



Humanities Graduate Centre



Transforming the Humanities through Interdisciplinary Knowledge

THInK 2017 DOCTORAL FELLOWSHIPS: CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

0. A Doctoral Fellowship Programme for a New Generation of Scholars

The **Humanities Graduate Centre** in the **Faculty of Humanities** at the **University of the Witwatersrand** is pleased to announce the second annual call for applications for a uniquely exciting doctoral fellowship programme, generously funded by the Mellon Foundation. Known as 'THInK' or 'Transforming the Humanities through Interdisciplinary Knowledge', the programme aims to support and stimulate innovative doctoral scholarship. Each year we will select for funding and participation a small, talented, and intellectually ambitious cohort of doctoral candidates. We will be seeking individuals who have the originality of vision, the passion for scholarship, and the breadth of imagination to work beyond conventional disciplinary boundaries in ways that will build a distinctive future for the humanities and social sciences in Africa.

0. The THInK Fellowship

THInK Doctoral Fellows are funded for four years at the doctoral level followed by a fifth post-doctoral year (contingent upon the successful and timely completion of the PhD). Funding comprises a basic annual stipend (valued at R125 000 in 2017), as well as limited additional funding to cover the costs of scholarly resources, such as books, a laptop, field research expenses, writing retreats and conference attendance.

THInK Fellows will be based at the Humanities Graduate Centre, where they will take part in a PhD Lab, collaborating to shape innovative scholarly projects and events for doctoral students across the Faculty. This will involve the convening of reading groups, writing retreats, and scholarly colloquia as well as seminars for the presentation of doctoral work-in-progress. Fellows will also contribute to the design and implementation of new curricula and pedagogies, which may involve some teaching, in the Faculty of Humanities at Wits in the third and fourth year of the Fellowship.

0. Thematic Scope

While the thesis topics pursued by THInK Fellows are expected to range widely across the contemporary African humanities and social sciences, fellowships will only be offered to those who demonstrably seek to make a significant, original and transdisciplinary intervention in social, cultural, political and/or aesthetic theory. Fellows will be expected to demonstrate that they have the capacity and intention to engage in an ambitious and self-motivated programme of reading and writing, as well as scholarly argumentation and reflection throughout the duration of the Fellowship.

0. The Humanities Graduate Centre

The THInK programme will support doctoral scholarship in the Faculty of Humanities through fellowships based at the Humanities Graduate Centre at Wits University. The Humanities Graduate Centre has pioneered the provision of intellectual support to postgraduate students in South Africa, especially doctoral candidates in the Humanities and

Social Sciences. It is designed to help constitute and nourish a new generation of diverse Africa-based scholars.

0. Eligibility

At the time of application for a THInK Fellowship:

- ❖ Applicants must have already graduated, or be graduating, with a Masters degree from any university no later than 15 January 2017. Students who are already enrolled for the doctorate in any School in the Faculty of Humanities at Wits are eligible to apply, but only if they **first** registered for the PhD **after** 30 June 2016.*
- ❖ Applicants must propose doctoral research that will make an original conceptual or theoretical intervention, and, in its broadest aspects, that will hold the promise of reshaping the contours of knowledge in the African humanities and social sciences. Applicants who do not show how their doctoral research might make a substantial theoretical and/or conceptual contribution will not be considered.
- ❖ Priority will be given to black South African, and particularly black African South African, applicants. Outstanding students from elsewhere on the African continent are, however, welcome to apply.

* Please note that, at the time of application, applicants do not have to be accepted into, nor do they have to be registered in, a PhD programme in the Faculty at Wits. However, please see below for conditions relating to acceptance and registration into a PhD programme at the time of accepting an award.

At the time of accepting an offer of a THInK Fellowship:

- ❖ Fellows must be admitted into, and be registered full-time for, a PhD in an academic programme in any School in the Faculty of Humanities at Wits.

In those cases where a THInK Fellowship is offered, but the student has not yet applied for or received admission to a PhD programme, the Humanities Graduate Centre will provide assistance with the application process. Where a THInK Fellowship is offered and a student has already secured acceptance into, or has been registered in, a PhD programme, supervisory arrangements will be subject to negotiation with the student and the PhD programme concerned. Please note that the offer of a THInK Fellowship does not constitute or guarantee acceptance into a PhD programme.

- ❖ Fellows must be admitted into, and be registered full-time for, a PhD in an academic programme in any School in the Faculty of Humanities at Wits.
- ❖ While in principle THInK Fellows are not precluded from receiving other funding, all such funding applied for and/or received must be disclosed at the time of application. THInK Fellows are expected to be fully committed to the Fellowship programme, and any other funding or employment with requirements that prevents such a commitment may result in the Fellowship being withdrawn. It is the applicant's responsibility to check whether other funding awarded to them has any caps, restrictions, or requirements that would make them ineligible for the THInK Fellowship, or that would inhibit their full-time commitment to the programme.

0. To Apply:

Applicants should submit all of the following materials electronically to think.humanities@wits.ac.za by no later than **Friday 16 December 2016**. Your name should be in the subject heading of the email to which your materials are attached as follows: **THInK 2017 Application – Your Name**]

- ❖ CV with full contact details
- ❖ Academic transcripts
- ❖ An intellectual biography of about 500 words. This should indicate how, or in response to what influences, your intellectual trajectory has taken shape thus far, while also addressing your future scholarly ambitions.
- ❖ A preliminary statement of doctoral research interests of about 1,000 words. The statement should indicate (a) the puzzle or problem that the research will address; (b) the conceptual or theoretical terrain in which the research promises to make an original intervention (c) the possible range of intellectual resources or scholarly genealogies upon which the research will draw; (d) the ways in which the research is conceived to contribute to the reshaping or transcending of current disciplinary knowledge.

In addition to the above application materials to be sent by the applicant, every application must also include the following to be sent separately:

- ❖ A recommendation letter from the supervisor of your Masters research report or dissertation supervisor that discusses the merits of your scholarship at Masters level and your scholarly potential, and
- ❖ A recommendation letter from any other person deeply acquainted with your academic work and who can attest to your scholarly potential.

Both recommendation letters are to be sent directly and separately by the supervisor and the referee to the email address listed above before the application deadline, and should put the candidate's name in the subject heading of the email to which the recommendation letter is attached as follows: **THInK 2017 Recommendation - Candidate's Name**.

Applications in which any of the above required application materials have not been submitted by the deadline will not be considered, and no further correspondence will be entered into.

Further enquiries:
think.humanities@wits.ac.za



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Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand