

AFRICALICS

**THE AFRICAN NETWORK FOR ECONOMICS OF LEARNING, INNOVATION,
AND COMPETENCE BUILDING SYSTEMS**



AFRICALICS VFP 2023 COHORT

EVALUATION REPORT

June 2024

www.africalics.org

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Introduction

The AfricaLics Visiting Fellowship Programme (VFP) serves as a foundation for fostering academic exchange and capacity building within the field of innovation and development (I&D) across the African continent. The VFP initiative commenced in 2015 as an experimental endeavor within the framework of the AfricaLics¹ Research Capacity Building Programme, financed by the Swedish Development Cooperation (Sida). Students were initially hosted at Aalborg University in Denmark. Starting in 2022, the AfricaLics VFP has been held at African universities with expertise in Innovation and Development studies. Consequently, the six scholars from the 2022 cohort were hosted by Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology (JOOUST) in Kenya, and the 2023 cohort was hosted by the University of Johannesburg (UJ), South Africa. This report focuses on the activities and experiences gained with regard to the 2023 cohort. We draw learning lessons that largely inform the grounding of the VFP within African Universities.

The fellowship program extends valuable training and capacity-building opportunities to doctoral candidates from low and low-middle-income African nations. It is structured into three distinct phases; the seamlessly online preparatory activities (Phase I) with a study visit in the VFP host country (Phase II) and online follow-up activities after the study visit (Phase III). As AfricaLics continues to strive towards its mission of nurturing research excellence and promoting innovation-led development, this report aims to offer valuable insights and recommendations to further enhance the effectiveness and relevance of the fellowship initiative.

¹ African Network for Economics of Learning, Innovation, and Competence Building Systems (AfricaLics) is academic research and capacity strengthening network whose vision is to facilitate the production and use of high-quality research at the intersection of innovation and development to promote inclusive and sustainable development in African countries.

PHASE I

Online pre-visit events from 1st Feb – 31st August 2023

- High-quality mentoring
- Trilateral meetings between students, home supervisor(s) and mentors
- Writing course
- Writing sessions
- Course on Academic journal article writing.
- AfricaLics PhD Academy
- Online paper presentation seminars
- Touch base meetings.

PHASE II

Study visits at UJ from 1st Sept. – 30th Nov. 2023

- Study and writing time at UJ.
- VFP 1-week physical workshop including face-to-face trilateral meetings and poster presentations
- Physical and hybrid paper presentation seminars
- Interactions with peers and staff at UJ
- Touch base meetings.

PHASE III

Online follow-up activities from 1st December – 18th December 2023

- Continuation of online mentoring
- Four writing sessions
- Online paper presentation seminars
- Touch base meetings
- End-of-the-Year celebrations and onboarding/introduction to alumni network.

A full overview of training sessions and key events during the one-year fellowship period is included in Annex 1, while Annex 2 includes an overview of the 2023 cohort (students and their home supervisors and mentors). Annex 3 contains a list of news pieces, blogs produced by students and other reports related to the 2023 cohort activities.

Through rigorous analysis and feedback from students, mentors and students' home supervisors, this evaluation report seeks to contribute to the continuous refinement and evolution of the AfricaLics Visiting Fellowship Programme, ensuring its continued contribution to the advancement of knowledge, skills, and networks among scholars and practitioners in Africa and beyond.

Methodology

This report is based on a survey that comprised 3 different questionnaires targeting: a) the six visiting fellows in the 2023 cohort, b) the twelve mentors who supported them, and c) the six home supervisors. The questionnaires were distributed via e-mail, with participants requested to complete and submit their responses within a month. A reminder email with a survey link was sent to the targeted respondents who had not responded by the deadline. This approach was chosen to maximize response rates, considering the geographical distribution of respondents across various countries.

Findings

Feedback from the Visiting Fellows

Pre-arrival administrative activities

The 2023 cohort felt that they received sufficient information about all the activities and the programme in general. They found the information very detailed and comprehensive. The overall assessment of the pre-arrival logistical organization and communication between has also been appreciated by the cohort emphasising that the consultative meetings with supervisors & mentors on how to design their workplans made the journey realistic and gave a clear structure for the work to be conducted during the fellowship period.

The hybrid model – a combination of online and onsite activities

All the cohorts who have had the chance to participate in the hybrid model (developed in response to the Corona pandemic) have shown appreciation of it. The 2023 cohort expressed particular appreciation for activities such as the PhD academy, online seminars, and hybrid seminars, noting their usefulness in improving writing and presentation skills. However, there were suggestions for improvement, particularly regarding the timing and structure of certain activities. For instance, one participant suggested that the PhD academy would have been more beneficial if held before the visit to UJ, South Africa to allow fellows more time to focus on their writing while in South Africa. Additionally, concerns were raised about the effectiveness of the trilateral meetings, with one participant expressing dissatisfaction due to the absence of a mentor and a perceived lack of engagement from the main supervisor. This pointed to a need for better facilitation and communication concerning the importance of home supervisors' participation in such sessions.

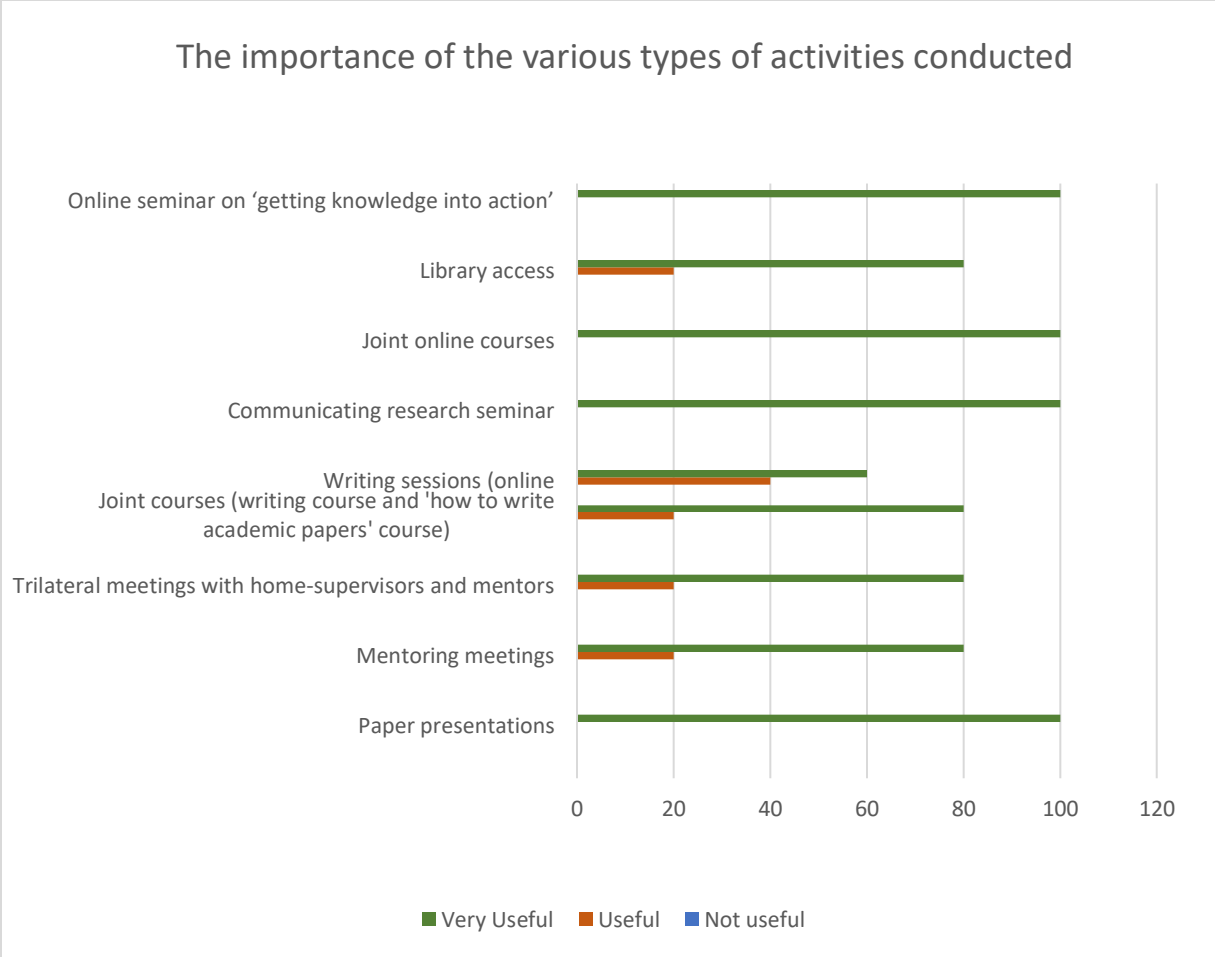


Figure 1: The importance & usefulness / relevance of the various types of activities (online, hybrid and physical) conducted.

While some participants commended the eventual provision of online library access, there were suggestions for further improvements to ensure early and seamless access to necessary resources throughout the programme. The hybrid model approach, combining online activities with physical seminars, was generally well-received, with participants noting its effectiveness in facilitating skill development and knowledge acquisition before the South Africa trip. However, there were appeals for the reinstatement and enhancement of library access to support ongoing PhD research efforts especially after the study visit and the scholarship period. Overall, the feedback provided valuable insights into the strengths of the programme activities and areas for enhancement to better meet the needs of participants and maximize the impact of the VFP.

The 2023 cohort expressed gratitude for the instrumental support provided by the contact persons in facilitating their settling down for the study visit at UJ. Specifically, respondents appreciated the timely provision of crucial information such as weather forecasts, power cut notifications, and details about social activities, which greatly aided in planning and preparation. The proactive and supportive role played by the UJ and ACTS teams was highlighted as invaluable, contributing significantly to a smooth and enjoyable experience during the visit.

Logistics during the study visit

All respondents commended the excellent access to UJ offices, amenities, and the overall convenience for study setups. Comments and suggestions for future improvements were also provided, including acknowledgment of the top-tier quality of the UJ working spaces and encouragement to maintain such standards. The serene and conducive studying environment was highly appreciated, with the daily walks to campus, despite the distance, noted for their positive impact on physical fitness. However, respondents highlighted the major challenge of frequent load shedding without a backup source of electric power. They emphasized the importance of ensuring a continuous 24/7 supply of electricity to facilitate better studying conditions for future cohorts.

The suggestions on how to improve the study stay in South Africa for future cohorts included finding them a better facility for accommodation with a generator in case of load-shedding. If the cohorts can get the UJ ID (temporarily) to access other facilities, it will be great. Students were not able to get ID cards throughout their stay, and this limited the places they could go to and facilities they could use while at UJ. One student suggested that the preparations for this be made early enough for subsequent cohorts so that they can have access by the time they arrive.

Outcomes

The study visit was an intense and productive experience, yielding significant outcomes for the scholars involved. The students all managed to complete the outputs they had set out to complete during their study visit. Notably, one scholar submitted his dissertation after two months of being in South Africa for the study visit. Upon returning home, he managed to successfully defend his dissertation with minor corrections only. Additionally, four other scholars submitted their first full draft dissertations to their home supervisors, while the last scholar continued to work on the various essays that will form her dissertation.

These achievements underscore the effectiveness of the study visit (in combination with online activities) in advancing the academic progress of the scholars and highlight the value of the program in facilitating timely and meaningful academic milestones.

We will stay in touch with the 2023 cohort as we have done with previous cohorts to continue encouraging them to complete their PhD journey.

Feedback from the Mentors

Preparations, online events, and overall structure of the VFP 2023

Most mentors (70%) found the dialogue about mutual expectations and role division with their students, supervisors, and the VFP academic coordinator during the first months of the VFP 2023 to be very useful, while 30% of mentors found it to be reasonably helpful. Some mentors noted that the role of the home supervisor was not adequately clarified. There was considerable discussion and documentation shared during this process.

Most online activities were highly ranked and seen as commendable for the programme and some of the additional comments or suggestions include:

- All events were highly beneficial and engaging, enhancing their impact significantly.
- The trilateral meetings were particularly useful in understanding the needs and expectations of the students, thus enabling better support provision.
- Frameworks provided by home institutions for PhDs are crucial for offering appropriate advice.
- Regular interactions with students via emails and WhatsApp were effective.
- Peer interactions and poster sessions were noted as particularly interesting.
- Paper presentations and trilateral meetings were deemed highly valuable.
- One mentor emphasized the importance of home supervisors taking an active role in the as they are important in the session in aligning discussions to their respective university rules & regulations etc

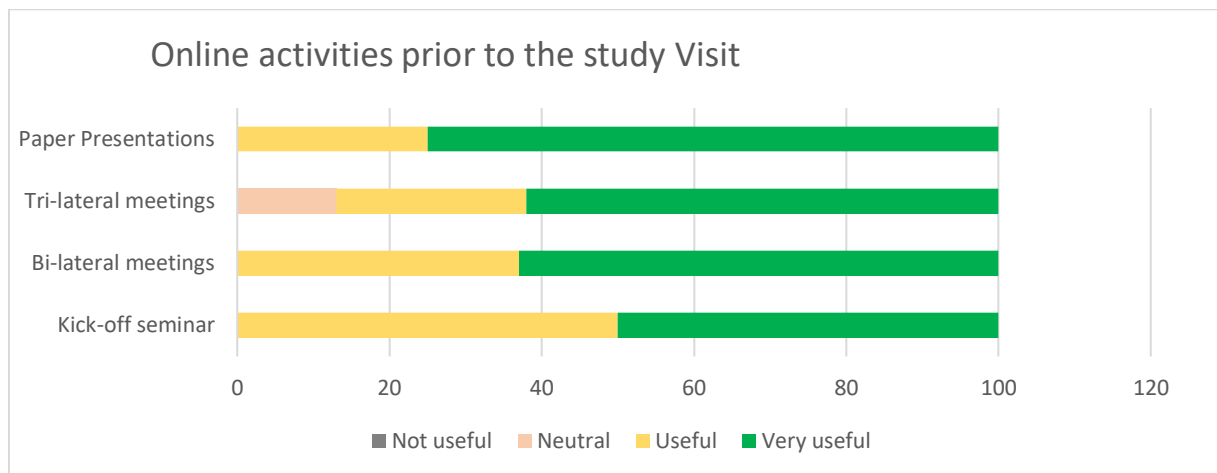


Figure 2: Usefulness of online activities before the study Visit (mentors' views).

Mentors were asked to specify the most rewarding aspects professionally and personally gained from the visiting fellowship that their PhD students would have found difficult to obtain without the visiting fellowship. These were:

- Opportunities for knowledge sharing, learning presentation ethics, and enhancing the overall research impact.
- Theoretical grounding in innovation and appropriate methodological approaches, aiding in structuring the PhD.
- Exposure to diverse perspectives on core topics on I&D
- Building networks, receiving ongoing guidance, and accessing resources to enhance theoretical reviews, methodology, and analysis.
- Access to literature databases, varied perspectives, and specialized knowledge in research areas.
- Participation in paper presentations, trilateral meetings, and addressing methodological challenges.

Mentors also commented on the most important assets (courses, access to library, feedback from mentors, interactions with peers/postdocs/senior staff at UJ etc.) that influenced the gains of the fellowship programme:

- Library access and mentor feedback were significantly important, especially for my student accustomed to an environment lacking such organization and follow-up.
- Feedback from various sources, including mentors, other staff, and fellow VFs, played a crucial role.
- Both feedback and resources, along with interactions, were valuable.
- All components, including courses, library access, mentor feedback, and interactions with peers/postdocs/senior staff at UJ, were highly beneficial.
- Interactions with peers, postdocs, and senior staff within and beyond UJ, along with mentor feedback, were highlighted.

The most challenging aspects professionally and personally of the visiting fellowship for the students, pointed out by mentor feedback include:

- Leaving home and their comfort zone but this is also an advantageous as it makes it possible for them to concentrate on their research.
- Language barriers and apprehensions about being in a new environment were noted, especially for those experiencing their first time outside their home country.
- Additionally, challenges were cited regarding the absence of supervisors, insufficient methodological planning, and the difficulty of reconciling perspectives between home supervisors and mentors.
- Some students also faced issues with the accessibility of supervisors during physical meetings, while others struggled with reconciling guidance from home supervisors with advice from mentors. Overall, these challenges underscore the complex dynamics and adjustments required for students participating in visiting fellowships, highlighting the importance of support and guidance throughout the process.

Mentors' satisfaction with participation in the VFP and final comments

80% of mentors expressed satisfaction on an overall basis with being involved as a mentor in the Africalics PhD VFP 2023 cohort. Some mentioned that mentors should not be viewed as and brought in to substitute home supervisors. Overall, 80% also would like to be involved in the programme in the future, provided they are available at the time.

Some additional comments (e.g. on why/why not mentors would like to participate again) were:

- It provides a platform for learning and sharing ideas.
- It's a great experience that allows mentors to help students improve in their studies of innovation and development. It's a real pleasure to be a stakeholder.
- To support PhD scholars' growth on the journey.

All participants expressed their willingness to recommend the program to others as mentors, with one noting that they would do so particularly if certain obstacles mentioned earlier are addressed.

Suggestions for changes to the overall structure and design of the AfricaLics PhD VFP that were brought up were:

- Consider organizing projects with more inter-related topics to enhance collaboration and exchange among visiting fellows.
- Increase the number of courses focused on leadership and career management for students.
- Ensure supervisors actively engage in the work to provide clear guidance to students; if possible make supervisor presence obligatory.
- Accommodate a larger number of candidates.

Mentors proposed their most suitable time to onboard students as per the diagram below;

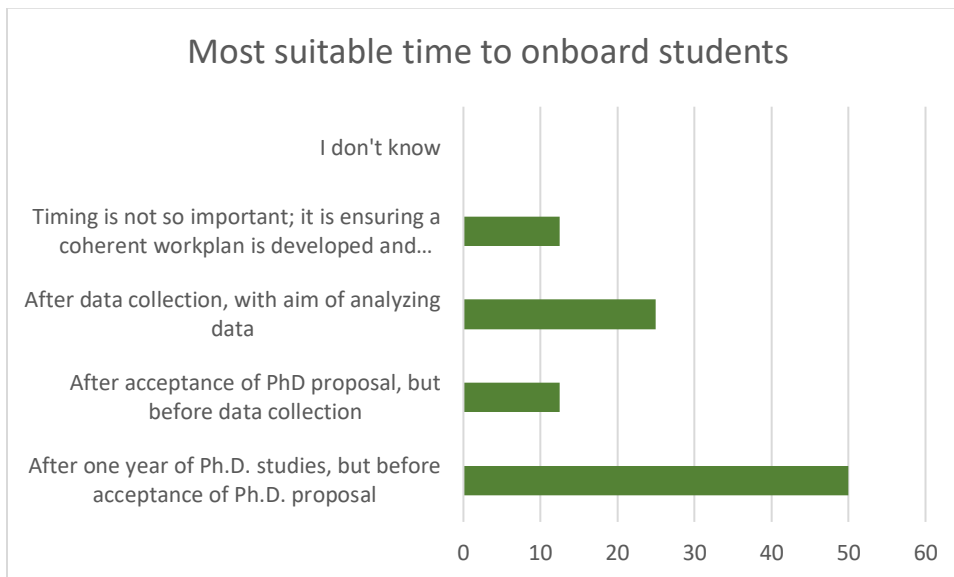


Figure 3: The ideal timing for future students to attend the AfricaLics VFP (mentors' views)

Feedback from the Home Supervisors

Interaction with AfricaLics Secretariat Team

The home supervisors observed that the communication between their student, mentor(s), and the secretariat before arrival in South Africa, aimed at clarifying mutual expectations and defining roles, facilitated their preparation for supervising their PhD student during the fellowship. Some stated, *"Following the initial online seminar, I had a clear understanding of what to expect, which greatly aided our preparations,"* while others mentioned, *"I consistently received valuable and timely information regarding my responsibilities."*

The hybrid model (combining online events with on-site study visit to UJ)

The hybrid model was deemed highly suitable by all home supervisors. They emphasized that it enabled interaction at minimal expense and provided opportunities for mutual learning and collaboration with other students. Additionally, the model allowed all supervisors, regardless of whether able to travel to South Africa or not, to participate in key activities. This helped overcome spatial and financial limitations, like not being able to finance both supervisors to travel for the physical meeting.

All home supervisors rated the knowledge and skills gained by their students as highly valuable. Specifically, in terms of professional development, the home supervisors highlighted the significance of gaining insights into contemporary trends in innovation studies, refining presentation skills, and enhancing scientific writing proficiency. Additionally, they noted that the VFP had helped their students acquire personal development skills such as effective feedback reception techniques and time management strategies, including allocating time for in-depth and shadow work, among others. Access to materials and webinar data was also recommendable and appreciated.

Home supervisors' top choice for the ideal timing for engaging with students in this programme was *after one year of Ph.D. studies, but before acceptance of Ph.D. proposal* and the second preference was *After acceptance of PhD proposal, but before data collection* as shown in the diagram below.

