

## **Andrew W. Mellon Foundation commits \$729,000 to urbanization project**

The Trustees of The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation have approved a grant of \$729,000 to the University of Pretoria to support a collaborative research and graduate education project between the Universities of Pretoria, Cape Town, Ghana, and Makerere on urbanization and mobility over a period of five years starting 2019.

There are two collaborating partners in each of the Universities. The Team leader for this research is Prof James Ogude, centred in University of Pretoria. The senior researchers from Makerere, under this collaboration are: Prof. Dominic Dipio and Dr Okot Bengge from the Department of Literature.

Spread out among the 4 universities, the project will altogether train and development of 8 PhD students, 6 post-doctoral fellows and 16 early career academics.

### **Key objectives of the project**

- Explore the imbrication of the idea of the city and the rural in shaping the general cultural landscape
- Explore the meanings of the African city in its multidimensionality
- Explore the trope of migration (rural/urban and transnational mobility) in city literatures
- Explore how specific cultural and artistic practices move between cities and their rural hinterland thus creating new cultural formats and meanings
- Explore new forms of leisure and consumption patterns and how they enable entanglement and formation of new identities
- Explore the formation of new cultural formats and genres through which new audiences are hailed into being in cities and countryside
- To enable both early career faculty and graduate students to develop a deep understanding of individual cities through a study of cultural currents and artistic practices; develop their ability to generate research questions and strategies for teaching African urbanism