

Welcome

Structural Transformation of African Agriculture and Rural Spaces (STAARS)

Information Session



Cornell University



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STAARS | Program Overview

- The STAARS fellowship program is a multi-institution collaboration managed by Cornell University
- Launched in 2016, STAARS has had 78 Fellows to date
- In 2024, the World Bank and the Partnership for Economic Policy (PEP) will help sponsor and mentor STAARS Fellows
- Fellows are paired with mentors at Cornell, the World Bank, or PEP
- Jointly author a paper on a topic of mutual interest
- 15-month fellowship period, April 2024 – June 2025

For more details visit: <https://barrett.dyson.cornell.edu/staars/>



STAARS | Research Themes

1. Dynamics of agricultural inputs use, technological change, and productivity growth
2. Rural factor (e.g., credit, labor, land) and product market performance and links to urban markets
3. Agri-food systems and value chains, their performance and evolution
4. Food security, nutrition, health and education linkages
5. Poverty dynamics, risk management and resilience against shocks
6. Sustainable natural resources management
7. Gender and marginalized groups

STAARS | Application Requirements

1. All proposals must be submitted through the [online application](#)
2. Applicant biodata information. A worksheet is available on the first page of the application to help you collect responses before submitting
3. Research Proposal (2500-word limit): motivates the selected research issue(s) and objectives, outlines data sources and proposed analytical methodology
 - i. Bibliographic references (not included in the 2500-word limit)
4. Current CV
5. Documentation indicating approval to use data (if any data sources are not publicly available)
6. Letter of support from home policy research institution (or current employer), explicitly committing to provide applicant with adequate paid time to undertake the research
7. Photocopy of the passport biodata page and, if applicable, any current US visa

STAARS | Eligibility

- Individual Fellows only (no teams)
- You received at least one degree from an African institution
- You've completed your Ph.D. no earlier than 2018 (or be last year ABD)
- You have strong analytical knowledge and statistical software skills (tested at finalist stage)
- You are proficient in English (all application materials and, if selected, paper drafts must be submitted in English)



The program is comprised of **four main components**:

- Research Project
- Virtual Launch Activities
 - E.g. Orientation, Work Planning, Panel of Past Fellows
- Professional Development Trainings
 - E.g. Research Ethics, Time Management, Writing Structure, Navigating Peer Review
- Feedback Workshops



STAARS | Review and Selection Process

Deadline to submit a proposal: **January 19, 2024, 11:59pm New York Time**

- Proposals are peer reviewed by multiple experts from Cornell, World Bank, and PEP.
- Finalists based on the peer reviews are presented to a pool of mentors to identify prospective matches.
- Finalists are tested to ensure adequate competence in statistical analysis (using Stata or R) prior to final selection.
- Fellows are matched with mentors and peer mentors.
- Plan to notify accepted applicants **by late March 2024.**

STAARS and STAAARS+ | Timeline



- **January 19, 2024:** Application deadline
- **Late March 2024:** Fellows selected and notified
- **April 2, 2024 (anticipated):** Launch of new cohort and virtual meetings begin
- **August 2024:** Paper Draft 1 due
- **September 2024:** 3 week visit to U.S. – travel restrictions permitting
- **December 2024:** Paper Draft 2 due
- **June 2025:** Deliver final research output



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Thank you for your interest!



Please write your questions in the Q&A tool; we will answer live or write responses.

More questions? Email: STAARS@cornell.edu