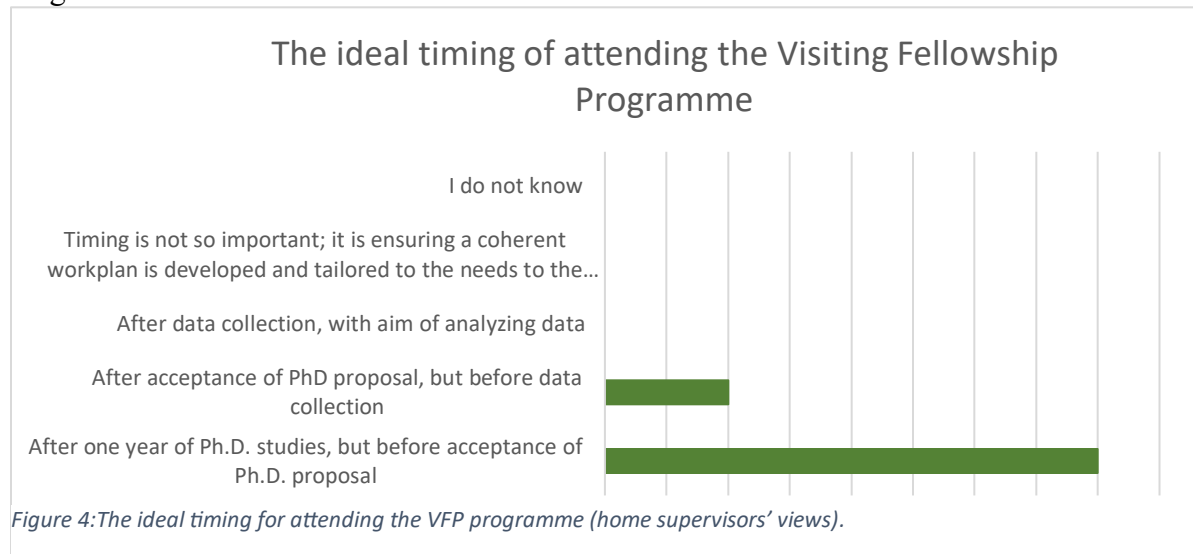


Figure 4: The ideal timing for attending the VFP programme (home supervisors' views).

There is thus a preference among home supervisors for the students to engage with the AfricaLics VFP at an early stage in their PhD journey. This resonates well with experience and feed-back from mentors on previous cohorts who have argued that early engagement is critical if the mentoring and new knowledge on I&D (theory and methods) is to actually influence the PhD students' dissertations and career development.

No home supervisors reported obstacles that prevented their students from benefiting from the programme. Engaging with peers, post-docs, and UJ staff, presenting papers physically, and

interacting with mentors were identified as the most enriching professional and personal aspects of the Visiting Fellowship program.

- One student experienced problem regarding her visa, however: Visa approval delays significantly impacted my student's trip to South Africa, nearly causing her to miss the opportunity due to the late issuance of her visa.

Overall Impression of the VFP programme

All home supervisors linked to the 2023 cohort expressed high satisfaction with their participation in the AfricaLics PhD Visiting Fellowship Programme, commending its well-executed structure and design. However, some suggestions for improvement were raised. For instance, adding a workshop on data analysis to the existing program was recommended. Additionally, concerns were voiced regarding the initial poor quality of presentation slides used by students, suggesting that supervisors should ensure acceptable standards. Another suggestion proposed dividing the program into two stages—before and after the approval of the proposal—considering that some students, were already at an advanced stage of their PhD, while others were in the early stages.

All respondents said they would recommend the AfricaLics VFP to their colleagues and other students. They also indicated their desire to remain engaged in future AfricaLics activities.

Conclusion and Recommendations

In summary, feedback from all respondents (students, home supervisors and mentors) involved in the 2023 cohort of the VFP program has been overwhelmingly positive. Scholars, mentors, and home supervisors alike have expressed satisfaction with the program's structure, including its online, hybrid, and physical components. The online bilateral and trilateral meetings have been particularly praised for facilitating effective communication among scholars, home supervisors, and mentors. However, it has been observed that not all home supervisors actively participated in the online events and consequently missed out on crucial seminars. This lack of engagement was particularly evident at the beginning of the program. Detailed communications were made regarding the program's model and the collaborative way of working and initial seminars were critical in outlining the roles and expectations for students, mentors, and home supervisors. The absence of some home supervisors in the initial sessions resulted in a gap in understanding and alignment, which could impact the overall effectiveness of the support system intended for the students' development.

The study visit component has been highlighted as highly beneficial and timely for the scholars' development. This component includes a one-week workshop, which since 2022 has included a formal two-day course on PhD supervision and mentoring. Organized by the secretariat, this workshop brings together mentors, visiting fellows, and home supervisors during the study visit. The workshop has been recognized as a significant element of the program, fostering joint learning

and collaboration, and providing valuable training that enhances the overall academic and professional growth of the scholars.

One notable recommendation stemming from the feedback is to explore strategies for increasing the participation of home supervisors in the program. Currently, some home supervisors do not engage as much as students and mentors would like, despite the potential for valuable learning opportunities for both the students and their supervisors. To address this, it has been suggested that trilateral meetings should be organized intentionally and well in advance, allowing ample time for supervisors to arrange their schedules accordingly. Additionally, securing calendar bookings can help increase commitment to the scheduled meetings. Sending out timely reminders closer to the day of the meeting can further ensure that these sessions are not overlooked. By implementing these strategies, the program aims to enhance the involvement of home supervisors, thereby fostering a more cohesive and supportive environment for the students' academic and professional growth.

