feedback, bridging wisdom and skill gaps, and enhancing knowledge creation. Dr. Smith concluded by stressing the need for partnership and flexibility in industry-academia collaborations, highlighting the potential these partnerships have to address

the educational and economic challenges facing Africa.

Prof. Afe Adogame noted that no single field of expertise is sufficient to address global crises such as climate change, pandemics, and the threats posed by Artificial Intelligence (AI), especially in Africa. He highlighted the various types of collaborations: disciplinary, multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, transdisciplinary, and inter-institutional, that are needed to confront global and local crises. He concluded by sharing a toolkit for Interdisciplinary Research: addressing multiple audiences, tailoring communication to resonate with different stakeholders, avoiding assumptions, justifying interdisciplinary approaches, and maintaining clarity.

Resources, AI, technology and the Curriculum

The focus of the session led by Professor Todne Thomas was broader academic research and the availability of resources within the contemporary digital era. There was an emphasis on utilizing up-to-date resources and the latest research findings, as well as encouragement to integrate contemporary digital tools and platforms into academic work. The session discussed the broad range of resources available in the digital age, including online databases, journals, and academic networks. Prof. Thomas stressed the importance of not relying on sources that are 20 years old or older. He highlighted the need to rely on recent studies and current research to ensure the relevance and accuracy of academic work.

Dr Lukman Olasunkanmi and other facilitators underscored the importance of ethical and responsible use of AI in research and education. They advised both students and lecturers to be mindful of the implications of AI technologies, particularly in terms of data privacy, bias, and the potential for over-reliance on automated systems. They called for a balanced approach to integrating AI into education. While AI offers significant potential for innovation and transformation, it also presents challenges that must be addressed thoughtfully. The panelists encouraged academics to be

deliberate in their use of AI, ensuring that it complements rather than replaces the human elements of teaching and learning. By focusing on the responsible use of AI, educators can harness its benefits while mitigating its risks.

Prof. Lombe led a practical workshop, providing strategies for designing effective and engaging learner experiences. She encouraged participants to establish the goal, rationale, and title for the course, ensure the course addresses a gap in the existing curriculum, classify objectives into primary, weekly, and broader goals, consider the methods and strategies for delivering course content, and develop a rubric for assessment, allowing for reflection and necessary adjustments. Prof. Lombe emphasized that theory is expansive and continually evolving, encouraging Fellows to incorporate this understanding into course development. The workshop provided hands-on experience in course development, highlighting the importance of thoughtful and structured planning in creating effective learning experiences.

Prof Simeon Ilesanmi discussed the need for educators to move beyond traditional teaching methods to foster a more engaging and effective learning environment. He analysed the sociological makeup of tertiary institutions, highlighting the roles of three main groups: students, teachers, and the management team, including policymakers. Strategies to enhance student engagement and learning outcomes: these include homework assignment model, audience response system, peer-review method, inquiry-based learning, and Socratic method. He urged educators to move away from purely traditional methods and towards

more dynamic, student-centred approaches.

On Historical Research

Prof. Tunde Decker discussed the expansive nature of history, emphasizing that historical research covers a vast array of topics and areas. He highlighted two key perspectives in historical research: Textuality, the analysis of historical records and texts, focusing on how they are written, interpreted, and understood; and Subjectivity, the consideration of biases and perspectives in historical narratives and tools, given that history is often shaped by the views of those who record it. Prof. Abimbola Adesoji emphasized the growing importance of social history, which focuses on the lives, experiences, and histories of ordinary people. Prof. Olufemi Vaughan shared his experience of writing a book based on a century of letters, which provided a unique insight into generational communication within his family. He emphasized the value of archived research, particularly colonial and missionary archives, which remain some of the most important and widely used resources for historians. These archives offer rich, detailed records that can shed light on various aspects of historical events and trends.

In the closing session of the Summer Institute, the Convener Professor Jacob Olupona concluded the session with a vote of thanks, acknowledging the importance of every participant. He highlighted the challenge of not being able to accommodate more fellows due to limited funds and expressed his appreciation for the contributions and efforts of all involved.

The IIAS 2024 Science Institute

Cultural Imperatives of Academic Collaboration in Africa

African Context and Ethical Considerations

Academic collaboration among African scholars should lean into the cultural origins of communalism in Africa in order to unleash the potentials of collective action in solving all forms of development challenges. Giving the opening remarks at the IIAS Science Institute, Prof. Timothy O. Olawumi, communalism, in the form of academic collaboration is an opportunity that African scholars should endeavour to utilise. The sense in which academic collaboration can foster research and leadership resonates with the spirit of African communalism. Welcoming the Vice Chancellor of the Obafemi Awolowo University, faculty, fellows, participants, guests and the media to the Science Institute, academics in Africa should not find it difficult to use collectively approved methodologies to interrogate phenomena in the continent. In ancient Africa communal action in addressing challenges generated desirable results. This cultural practice should be inculcated into academic practice to generate collective wisdom and understanding which could be harnessed positively.

While delivering his keynote Scientific Excellence: A Research Leadership in Institute, Professor Timothy researchers often excel in struggle to achieve the same. He questioned why this is to Africa's lack of leadership. He outlined the approaches to research building research resilience, research visibility. He also traditional hierarchical which stifle innovation and keynote stressed the and inclusive research career researchers in hands-local expertise and research networks. Professor Olawumi highlighted the need for interdisciplinary collaboration, sustainable research communities, and structured career development programs. He stressed the importance of mentorship and of creating opportunities for early-career researchers to develop their skills. He concluded by highlighting the significance of research visibility through open-access communication, social media engagement, and international partnerships. While expressing his gratitude to friends and supporters of the Institute, Professor Olupona introduced the theme, "Community of Practice: Collaboration and Academic Leadership for Science, Technology, Education, and Research in Africa," emphasising its significance in fostering innovation and sustainable progress through collaboration. Collective expertise within the community is crucial for advancing academic leadership and pioneering research, particularly in science and technology fields that are essential for addressing contemporary challenges and strengthening education systems.

