AYGS

2020

The Africa Institute of South Africa (AISA) within the Human Science Research Council (HSRC) in partnership with the University of Botswana will be convening the 14th Africa Young Graduates and Scholars (AYGS) conference organised under the theme *"Innovating for Sustainable Development: The Research-Policy- Practice Nexus."*

Timelines
Deadline for abstract submission: **23:59 on 30 November 2019**
Deadline for final paper submission: **20 January 2020**
Conference dates: **5 to 6 March 2020**

Submission Guidelines
AYGS 2019 invites contributions from emerging scholars, activists, researchers, policy makers, professionals, and students from Africa who are interested in and concerned with development challenges of the youth in Africa. Emerging refers to contributions from Masters' and Doctoral Degree Level scholars or those who completed their PhD within the last 3 years. Priority will be given to submissions that clearly contribute existing theories and rational for development. Submission that contribute (or suggest) the development of new theories and rationales of international development will receive even greater primacy. This is important in the context of a raft and growing number of international agreements and notably rise in cases of economic nationalism all present conflicting and-or re-enforcing economic, social and environmental standards that place are burdening late-comer industrialisers. The huge capital outlay consequently determines, from a technological perspective, the type of business and industrial development models; which require different design, engineering, production, investment, safety, and quality assurance solutions that are different from those of the forerunners.

Abstract submissions should have the following format:
Abstract: Maximum of 300 words
Keywords: Five keywords
Bio: 100- word author biography, including email address
Bio picture: Head-and-shoulders photo in 300 dpi jpeg format
Closing date: 30 November 2019

Please submit your abstracts to: AYGS2020@hsrc.ac.za

The organisers of the conference will not consider late submissions.
Successful applicants will be notified by **10 December 2019.**

Full paper submissions
Authors of accepted abstracts are expected to write and submit full papers by 23:59 (South African time) on **20 January 2020**

For submission of full papers, the writers need to:
• Write with clarity.
• Articles of (6 000 words maximum inclusive of references) should be based on research findings and contain analysis and relevant arguments.

The HSRC Press as an edited peer-reviewed output may subsequently publish excellent articles.

Submit the contributions in the following format:
File type: Microsoft Word
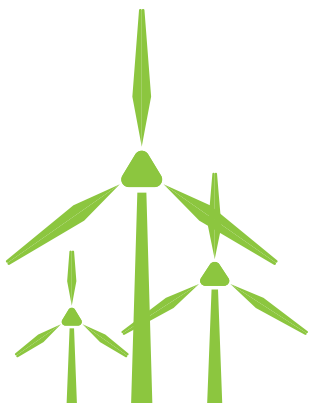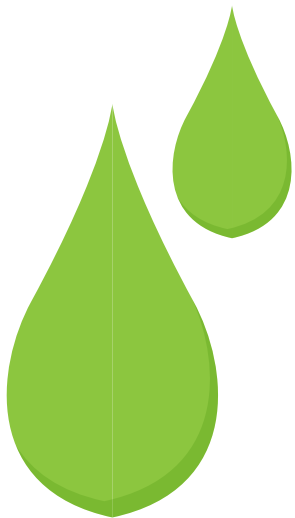Font: Times New Roman, font 12pt
Line spacing: Single
Justification: Left
Referencing: HSRC-AISA style (see style guide attached)

Abstracts and contributions must be written in English and in a style accessible to a wide audience.

Selection and Editing Process
All submissions are peer-reviewed through a double blind peer-review process coordinated by the Scientific Committee at AISA. **Please note that the selection of the abstract and papers for presentation and possible publication will be based on a criteria set by AISA.**

Innovating for Sustainable Development: The Research-Policy- Practice Nexus

Sustainable Development is probably one of the most commonly used terms in the economic development and growth discourses of the 21st century. At its simplest, the term sustainable development refers to improvements in human wellbeing's economic, social and environmental conditions- the three pillars of the concept. Through this approach, the world seeks to address multiple global challenges and crises that include extreme poverty, economic recession, climate change, conflict, terrorism and governance at national and supra or sub-national levels. However, with such a broad implicit and explicit focus, sustainable development has come to mean everything and anything to anyone who refers to it. This may lead to policy and practice paralysis as its implementation is subject to different emphases and interpretations. Nevertheless, the term remains popular.

Indeed, the various policy thrusts under Agenda 2063- The Africa We Want, the global 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 AfSD) with its accompanying 17 Sustainable Development Goal and 169 targets, converge around the concept of sustainable development. In this context, the term 'development' maintains its reference to structural transformation that reduces dependence on primary production through the establishing of economically dominant and globally competitive manufacturing and services industry bases. These industrial bases characterise the present-day developed countries but are absent in Africa. Agenda 2063 and 2030 AfSD seek to establish those. However, unlike the pioneer-countries of the current dominant manufacturing and services industries and countries, contemporary demands of all industrialisation processes not only pursue the economic objective but also simultaneously seek to improve the social and environment wellbeing of all humans and that of other flora and fauna as well. Consequently, in developing countries, delivering on Agenda 2063, 2030 AfSD and other broad development initiatives dictates a modification of established but unsustainable approaches to development. Innovation is the essence of this modification.