During the last touch base meeting, scholars recommended the inclusion of a course on data management in the training program. There is a growing importance of data management skills in academic research, as it supports organizing, storing, and analyzing research data more effectively. Scholars pointed out that incorporating this course into the training program would not only enhance their research capabilities but also equip them with essential skills for future academic and professional endeavors. This recommendation aligns with the program's commitment to providing comprehensive support to scholars, ensuring they are well-prepared to meet the challenges of contemporary research environment.

Additionally, the formal role of mentors as providing complementary advice and mentoring to the students can be difficult to adhere to if home supervisors are not seen as sufficiently active during the fellowship period. The roles of home supervisors and mentors are different with home supervisors maintaining full responsibility for their students' PhD process also during the VFP fellowship period and mentors providing additional support. As recognized by some of the home supervisors in the survey feedback, written and oral information to all participants in the VFP clearly emphasizes this. At the same time, the AfricaLics network and secretariat rely on home supervisors' goodwill to participate in joint activities (notably paper presentation seminars and trilateral meetings) as there is no remuneration provided for the home supervisors outside the remuneration they get from their universities. For sustainability reasons, this will be difficult to provide also in the future.

Annex 1: AfricaLics Visiting Fellowship Programme scholars, 2023 cohort

Name	Country	Gender	Dissertation title	Home Supervisor	Mentors
Adeduntan Segun-Olasanmi	Nigeria	Female	Dynamics of Gender and Technology in the Cashew Nut Value Chain in Southwestern Nigeria	Professor T. O. Oyebisi	Justina A. Onumah
					Caleb Olweny
Natnael Sharecho	Ethiopia	Male	Business model innovation and firm performance: Moderating role of environmental dynamism.	Dr. Zeruhin Kehinde	Abdi Ahmad
					Jesper Lindgaard Christensen
Rosalyn Baddoo	Ghana	Female	Commercializing agri-innovations in Ghanaian Universities for sustainable Agribusinesses	Prof. Akwasi Mensah-Bonsu	Caleb Akinrinade
Paule Melissa Atangana	Cameroon	Female	Four essays on the macroeconomic effects of financial development on sources of innovation in Africa	Gandjon Fankem Gislain	Abdelkader Djeflat
					Mvogo Gregory Paulin
Mbeo Calvince Ogeya	Kenya	Male	Transformative Innovation: Investigating the coevolution of grid and off-grid electricity system.	Prof. Ogara Solomon	Rasmus Lema
					Maruf Sanni
Ann Numi	Kenya	Female	An Agricultural Biotechnology Technological Innovation System (ABTIS): Build-up, Actors & Dynamics	Dr. Caleb Olweny	Opeyemi Ayinde
					AnnKingiri

Annex 2: 2023 Event Overview

AfricaLics PhD Visiting Fellowship Programme (2023 cohort)

Key activities and milestones

Online activities 1st Feb. - 31st August 2023 and 1st December 2023 -
31st January 2024

On-site activities (Johannesburg) 1st September – 30th
November 2023

DATE & TIME	TITLE OF EVENT	FACILITATOR(S)	PARTICIPANTS	HOW TO
8 February 2023 (11:00Hr- 14:00Hr EAT)	Students Online Introduction Seminar with the AfricaLics Secretariat	MHA and Mourine	2023 Cohort	Outlook invite with Zoom link from secretariat
14 February 2024 (14:00Hr: 16:00Hr EAT)	Online Introduction Seminar with first trilateral meetings included.	MHA/Becky and Mourine. Ann K. to welcome all.	2023 cohort + home supervisors and mentors.	Outlook invite with Zoom link from secretariat
28 February 2023	Submission of draft workplan.	Mourine to remind visiting fellows and follow up	2023 cohort to send to VFP Academic coordinator (MHA) and VFP Manager (Mourine)	By mail.
12th March 2023	Submit presentation sheet and documents for the first online paper presentation	Visiting Fellows to send documents to Mourine or UJ support staff for circulation to all participants.	2023 cohort	By mail.