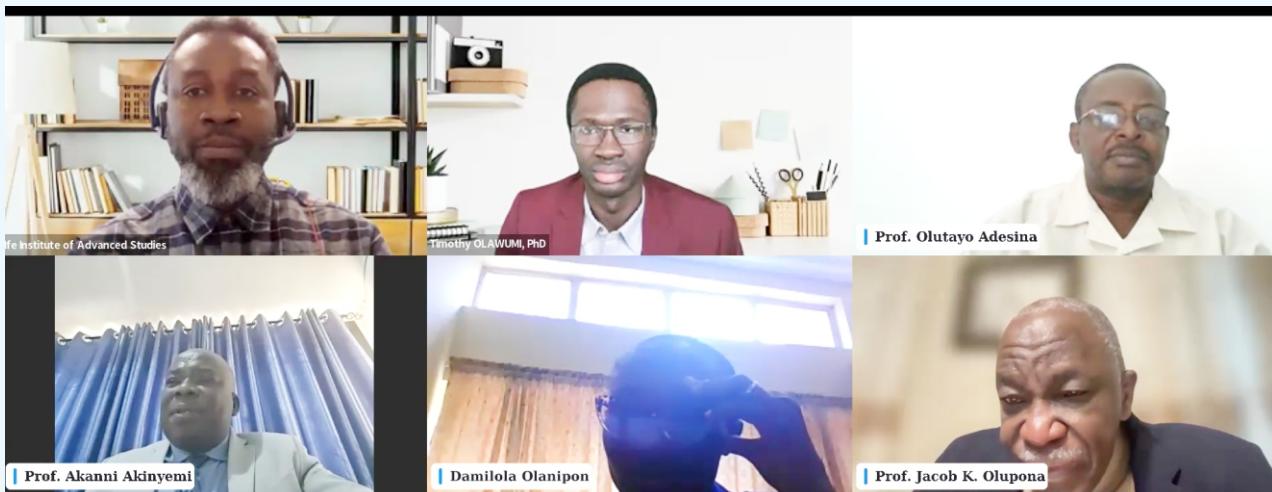


Prof. Timothy O. Olawumi
School of Computing, Engineering and Built Environment

Edinburgh Napier University, Merchiston Campus, EH10 5DT Scotland, UK, 2024
Speaker at the 2025 IIAS Science Institute

address titled "Rethinking Framework for Collaborative Africa" at the Science Olawumi stated that African their work outside Africa but success within the continent, disparity exists and attributed collaborative research need for innovative leadership with the aim of mentoring, and increasing discussed the challenges of research models in Africa, limit capacity building. The importance of decentralized leadership, involving early-on projects, and leveraging technology to build strong

Reflecting on the Institute's eight-year history, Professor Olupona acknowledged its impact in mentoring scholars globally and establishing IIAS hubs across Africa. He noted that this year's session brings together nearly forty members from different parts of the world, reinforcing the Institute's commitment to active engagement and collaborative scholarship. He expressed gratitude to the organising committee for their efforts in making the event possible and encouraged participants to take full advantage of the opportunity to connect, lead, and collaborate with curiosity and courage. He urged them to contribute towards achieving shared goals. In his closing remarks, Professor Olupona underscored the importance of integrating STEM with the social sciences and humanities, recognising that interdisciplinary approaches are essential for driving meaningful and lasting innovation.



Community of Practice: Collaboration and Academic Leadership for Science and Technology Education and Research in Africa.



IFE INSTITUTE OF ADVANCED STUDIES

Rethinking Scientific Excellence: A Framework for Collaborative Research Leadership in Africa

Dr. Timothy OLAWUMI
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19/11/2024

The Convener Professor Jacob Olupona thanked everyone for attending the opening ceremony of the Science Institute, recognizing key individuals such as the Vice Chancellor, faculty, fellows, guests, and colleagues. He introduced the theme of the Institute: "Community of Practice: Collaboration and Academic Leadership for Science, Technology, Education, and Research in Africa," highlighting its relevance in promoting innovation and long-term progress through collaboration. He emphasized that the community's collective expertise is essential for developing academic leadership and pioneering research, particularly in science and technology. The latter, in turn, are key to addressing challenges and building resilient education systems. Reflecting on the institute's eight-year history, Professor Olupona celebrated its role in mentoring scholars globally and the establishment of IIAS hubs in Africa. This year's session gathers nearly forty members from around the world, encouraging active engagement and collaboration. He expressed gratitude to the organizing committee and encouraged participants to embrace the opportunity to connect, lead, collaborate with a spirit of curiosity and courage, and work towards making shared goals a reality. Finally, he noted the importance of integrating STEM with social sciences and humanities.

Local Knowledge for Global Science

Professor Victor Counted explored how we can combine—and why we should combine—individual perspectives on the same issues using the illustration of "the blind and the elephant." He emphasized that regardless of our perspective, there is always an element of blindness. This leads to emic (insider) and etic (outsider) approaches in research. The etic approach generalizes global phenomena, while the emic approach is subjective and culturally specific. He explained that most research starts broadly with the etic approach but intersects with individual worldviews, which shape science through six aspects: ontology, epistemology, semiotics, axiology, teleology, and praxeology. As a psychologist integrating faith and psychology, he shared four integration models to globalize local knowledge: levels-of-explanation, domain-specific integration, knowledge

preservation, and transformational knowledge exchange models.

Dr. Victor Okorie continued the discussion by stating the importance of recognizing and validating indigenous knowledge in Africa, as it spans all aspects of life from birth to death. He highlighted the need for collaboration between local and global science through emic (insider) and etic (outsider) perspectives. He discussed the concept of post-normal science, which addresses high-stakes decisions in uncertain situations and the potential for exploitation when integrating global knowledge. He outlined mandates for integrating local knowledge and global science, including universities going beyond traditional roles to solve real-life problems, ensuring epistemic duality to amplify local voices, and engaging communities through proper stakeholder marketing. He advocated for the creation of centers of excellence that would enable local knowledge systems to address ethical conflicts and institutionalize local knowledge, preventing it from remaining fragmented and ensuring that it receives proper policy attention.



Oral Storytelling Conceptualized for Biomedical Research

Prof. Ayodeji Ogunnaike discussed the profound role of storytelling in traditional African societies, where griots and praise singers not only preserve cultural wisdom but also serve as intellectuals and scientists, conveying knowledge through narratives that address societal issues. He highlighted the power of storytelling: neurological research shows that listening to stories activates the

brain in ways that enhance memory, creativity, and understanding, by linking new information to existing knowledge. He argued that storytelling is central to various modern professions, such as law, politics, healthcare, and finance, where it shapes decisions and influences outcomes. For effective communication, it is crucial to understand the audience's existing narratives, as these preconceptions shape how new information is interpreted.

Professor Ogunnaike warned against the potential dangers of misinterpretation when facts are isolated from their broader context. The discussion also focused on how misinformation spreads, particularly in the medical field, and on the need to craft more effective stories to counter false narratives. He concluded by advocating for a narrative-driven approach in STEM fields. Such an approach can enhance understanding, creativity, and societal impact, especially in areas like biomedical research and scientific communication.

Collaboration for Leadership Training in STEM

Prof. Bolanle F. Oladejo addressed the importance of collaborative models in African tertiary institutions to enhance leadership development. She emphasized initiatives like communities of practice, partnerships, and interdisciplinary collaborations as essential for fostering continuous growth in leadership programs among students. These approaches aim to bridge different academic disciplines and promote integrated learning. However, Prof. Oladejo highlighted several challenges faced in this area, including mentorship gaps, limited resources, difficulties in international partnerships, and constraints within the curriculum. To address these challenges, she suggested creating opportunities to gather research initiatives and build networks around ongoing research efforts. In conclusion, she proposed several recommendations to prepare students for future responsibilities. These include promoting strategic alignment, fostering mutual trust, upholding ethics and norms, incorporating reflective practices, and developing sustainable strategies.

Thinking Innovative and Creative Science and Technology Research outside the Box

Dr. Soji Ilori emphasized the importance of creativity across all fields of study, defining it as the ability to imagine or invent something new. He highlighted that creativity involves "seeing what everyone sees but thinking of what nobody has thought of". He stressed the synergistic connection of ideas and noted that creativity can be learned, as stated by Edward de Bono. Dr. Ilori explained that anyone can be creative if they dedicate time to cultivate this capacity. He emphasized the need for engaging in wild thinking like children, mastering fundamentals, and having a method to discipline the mind. Generating ideas requires passion, knowledge, and experience. Dr. Ilori outlined different levels of creativity, from simple improvements that use existing knowledge to new inventions which create new effects.

Entrepreneurship and Tertiary Education Curriculum for Science Students

Professor Olalekan Yinusa stressed the importance of embedding practical-focused learning in the science curriculum to address the high unemployment and underemployment rates in Nigeria and Africa. He highlighted that universities must lead by changing students' mindsets and engagement, helping them leverage the limitless opportunities available in the digital world. He outlined the benefits of integrating entrepreneurship into the curriculum, including enhancing skill relevance, career versatility, and fostering innovation. This integration would build students' confidence in starting businesses and developing project management and communication skills. Professor Yinusa identified fundamental skills required for integrating entrepreneurship, such as business basics, intellectual property management, regulatory knowledge, practical skills, hands-on learning, internships, and mentorship opportunities and suggested curriculum modules included fundamentals of entrepreneurship, market research, financial literacy, and innovation. He described the phases of entrepreneurship integration: innovation and project development, pilot phase, and curriculum expansion. He concluded that integrating

entrepreneurship into the curriculum would impact students, strengthen institutional reputation, and benefit organizations.

Dr. Gbenga Adebayo defined an entrepreneur as "someone who offers a product or service at a price that attracts buyers and generates profit". He highlighted the challenge of integrating entrepreneurship into the curriculum, noting that many entrepreneurs lack formal education. He urged universities to explore adjunct positions for industry experts across all departments and emphasized that entrepreneurship education must involve hands-on skills.

