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Fostering excellence in African scholarship

AN ARTS, HUMANITIES AND
SOCIAL SCIENCES INITIATIVE

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“Besides acquiring best training at a premier university and benefiting from the rigors of graduate training, the PANGeA initiative has enabled me to establish a network of some of the most vibrant young scholars on the continent. I am hopeful that this will lead to productive collaborations in the future. I have also acquired best work ethics and practices that I hope will contribute to my scholarly and academic growth.”

Dr Edgar Nabutanyi, Uganda
(2010 cohort and Stellenbosch graduate, 2012)



“For me, the biggest gain of being part of PANGeA has been the opportunity to interact with prominent scholars most of whom I had previously ‘met’ only in books and articles. This experience has given me not just a certain familiarity with but also somehow a sense of belonging to an intellectual network.”

Dr Emmanuel Ngwira, Malawi
(2010 cohort and Stellenbosch graduate, 2012)



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With Africa's contribution to world science on the decline and escalating numbers of students choosing to further their education and careers overseas, the time has come to strengthen the capacity of Africa to generate new knowledge.

The **Partnership for Africa's Next Generation of Academics** (PANGeA) is a collaborative network of leading African universities developing research capacity and confidence in bringing Africa's expertise to Africa's problems.

Our vision is to promote Africa's next generation of academics, leaders and professionals through partnership and collaboration on the continent. Our strategy to pursue this vision is to build and sustain world-class doctoral programmes on and about the African continent, focusing on the arts, humanities and social sciences.

The network currently consists of the universities of Botswana, Dar es Salaam (Tanzania), Ghana, Malawi, Makerere (Uganda), Nairobi (Kenya) and Stellenbosch (South Africa). PANGeA is therefore enriched through developing an active footprint on which to draw intellectual diversity in terms of linguistic, cultural and national backgrounds.

History of PANGeA

The PANGeA initiative came into existence during a workshop which was held at Stellenbosch University for deans of faculties of arts, humanities and social sciences in Africa in November 2006. Discussions resumed in Uganda in March 2009 around the

establishment of a resilient partnership between the partner universities to recruit students and staff to participate in the PANGeA network and resulted in the signing of a Letter of Intent. A third meeting held late in 2009 in Tanzania produced a draft multilateral Memorandum of Understanding which was negotiated by management on the partner campuses and officially signed by all partners in Stellenbosch on 12 November 2010.

Graduate School of Arts and Social Sciences

Stellenbosch University's contribution to the network was the establishment of the **Graduate School of Arts and Social Sciences** as a HOPE Project initiative to strengthen and advance doctoral training and scholarship on the African continent by:

- Offering partially-structured doctoral programmes in the arts, humanities and social sciences;
- Addressing problems relevant to Africa's development in multi-disciplinary research themes (with a specific focus on the international development themes);
- Making available three-year, full-time, residential scholarships;
- Providing broad-based research and scholarship support through weekly seminars, workshops, colloquia and short courses;
- Enhancing academic collaboration and mobility (PANGeA) in partnership with leading African universities.

This programme is not only the first in Africa to bring such a degree of coherence to efforts to rebuild and sustain the capacity to produce human capital of the highest order, but is also the largest of its kind on the continent. Since 2010 an average of 25 students has enrolled per annum in the full-time doctoral scholarship programme at the Graduate School of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.

Comprehensive support

The Graduate School of Arts and Social Sciences maintains a comprehensive **Framework for Doctoral Support**, consisting of the following four elements to enable students to complete their doctoral studies in three years:

1. The study programme is a **partially-structured, full-time, residential programme** over three years. The Graduate School coordinates the provision of scholarships and academic support and tracks student progress in conjunction with supervisors to ensure timely completion.
2. The Graduate School and the department where the student is enrolled, create an **interactive learning environment** conducive to advanced scholarship development. This is currently achieved by the following means: (a) an anchor seminar and training programme organised by the Graduate School, (b) a requirement that students attend and participate in regular scholarly activities such as guided postgraduate, departmental, or theme-oriented seminars, reading groups, conferences or

specific training modules offered by the African Doctoral Academy and elsewhere at Stellenbosch University; and (c) regular meetings between students and supervisors as well as regular student progress reports to the Graduate School office.

3. The student's research topic is part of one of the Faculty's eight approved **Research Themes** which are focused on problems related to Africa's development, with an overarching focus on promoting human dignity, the eradication of poverty and advancing peace and democracy.
4. Where appropriate and feasible, students are encouraged to participate in the Faculty's efforts to engage in **collaborative research projects with leading African universities through PANGeA**. In cases where students will spend significant periods of time away from Stellenbosch or on partner campuses, appropriate measures are taken to arrange suitable co-supervision.