Generally, innovation refers to the process of nurturing an idea into prominence. The idea may be either a good or a service. Alternatively, it may be the manner of producing and/or delivering that good or service. Proceeding from this stylised description it becomes acceptable to view innovation as key to delivering desirable development outcomes that balance social, economic and environmental wellbeing of humans, other flora and fauna presently and in the future. Building on the existing discourse around the sustainable development-innovation nexus, the 2020 AYGS conference runs under the theme: Innovating for Sustainable Development: Research, Policy and Practice, examining the theories, rationales and practices of innovations in the context of sustainable development in Africa. Through papers that advance theoretical and conceptual arguments as well as specific case studies, some of the indicative issues for discussion under the four interrelated sub-themes are

1. Innovating for economic development

Papers under this theme are expected to address innovations for the development sustainable manufacturing and services industry bases in Africa focusing on both product and-or process innovation. Most desirably, the papers have to consider process and product innovations in the context of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA). Some indicative issues for discussion under this theme include:

(i) The creation of inter-sectoral partnerships between actors, i.e. civil society public and private actors within and across national boundaries to overcome single actor failure outcomes.

(ii) Innovating to deliver adequate, secure and reliable public goods to aid industrialisation and economic integration in Africa.

(iii) Sustainable innovative products and production approaches in Africa's manufacturing and services industries.

(iv) Formalising small, micro and medium size enterprises for sustainable industrialisation in Africa.

(v) Funding models that carry the potential for advancing competitive and sustainable industrialisation in Africa.

2. Science and Technology for Sustainable Development: Harnessing Big Data, Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning

The transformative power of Big Data, Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning spans all economic, environmental and social sectors. Accelerated technological advances in big data analytics, artificial intelligence and robotics among other related developments continue to changing how humans work, learn, live and interact with each other and the environment. In that respect, these advances have a role in the sustainable development space. This sub-theme seeks papers that look at the application of Big Data, AI Machine Learning, Block Chain technologies in economic, social and environmental issues addressing among others. Some key issues are;

(i) Exploring how and where (if at all) technological changes and innovations are affecting sustainable development policy and/or practice.

(ii) Establishing the nature and scope of contributions from Africa in the application of big data analytics, AI and robotics for sustainable development.

(iii) Determining the efficacy of African research (and funding) policies in advancing technical development and support for greater local ownership of products and production approaches.

3. Innovative and Multi-dimensional Approaches to Sustainable Peace, Security and Justice in the 21st Century

The international community has made notable efforts seeking to address concerns around peace security and justice for all global citizens. For instance, Africa's Agenda 2063 articulates an aspiration of silencing the guns in the continent by the year 2020. Similarly, the United Nations, through SDG 16 of the 2030 AfSD articulates a vision of promoting peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development and providing access to justice for all through establishing effective, accountable and inclusive institutions that serve all global citizens at all levels. Despite these and other similar initiatives, threats to peace, security and justice in Africa remain entrenched. A number of fundamental theoretical predilections explain this phenomenon.

One such is the lack of a workable, compelling and shared vision of a future peaceful, secure and just Africa and World. The other is the loss of confidence in traditional institutions tasked with delivering and preserving peace, security and justice in the continent and globally. Also important is the rising and pervasive poverty, glaring inequality within and between countries, regions and continents, 'unfair' global trade regimes, backlash against globalisation and the sense of helplessness to combat climate change among other. Furthermore and in this era, there are challenges around the material clash of cultures and civilisations, all inevitably leading to the rise of narrow nationalist interests manifesting in politics and terror groups among others.

To address the myriad of peace, security and justice challenges, there is need to adopt innovative, multidimensional and multifaceted approaches that combine various socio-economic, security, peace and justice strategic frameworks. Indicative matters for discussion in this space include;

(i) Innovations for delivering and maintaining sustainable peace, security and justice to all for development in Africa

(ii) Reimagining the architecture of 'new' peace, security and justice institutions and instruments to deliver sustainable development.

(iii) The gender lens in the peace, security and justice space.

4. Social Sciences and Humanities for Sustainable Development

The sustainable development concept acknowledges that considerations in the social sciences and humanities disciplines are inseparable from issues that seek improvements of economic wellbeing. For instance, economic development has to generate decent employment and present minimal (if any) environmental degradation. In this scenario, peace and security, high quality education, access to adequate, secure and reliable infrastructure and services that respect local cultural contexts are equally important and thus need specific attention. Such attention ensures that all the planning and outcomes of improving human wellbeing in the 21st century deliver contextualised outcomes of success. Some of the indicative matters under this sub-theme include;

(i) Advances, changes or stagnation in the understanding of the concept of sustainable development and 'development.'

(ii) Comparison of conceptual understanding and practice approaches to the concept of sustainable development between countries in and outside Africa.

(iii) Identifying the nature and scope of the impact of disciplines such as anthropology, sociology and political science etc. to the sustainable development policy and practice space.

(iv) Cultural considerations and Creative Industries: An innovation path to sustainable development in Africa or restriction?

(v) Understanding the drivers of the supply and demand for development research, and evidence in the sustainable development space and how this differ between developing and developed countries.