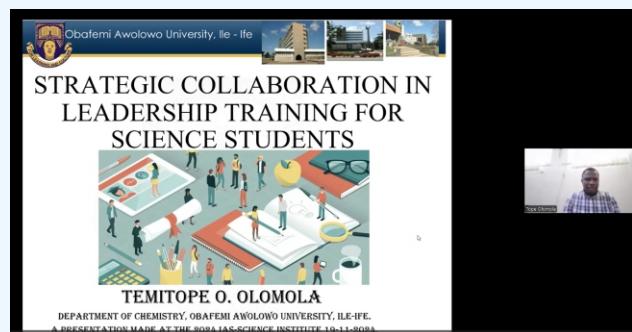
Bridging Disciplines: Collaborative synergies

Professor Douglas Buttrey discussed the importance of collaboration across disciplines to create a sustainable world for future generations. He reviewed the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which focus on economic growth, social inclusion, and environmental protection, and whose number has now expanded to 17. He compared these goals with the National Academy of Engineering's 14 goals for the 21st century, noting their global relevance but different developmental aims. He discussed using the software Trendalyzer for statistical analysis, demonstrating the development gap between countries like the United States and Nigeria/Ghana through life expectancy and GDP per capita graphs. Professor Buttrey highlighted the need for interdisciplinarity and collaboration in science and technology to make global chemical processes more carbon and energy-efficient, addressing climate change caused by human activities. He emphasized the objective of providing sustainable solutions like biogas.

Community of Practices, Research Networks and Social Good: Think South to North Practices

Professor Tope Olomola discussed the South to North model, which prioritizes practices and solutions from the Global South, ensuring bidirectional knowledge flow and challenging traditional expertise hierarchies. He defined a community of practice (COP) as a group of individuals sharing a common passion. COP encourages local problem-solving, capacity

building, and amplifying marginalized voices by integrating grassroots knowledge into larger systems. He distinguished between COPs and research networks, noting that research networks focus on general topics with localized participants, while COPs involve direct stakeholders and informal knowledge sharing. He highlighted the need for South to North practices to complete the paradigm shift, recognizing innovations from the Global South and building reciprocal partnerships. Examples of South to North practices in physical sciences include solar energy and earthquake-resilient constructions from Southeast Asia. Professor Olomola acknowledged challenges such as power imbalances, language and cultural barriers, and maintaining sustainability, but noted opportunities like technological advancements, policy advocacy, and youth engagement.



Engaging Conversations across Disciplines

Professor Henrietta Nyamnjoh drew our attention to a theory of conviviality propounded by Professor Francis Nyamnjoh, which suggests a way to broaden our perspectives by engaging with scholarship across various disciplines. The theory is important as AI increasingly affects people's breadth of vision. We must work together to avoid incompleteness and promote conviviality. According to her, the theory defines incompleteness as a framework for thinking and relating to the world where the realization that one does not possess knowledge typical in other disciplines is normal. Incompleteness emphasizes the importance of acknowledging our limitations without pretense. This concept encourages us to reach out across emerging borders, exploring new ways of thinking, social living, bridging divides, and networking to foster a more inclusive existence. Recognizing our

incompleteness can lead to interdependence, active participation, and mutual fulfillment. Conviviality on the other hand, highlights the importance of repairing rather than rejecting human creativity and relationships, promoting diversity, tolerance, mutual accommodation, and interaction. These two powerful concepts teach us that working alone is not beneficial; instead, collaboration with others by being rooted in a spirit of learning and humility, is essential. The approach allows us to open ourselves to scrutiny and examination. Therefore, interdisciplinary collaboration is vital for addressing complex and interconnected challenges, ultimately leading to more comprehensive and innovative solutions.



Building skills for career and practice

Professor Mirabel Ifeoma Onwuka defined skills as the knowledge and abilities that enable someone to perform a task well. She explained that "a career is one's calling in life, which can be pursued both formally and informally, and is meant to be progressive". Building skills involves engaging in activities that help achieve set goals and objectives. She identified three major types of skills: soft skills, hard skills, and transferable skills. To build skills for career development and practice, it is important to set professional and personal goals, accept feedback and criticism, manage time effectively, identify one's strengths and weaknesses, attend conferences, and collaborate with others. Professor Onwuka concluded with a call to action, encouraging everyone to start taking steps toward their career aspirations and big dreams.

Dr. Adekola Adebayo shared insights on career skills from an industry perspective, emphasizing the importance of understanding that different skills become relevant at different career stages. Soft skills, which indicate how one interacts with

others, contribute to professional growth by enhancing employability, increasing job performance, and facilitating career advancement. In the early stages of career development, building a strong technical foundation through education and hands-on experience is essential. Collaboration and teamwork foster problem-solving and critical thinking skills. At the mid-career stage, leadership and project management skills become important for inspiring, guiding, and managing teams and projects. Networking and relationship building provide growth opportunities, while adaptability and continuous learning are necessary due to the constantly changing world. Dr. Adebayo discussed the importance of refining and enhancing skills over time through self-assessment, feedback, and mentorship. He concluded by stressing the need to continually develop skills to avoid stagnation and focus on the right mix of skills that will set you apart in your field.

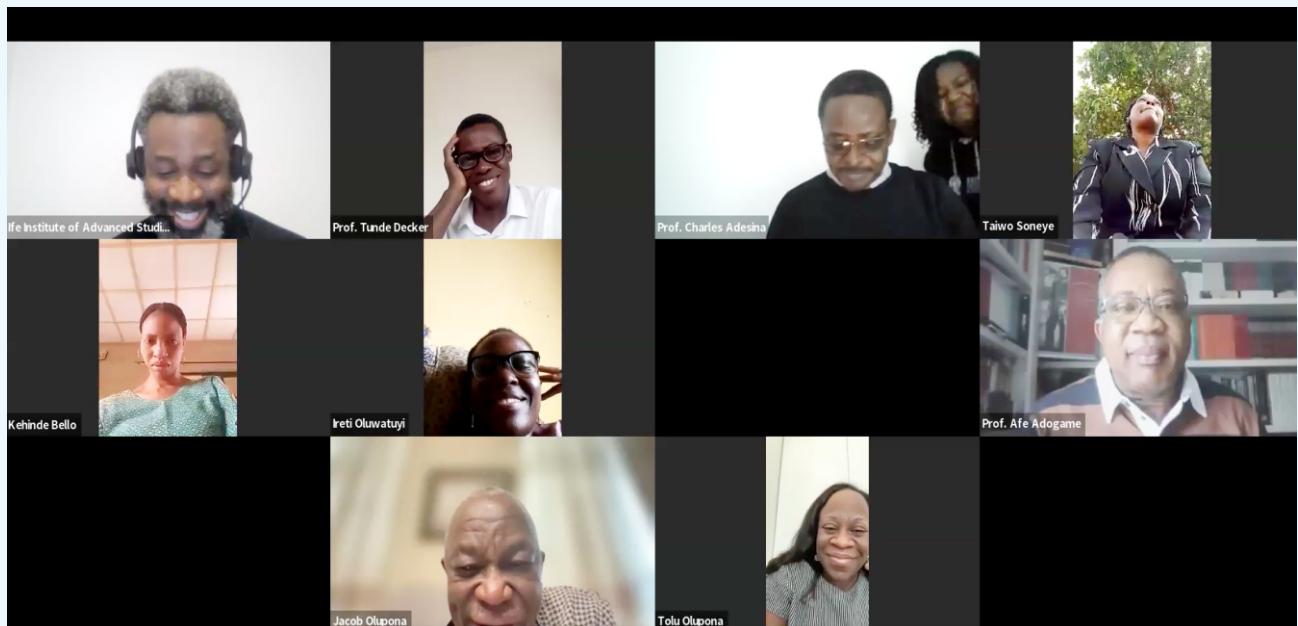
Dr Adeleye Adeomi emphasized that every building starts with a solid foundation; here, this means choosing the right career, one that aligns well with your personal strengths and interests. A career should not solely be about money value but also provide a sense of relevance and fulfillment. He mentioned that developing a skill requires intentional effort and a commitment to continuous learning. Additionally, finding a career path that matches one's unique abilities is crucial. It is important to identify the skills that are essential for one's chosen career and to be proactive in acquiring them. This process involves structuring time to build these skills, connecting with people who possess them, utilizing the internet for research, and maintaining consistent efforts.

Skin, Race, Career and Practice

Professor Sheriff Folarin addressed the issue of skin color, race, and career, highlighting that this problem extends beyond racial discrimination to include distinctions and value placed on skin color within the same ethnicity, nationality, or race. He noted that in Africa, there is a pronounced preference for lighter skin over darker skin. Focusing on Nigeria, Professor Folarin discussed challenges in career development linked to

ethnic differences. Research within communities of practice shows that the intersection of skin color, race, and academic careers often favors individuals with lighter skin tones, both within organizations and beyond. He pointed out that there is also an unconscious bias against those with darker skin outside these communities. Contributing factors include social perceptions, conflicts among nations, and the enduring legacy of colonialism and racial segregation in Africa, which have significantly influenced skin color

discrimination. Colorism affects interpersonal relationships, including those in the workplace. To overcome the challenges of racism, particularly on an individual level, one can turn to several strategies. These include developing a strong academic profile that impresses others, consistently striving for productivity, and participating in implicit bias training, as we all grow up with ingrained biases.



Fellows' Reflections

A CATALYST FOR CHANGE: REFLECTIONS ON THE 8TH ANNUAL SUMMER INSTITUTE, 2024

14th May 2024, I received an email that I had been selected to attend the 8th IIAS Summer Institute 2024 between July 22, and August 2, 2024. I am excited to share my participation in the two-week immersive experience, an unforgettable journey of intellectual curiosity, cultural immersion, and personal growth at the 8th Ife Summer Institute, held at the serene ambience of Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile Ife, Osun State, Nigeria, where I immersed myself in a transformative programme centred on "Building Communities of Practice: Interdisciplinary Collaboration and Academic Leadership in Africa." The program which hosted a diverse group of global scholars and intellectuals from various fields and disciplines offered a unique blend of academic rigour and experiential learning, providing me with a wealth of opportunities to expand my horizons and network, deepen my understanding of the world of research, and explore new ideas and rich heritage of Ife.

The group sessions, questions, collaborations, networking, discussions, and mentorship were expertly and thoughtfully coordinated, and led by professors of exceptional quality and experience. Through this programme, I acquired a diverse range of new knowledge, covering research concepts, publishing strategies, teaching methodologies, grant writing, collaborations, AI in learner evaluation, and academia in general. This enriching experience broadened my understanding of the pivotal role that interdisciplinary collaboration plays in shaping the future of academia and advancing my research. It equipped me with a renewed vision to foster meaningful collaborations, promote knowledge exchange, and contribute to building vibrant academic communities. The Plenary Session II: Skills and Practice on Journal Publication - Peer Editing and Peer Review Articles by Prof. Moradewun Adejunmobi was the best session for me. I practically enjoyed all the sessions as well.

Beyond the academic activities, the Ife Summer Institute provided numerous opportunities for cultural experiences. One of the most memorable

experiences of the program was our excursion to the Ooni of Ife palace and the Ife Institute permanent site along Ife-Osu Expressway. The palace, a symbol of the rich history and tradition of Ife, was a breathtaking sight. We were fortunate to learn about the history of Ile-Ife and gained insights into the role of the Ooni as the spiritual leader of the Yoruba people. The Ife Institute permanent site was a fascinating glimpse into the future of research, academia, and innovation in Ife. The state-of-the-art facilities shown by the architects promise to further enhance the city's reputation as a centre of academic excellence.

