African Studies Center

THE POWER

Founded through a presidential commitment to engaging with Africa and initial seed funding from the provost’s office, the University of Michigan’s African Studies Center (ASC) is one of the nation’s foremost institutes for interdisciplinary, collaborative research and training on, in, and about Africa. ASC provides guidance and coordination for Africa-related education, research, and programming at the university and promotes collaboration with partners on the continent. ASC funds research sabbaticals that bring talented African faculty to campus through our flagship program – University of Michigan African Presidential Scholars (UMAPS) – which fosters new perspectives and brings value to our students and faculty while also strengthening African universities. The next generation of African scholars build their international academic networks, are empowered to become research leaders in their fields, and work toward solving global challenges and contributing to the continent’s growth and continued excellence.

We are committed to building all of our engagements on the values of reciprocity, sustainable partnerships, co-creation of knowledge, and real-world applications. This makes ASC a valuable contributor to the efforts of African countries to build their own capacity and grow their own talent in ways that will help bring more education, health, well-being, economic growth, and development across the continent.
THE OPPORTUNITIES

ASC supports initiatives in all disciplines and fields represented at U-M—from law and medicine to the sciences and humanities—for the mutual benefit of the university and our partners on the continent. We enable students and faculty to collaborate on research projects with colleagues at African partner institutions. UMAPS and other ASC initiatives enrich the experience of U-M's students and faculty through the inclusion of African perspectives on campus and ensure that the University of Michigan remains an attractive destination for African Studies.

THE IMPACT

Funding support provides more opportunities for U-M students to engage first-hand with the African continent through supervised research projects, internships, and specialized courses, and for talented faculty and students at African universities to pursue research sabbaticals and educational opportunities at U-M. Gifts help ensure that faculty based at both U-M and African institutions continue to develop and sustain equitable partnerships in the sciences, social sciences, humanities, and professional fields. In order to find innovative solutions to shared global problems and formulate new research agendas, ASC leverages our strengths as a premier center for African studies to increase our impact both on campus and on the continent.

Named African Faculty Fellows Program or Named Individual Scholar

$15M endowed / $750,000 annually – program
$500,000 endowed / $25,000 annually – one scholar per year

The University of Michigan has a deep commitment to building and expanding scholarly partnerships with African institutions. The U-M African Presidential Scholars program was established with seed funding from the provost and has transformed the way institutions of higher education collaborate on African studies. With funding for this signature initiative expiring next year, we are seeking new sources of support that will maintain this remarkable program. An endowed gift will support the continued development of talented faculty from African universities through five-month residencies in Ann Arbor. ASC is planning two cohorts of 15 fellows each year.

These fellows enrich our community while also being enriched by the University of Michigan. Each fellow is paired with a faculty collaborator who is a leader in their field and is given access to all the university’s resources, including libraries and laboratories. The scholars work toward their research goals and then return to their home universities in Africa with new knowledge, ideas, and networks. A named African faculty fellows program will ensure that the University of Michigan remains a prominent destination for the study of Africa in all its facets.

We are also offering naming opportunities for individual scholar positions in the UMAPS program, which provides for one highly talented African faculty member to undertake a five-month residency at U-M. Endowed positions in the UMAPS program can be designated for
fellows from specific universities or countries, or in specific disciplines, or they can be unrestricted. Funding is needed to cover the costs of the residency, including travel, housing, and a stipend.

**Annual Africa Michigan Collaborative Conference**

**$2M endowed / $100,000 annually**

The core of ASC and U-M’s engagement with Africa is networks of individuals and the intellectual community they create. Conferences are essential to bring together scholars – from Africa and elsewhere – to share advancements and knowledge with other researchers, policy makers, cultural producers, thought leaders, and business professionals. Topics each year will address issues of global importance in the humanities, social sciences, professional and creative fields, and STEM that leverage the strengths of U-M faculty and Africa-based collaborators to bring in new partners. Funds are needed to cover the costs of hosting a large-scale conference, including contributors’ travel expenses.

**Annual Distinguished Lecture**

**$250,000 endowed / $10,000 annually**

ASC is commitment to providing a platform for African knowledge producers on the U-M campus and the world stage. Resources are needed to host an annual distinguished lecture that puts the spotlight on a senior Africa-based scholar. By focusing attention on experts and leaders on Africa, ASC helps unsettle the conventional understandings of the continent. With a critical mass of interested students and faculty, U-M will continue to build long-term equitable engagement with the continent.

**African Languages Program**

**$500,000 endowed / $25,000 annually**

Language instruction is central to a meaningful and effective understanding of the countries and cultures of Africa. ASC supports the expansion of U-M’s African language program by recruiting native speakers of African languages as instructors of courses for students across the university. Funds are needed to support visiting African language faculty and will be used to cover expenses for one visiting language scholar.

**Africa–Focused Curriculum**

**$500,000 endowed / $25,000 annually**

Students have greater opportunities to explore Africa-focused learning through content that is integrated into curricula across the university. ASC provides faculty grants to develop Africa-focused content in a range of courses. Students from all of U-M’s schools and colleges benefit from the expanded engagement in Africa-related knowledge and perspectives as they move toward their future careers. Funds are needed to support up to three faculty per year as they bring content related to Africa into course offerings across campus.
Student Research and Internship Fellowships

$1M endowed / $50,000 annually - $5,000 per student

First-hand experience in Africa significantly enhances the education of our students as they become globally-engaged citizens, preparing them for careers where regional expertise is needed. ASC welcomes endowed as well as expendable gifts to support merit-based fellowships for study abroad in all African countries. We also need supplemental funds to support African students who are studying at the University of Michigan.

WAYS TO FUND YOUR GIFT

Your gifts of cash, pledges, or appreciated securities change lives. Wills, estate, and planned gifts allow you to create a lasting legacy that will enable the best and brightest minds to experience a liberal arts education, solve problems in a changing world, and yield ideas and innovations that will make a difference in Michigan and around the globe.

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