Multi-disciplinary research themes

1. **Democratisation, poverty and conflict** [Political Science; Political Philosophy; Sociology]
2. **Land, environment and society in Africa** [Sociology; Social Anthropology; Geography and Environmental Studies; History]
3. **Transitions and translations: Africa in local and global imaginaries** [English; African Languages; General Linguistics; Journalism; Visual Arts]
4. **The arts as knowledge** [Music; Drama; Visual Arts]



5. **Science, technology and society**

[Philosophy; Centre for Research on Evaluation, Science and Technology; Sociology]

6. **Consolidated geographical information technology application**

[Geography and Environmental Studies]

7. **Language, culture and communication**

[African Languages; Afrikaans and Dutch; French; German; General Linguistics; Journalism]

8. **Public mental health**

[Psychology; Social Work]

Innovative study models

Students are guided by experts in their fields of study and trained according to what is now known as the “cohort” model of doctoral study, which regards regular interaction and interchange amongst students and scholars working full-time in the same broad field of research – even when they are from different academic disciplines – as an important formative aspect of their intellectual development. The application of this model is rather unusual in the humanities and the social sciences, and most probably a first in Africa.

The most valuable resource in the programme is, however, the diversity of the students’ educational backgrounds which presents an abundance of potentially enriching intellectual inputs. The programme’s educational model therefore involves conscious efforts to develop structured opportunities for academic interaction. Given proper guidance, this resource enriches the quality and maturity of scholarly output in the programme far beyond that which can be achieved through traditional lecturing and learning.

Expansion of PANGeA and the doctoral programme

To sustain and further develop the programme, expansion on the following fronts will be necessary:

- **Research Themes:**We need to consolidate and strengthen current themes and at the same time encourage partners to contribute new themes based on their particular strengths in staffing, facilities, finance and access.
- **Recruitment:**We need to intensify efforts to recruit the best available talent by improving our recruitment procedures to include nominations of junior academics by partners, interviews with potential candidates and consultation with referees.
- **Partnerships:**We need to recruit new partners to create wider participation and self-sufficiency in promoting the next generation of academics and professionals equipped with leadership skills suitable to accept the challenges of Africa’s development.
- **Modes of participation:**We need to develop various modes of participation, for example sandwiching, whereby students spend half the year on the SU campus and the other half on a partner campus for each of the three years; as well as joint supervision and joint degrees, to suit the needs of different partners, in addition to a research skills training and development programme that is rotated amongst partner institutions on an annual basis.

Support the next generation of African leaders

Gift Opportunities

The following exist as on-going gift opportunities for the right investor:

The full-time doctoral scholarships are substantial and can be regarded as competitive when compared to other scholarship schemes at this level, enabling the best talent to benefit from the programme. The Graduate School has the capacity to increase the annual intake to between 30 to 40 new entrants per year. The major limiting factor is the financial provision for full-time doctoral scholarships.

FUNDING OPTIONS (in order of priority)	AMOUNT REQUIRED
<i>Three-year scholarships:</i> Each student receives R130 000 per annum for three years plus a laptop computer	R400 000 per student
<i>PANGeA:</i> Research projects, capacity building, training workshops and mobility support (3-year period)	R200 000 per student
<i>Research theme-based conferences</i>	R100 000 per theme

Current and previous investment

The Graduate School, PANGeA, our students and our graduates are indebted to the following institutions that have shared our vision for African scholarship by providing financial support:

- Stellenbosch University's HOPE Project
- Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Stellenbosch University
- Carnegie Corporation of New York
- PANGeA partner institutions

Graduate School, PANGeA and the HOPE Project

The Graduate School of Arts and Social Sciences and PANGeA are initiatives of Stellenbosch University's HOPE Project (www.thehopeproject.co.za), which creates sustainable solutions from science to solve some of Africa's most pressing challenges. The HOPE Project showcases key research and teaching initiatives that serve society and help build a better future, while developing an academically strong and relevant University, and fostering mutually beneficial partnerships.

In the three years since the Graduate School scholarship programme was launched, 19 PhD students have been awarded their degrees; thereby contributing to Africa's next generation of academics and professionals, and generating new knowledge in the arts, humanities and social sciences. Four of these students completed their doctoral studies

within two years, and the other 15 within three years, illustrating what can be achieved when sufficient financial support enables students to focus on their postgraduate studies.

Through the HOPE Project Stellenbosch University supports five themes selected from the international development agenda: eradicating poverty and related conditions; promoting human dignity and health; promoting democracy and human rights; promoting peace and security; and promoting a sustainable environment and a competitive industry.

The Graduate School and PANGeA also assist Stellenbosch University in its transformation objectives of becoming a major role player in Africa; of generating relevant knowledge for the 21st century and of establishing itself primarily as a research and postgraduate institution.

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