I am sincerely grateful to the visionary Convener, Professor Jacob Olupona for his invaluable leadership, dedication and commitment to fostering intellectual growth and cultural exchange. The great support from all Professors who generously mentored the next generation of scholars, sharing their knowledge and



experience is highly appreciated; Douglas Buttrey, Afe Adogame, David Ogungbile, Morenike Ukpong, Nkatha Kabira, Todne Thomas, Sheila Otieno, Tunde Decker, and Cheryl Sterling. I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to Dr. Omotayo Owoeye for his exceptional leadership and guidance throughout the Ife Summer Institute. The dedication and commitment of the entire faculty members to providing a transformative experience for participants are truly commendable. A big thank you to Mummy Olupona for feeding us with balanced diets. In addition to the academic and cultural experiences, the Ife Summer Institute provided ample opportunities for personal growth and development. I had the opportunity to expand my global perspective, connect with fellow researchers, form meaningful connections and collaborations, and mentoring relationships. The program also helped me develop essential soft skills, such as effective communication, teamwork, and time management.

The Ife Summer Institute was more than just a summer program; IT WAS A CATALYST FOR CHANGE. It was a transformative experience that has had a profound impact on my life. The knowledge, skills, and connections I gained will undoubtedly have a lasting impact on my future endeavours, and help me navigate my career path. I am grateful for the opportunity to have

been part of such a prestigious and transformative programme and for the lifelong memories I have created.

In Dr. Tayo's voice, "I will always conceptualize and operationalize my stomach" and my favourite quote from IIAS'24 is "Coming from a Place, you will end up in a Space."

Ayopo Anuoluwa SOTADE

IIAS Fellow, 2024.

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IIAS Fellow, 2024.

IIAS IFE SUMMER INSTITUTE: A REAL EYE-OPENER

IIAS Ife Summer Institute: A Real Eye-opener

Many times, we sit on top of a goldmine without discovering the precious metal. I heard about the Ife Institute of Advanced Studies (IIAS) at the end of the 2023 Summer Institute when I saw many scholars, far and near, sharing testimonies on social media about the ocean of benefits derived from the Institute. I passionately followed the Institute's activities. Eager to learn more about academic and research writing, I was determined to attend the event in 2024.

The first travel grant that I won few months before my participation in the 2024 Ife Summer Institute was like a miracle. For me, it was a pursuit of knowledge. As a PhD student then, I weaved together an application to participate in a workshop on Energy Humanities in Nigeria. I never thought that this three-page application could translate into thousands of naira. But the Summer Institute opened my eyes. I discovered that the travel grant was one of the smallest awards and was emboldened to search for more. IIAS taught me the art of seeking excellence in research,

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From the opening ceremony to the end of the two-week workshop, every moment was full of great inspiration. The facilitators emphasised problem solving pedagogy and innovative research, learner-centred interactive teaching methods, and the conceptualisation and

operationalisation of everyday abstract ideas to bridge gaps between theory and empirical research. They also stressed the importance of teamwork and collaboration rooted in mutual benefits among researchers from diverse fields in order to produce meaningful interdisciplinary research. Professor Lawuyi's explication of the principle of Ajobi/Ajogbe (shared birth/neighbourliness) in community development was a useful analogy here.

Different facilitators took us through monetary and non-monetary benefits of grantsmanship such as solutions to pressing social problems, career advancement, and visibility. To navigate grant opportunities, we were taught to present qualities such as interdisciplinarity, inquisitiveness, resilience, networking and 'mentworking', time management, and peer editing. We were also taught to evaluate our audience for research dissemination, to use simple, clear and appropriate language and to find a research focus by creating a niche in a particular field. Common reasons for application rejection were revealed to be the unoriginality of ideas, the irrelevance of research problem to funders' goals, and the non-alignment between one's problem, objectives and method.

The Summer Institute is a worthy, rewarding and refreshing event. I advise the current fellows, especially people in African Studies, to respond to their environment, see every phenomenon as data and find a good way to recreate old stories in new research.

Qasim Adeyemi Aliu, PhD

**School of General Studies, Nigeria
Maritime University, Okerenkoko, Delta
State.**

MY EXPERIENCE DURING THE 8TH ANNUAL IFE SUMMER INSTITUTE 2024 - By Olayemi Olusegun Olalude

I had the privilege of attending the 8th Annual Ife Summer Institute 2024, which focused on the theme of "Building Communities of Practice: Interdisciplinary Collaboration and Academic Leadership in Africa." The workshop was an enriching experience, aimed at fostering collaboration among researchers across disciplines and developing leadership skills within academic communities in Africa.

The 8th Annual Ife Summer Institute was a highly informative, engaging, and inspiring experience. The facilitators were experts in their fields and took the time to explain concepts in detail, often using real-life examples to illustrate key points. The workshop fostered a collaborative environment where participants could share experiences, discuss challenges, and explore solutions together.

One of the highlights for me was the interactive nature of the sessions. We were encouraged to engage in group activities, present our ideas, and work on real-world problems. This hands-on approach ensured that the knowledge we gained could be immediately applied to our own research and academic practices.



Since attending the workshop, I have been able to implement many of the strategies I learned, leading to improvements in several key areas of my academic career:

■ **Improved Writing Skills:** The insights into research writing have allowed me to improve my papers' structure, coherence, and impact. I've become more efficient in drafting and editing my work, resulting in clearer and more impactful publications.

■ **Enhanced Collaboration:** I have been more intentional about seeking interdisciplinary collaborations, which has led to exciting new research opportunities. These collaborations have expanded the scope of my work and introduced me to new perspectives and methodologies.

■ **Stronger Research Proposals:** The guidance on writing strong research proposals has made a significant difference in how I approach grant applications. I am now more confident in my ability to secure funding and have already begun drafting proposals for several research projects.

■ **Effective Mentorship:** The focus on mentorship during the workshop has influenced me to actively seek mentorship relationships. Additionally, I have taken on the role of mentor for junior researchers, helping them navigate their academic journeys and encouraging them to pursue research excellence.

■ **Increased Confidence in Grant Writing:** With the practical tips provided on grant writing, I now approach the process with much more confidence. I have begun to identify and apply for relevant research grants that align with my academic interests.

The workshop has had a lasting impact on both my professional and personal development. I now understand the importance of academic leadership and feel more prepared to take on leadership roles within my institution and the broader academic community. The skills I have gained will not only enhance my research but

broader academic community. The skills I have gained will not only enhance my research but also empower me to mentor others and contribute to building stronger academic networks.

Looking ahead, I am excited about the future. I plan to continue applying the knowledge and skills from the workshop to my research and academic endeavors. The focus on building communities of practice will remain a core part of my strategy as I seek out new collaborations and aim to contribute meaningfully to interdisciplinary research efforts.

In conclusion, the 8th Annual Ife Summer Institute 2024 has been a pivotal experience in my career. It has equipped me with practical skills and a renewed sense of purpose as I continue to grow as both a researcher and an academic leader in Africa. All thanks to the organisers of the workshop.

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Stronger Research Proposals: The guidance on writing strong research proposals has made a significant difference in how I approach grant applications. I am now more

confident in my ability to secure funding and have already begun drafting proposals for several research projects.

Effective Mentorship: The focus on mentorship during the workshop has influenced me to actively seek mentorship relationships. Additionally, I have taken on the role of mentor for junior researchers, helping them navigate their academic journeys and encouraging them to pursue research excellence.

Increased Confidence in Grant Writing: With the practical tips provided on grant writing, I now approach the process with much more confidence. I have begun to identify and apply for relevant research grants that align with my academic interests.

The workshop has had a lasting impact on both my professional and personal development. I now understand the importance of academic leadership and feel more prepared to take on leadership roles within my institution and the broader academic community. The skills I have gained will not only enhance my research but also empower me to mentor others and contribute to building stronger academic networks.

Looking ahead, I am excited about the future. I plan to continue applying the knowledge and skills from the workshop to my research and academic endeavors. The focus on building communities of practice will remain a core part of my strategy as I seek out new collaborations and aim to contribute meaningfully to interdisciplinary research efforts.

In conclusion, the 8th Annual Ife Summer Institute 2024 has been a pivotal experience in my career. It has equipped me with practical skills and a renewed sense of purpose as I continue to grow as both a researcher and an academic leader in Africa. All thanks to the organisers of the workshop.

2024/2025 IIAS WEBINAR SERIES

MONTH	CLASSIFICATION	TOPIC	SPEAKER(S)	DISCUSSANT/ FACILITATOR
September	Webinar	Deconstructing the African COVID-19 Paradox: Some Attempts at Theorisation	Dr. Tolulope Osayomi, (University of Ibadan, Nigeria)	Prof. Oyekanmi Babatimehin (Obafemi Awolowo University, Nigeria)
October	Book Talk	Representations of Child Soldiers in Contemporary African Narratives	Dr. Ademola Adesola Mount Royal University, Canada	Prof. Olusegun Adekoya (Obafemi Awolowo University, Nigeria)
December	Hub Webinar	Collaborate to Innovate: Building Interdisciplinary Partnerships for Academic Impact	Prof. Hauwa'u Evelyn Yusuf (Kaduna State University, Nigeria)	Safiya Gatama Johnson (Gombe State University, Nigeria)
	Reflections	2024 Together Again	Convener, Prof Olupona (Harvard University, USA)	Dr. Tayo Owoeye (Glasgow Caledonian University, UK)
January	Webinar	New year, New Heights: charting the course for 2025	Prof. Simeon Ilesanmi (Wake Forest University, USA)	Dr. Tolulope Osayomi (University of Ibadan, Nigeria)
February	Hub Webinar	Academia: the Why, What, Who, and How?	Prof. David Aworawo (University of Lagos, Nigeria)	Adewale Onagbesan (University of Lagos, Nigeria)
	Webinar	Grant and Fellowship Opportunities	Prof. Cyril Obi (Social Sciences Research Council, USA) and Dr. David Kerr (Oxford University, UK)	Dr. Tolulope Osayomi (University of Ibadan, Nigeria)
	Workshop	Publishing for Impact and Global Recognition 2.0	Dr. Olubanke Davies and Dr. Abiodun Adegbile	Dr. Tolulope Osayomi (University of Ibadan, Nigeria)
March	Hub Webinar	Personal Experiences in Writing Grant Winning Proposals	Prof. Olutayo Adesina (University of Ibadan, Nigeria)	Dr. Mirian Ngozi-Alike (Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Nigeria)
	Webinar	Biography and the Politics of Monumentality	Dr Terri Ochiagha (The University of Edinburgh, UK)	Prof. Olutayo Adesina (University of Ibadan, Nigeria)
April	Book Talk	IN THE TWILIGHT OF TIME: Chief Lòògò Bámútùlá, A Biography of an African Medicine Man	Prof. Jacob K. Olupona (Harvard University, USA)	Oluwole Akinyosoye
May	Webinar	Historic and Period-Based Filmmaking	Dr. Adeyemi Akande (London Metropolitan University, UK)	Dr. Tolulope Osayomi (University of Ibadan, Nigeria)

COUNTING OUR BLESSINGS: KEY MOMENTS IN 2024

- Dr. Morufu Bukola Omigbule promoted to a Reader. He also published a book titled "RITUALS OF ILE-IFE, NIGERIA: NARRATIVES AND PERFORMANCES OF ARCHETYPES"
- Dr. Chidiebere Victor Adim received a visiting fellow award at the African Studies Centre Leiden.
- Dr. Oyeyemi Babalola was promoted to the position of a Reader, Department of Psychology, Obafemi Awolowo University
- Prof. Jacob Olupona was celebrated at the Centre for Gender and Social Policy, OAU, Ile-Ife. He was also appointed as a Hugh K. Foster Endowed Professor of African and African American Studies and Professor of African Religious Traditions.
- Dr. Chidiebere Victor Adim was awarded a Visiting fellow at the African Studies Centre, Leiden.
- The Hub Representative of North Hub - Safiya Johnson Gatama, Nigeria had the 1st North Hub Webinar Series and the Speaker was Prof. Hauwa'u Evelyn Yusuf (Professor of Criminology and Gender Studies, Kaduna State University, Nigeria).
- Prof. Folashade Hunsu was pronounced a Professor of English
- Dr. Ngozika Obi-Ani was awarded a research fellowship at the African Studies Centre, Leiden.
- Prof. Olutayo Adesina is honoured with a Global professorship award in the United Kingdom
- Dr. Opeyemi Ekundayo was appointed Acting Director, Centre for Gender and Social Policy, OAU, Ile-Ife and later pronounced a Professor of Psychology.
- Chukwuemeka Oko Otu (2023 Fellow) won a research grant from the Royal Historical Society, UK on "Community Policing in Nigeria". He also completed his PhD viva at the University of Buckingham, United Kingdom.
- Dr. Ayodun Stephen Ibidunni (2024 Fellow) was appointed Chair, Southwest Director of Entrepreneurship Centre (DECs) of Nigerian Universities
- Dr. Nogu Ngozi Dorothy (2023 Fellow) won the Association of Commonwealth Universities Career Conference Grant 2024 for emerging Researchers.
- January 26: 60th Birthday of Prof. Olutayo Adesina
- February 16: 60th Birthday of Prof. Afe Adogame
- April 16: 75th Birthday of Emeritus Prof. Funmi Togonu-Bickersteth
- Prof. O.A. Oyeshile delivered the 550th Inaugural Lecture at the University of Ibadan (African Philosophy and the Unending Quest)
- Prof. Morenike Oluwatoyin Ukpong delivered the 392nd Inaugural Lecture at Obafemi Awolowo University. She also delivered the 17th T. A. I. Grillo Distinguished Alumni Lecture at Obafemi Awolowo University.
- IIAS Site along Ife-Osu Road opened up
- Retirement and Book Launch Ceremonies of Professor Rosemary Olufunmilayo Soetan
- Dr. Tolu Osayomi - 2017 Fellow started his AFOx Fellowship

- Dr. Tayo Owoeye, the IIAS Program Director, collaborated with a Radio station in Scotland – Jambo Radio Scotland to host a podcast on trendy issues in Africa and Africans in diaspora.
- IIAS Fellows, such as Olusegun Exradallenum, Ibitayo Odetade, Abdussalam O Amoo, and others won the LSA 2025 Travel Grant
- Professor Damilola T. Agbalajobi was announced as a Professor of Political Science at Obafemi Awolowo University. She also gained a fellowship to the Global Forum on Democracy and Development.
- Dr. Ademola Adesola published a book titled "Representations of Child Soldiers in Contemporary African Narratives."

Journal of Cultures and Ideas

(An African Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies)

ISSN: 0189-6539

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Aims and Scope

Journal of Cultures and Ideas is an international and interdisciplinary journal that seeks to extend the scope of scholarly debate about Africa and African Issues. The journal serves the full spectrum of humanistic and social sciences disciplinary communities including anthropology, archaeology, history, law, economics, political science, psychology, sociology, demography, development studies, education, gender, peace and conflict studies, literature, and urban studies. Other fields are accepted insofar as they impact on culture. The journal will accept empirical and research papers as well as theoretical and practice-oriented papers that contribute to a better understanding of the African experience in all its ramifications.

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Articles submitted to the journal must be original and should not have been previously published or be in the process of being considered for publication elsewhere. Articles should average between 5,000 and 9,000 words (excluding footnotes) in length. Case analyses should be between 1,500 and 2,500 words; comments/notes should not exceed 3,000 words and book reviews should be between 500 and 1,500 words. The Journal shall be published bi-annually. This will be both in hard copies and online versions. All contributions should be submitted in Word document and should follow the MLA Style. Only manuscripts that comply with the submission guidelines will be considered for peer review.

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All articles and manuscripts submitted to the journal will undergo rigorous peer review processes based on the reports of two anonymous reviewers. The journal also has zero tolerance for plagiarism.

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The 2026 Summer Institute will mark the 10th Anniversary of the Institute. Stay tuned to our website (<https://ias-ife.com/>) and social media platforms for updates on application and participation.



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