17 th March 2023	Touch base meetings re: VFP individual draft work plans	MHA and Mourine to meet students individually and give feed-back.	2023 cohort	Outlook invite with Zoom link
Tuesday 21 st March 2023	Writing Course (General writing skills)	Liv and MHA/ Mourine	2023 cohort and maybe some additional participants (Bio-innovate students, AfricaLics alumni or UJ students)	Outlook invite with Zoom link
21 st March 2023	Human Rights Day in South Africa			
Wednesday 22 nd March 2023	First online Paper Presentation Seminar	MHA (Chair) + Mourine (zoom invite and organize minutes)	2023 cohort + home-supervisors + mentors	Outlook invite with Zoom link
31 March 2023	Agreed workplans signed and submitted	Mourine to remind visiting fellows and follow up	2023 cohort to complete workplans and obtain signatures from home supervisors and mentors + send to Mourine cc to Margrethe	By mail
Holidays in April/May	Friday 7 th April – Monday 10 th - Easter holidays + 21 April Eid al_Fitr tentatively + 1st May: Labour Day.			
14 th April, 28 th April, 12 th May, 26 th May and 16 th	Writing Sessions	Mourine and MHA (kick-off only)	2023 cohort and possibly (2022 VFP cohort and other alumni)	Outlook invite with Zoom link

June				
26 th April 2023	Course on Writing Academic Articles	External facilitator Liv Gish + MHA and Mourine	2023 cohort and possibly other alumni (tbd)	Outlook invite with Zoom link
27 th April 2023	Freedom Day in South Africa			
1 st May 2023	Workers' day in South Africa			
12 th May 2023	Submit presentation sheet and documents for presentation on 24 th May.	Mourine to remind visiting fellows and follow up	2023 cohort to submit to Mourine/UJ support staff for circulation to all participants.	By mail.
24 th May 2023	Second online Paper Presentation Seminar	MHA (Chair) + Mourine (zoom invite and organize minutes)	2023 cohort + home-supervisors + mentors	Outlook invite with Zoom link
26 th May 2023	Touch base meeting to plan for UJ visit	Becky/Mourine	2023 cohort	Outlook invite with Zoom link
5 th – 9 th June 2023	AfricaLics PhD Academy (online; focus: systematic literature review + student paper presentations)	Becky/Mourine – VFPs must send in their abstract as all other participants, but participation is part of the scholarship.	2023 cohort + other selected participants.	Outlook invite and Zoom link
16 th June 2023	Touch base and planning for UJ visit	Becky/UJ staff and Mourine/MHA	2023 cohort	Outlook invite with Zoom link

16th June 2023	Youth Day In South Africa			
Holidays in June	1st June -Madaraka Day (Kenya) and 29 June- Eid al-adha			n.a.
JULY and AUGUST 2023	Writing time and preps before leaving for UJ.		2023 cohort	n.a.
9th August 2023	National Women’s Day in South Africa			

1st September 2023	Arrival and accommodation: be aware of COVID19 test requirements etc.	Becky/UJ staff	2023 cohort	On-site in J’burg
Early September	Settling and getting workspace on campus	Becky/UJ staff	2023 cohort	On-site in Nairobi
4 th September 2023	Welcome seminar on-site – no paper presentation	Becky + UJ staff – AK/MHA/MC online (tbd)	2023 cohort + Participants from UJ; other participants (tbd)	Room at UJ + zoom link if anyone joins virtually
11 th September 2023	Submit documents for presentation on 21st Sept. 2023	Mourine to remind visiting fellows and follow up	2023 Cohort to submit to Mourine for circulation.	By mail
17th September 2023	Arrival of home and supervisors and mentors	UJ staff based on agreed programme and communication with participants	2023 cohort (and maybe also some from 2022 cohort)	Tickets and rooms to be organized (UJ)

18 th and 19 th September 2023	PhD Supervision seminar	Mirjam/Liv as facilitators (MHA/Ann; Becky).	2023 cohort + home-supervisors + mentors + additional (UJ) students and supervisors.	Plenary room at UJ with round tables; zoom invites for online participants
20th September 2023	Bilateral and Trilateral meetings	Mourine /Becky or MHA or other to welcome participants	2023 cohort + other PhD students and their home supervisors + mentors + facilitators	Plenary room with round tables for each student; zoom for online participants
21st September	Third Paper Presentation Seminar – including poster session by students	Becky/MHA/Mourine + UJ staff	2023 cohort and their home supervisors and mentors + facilitators	Plenary room at UJ with round tables + zoom for online participation
21 st September in the evening	Galla-dinner	Becky/UJ staff	2023 cohort and their home supervisors and mentors + Facilitators	Venue to be decided
22nd September 2023	Wrap-up meetings and depart. mentors and supervisors	UJ/Mourine	2023 cohort + home-supervisors + mentors	Rooms at UJ (plenary room with round tables)
25 th Sept 2023	Heritage Day in South Africa			

13th October 2023	Submit documents for presentation on 25th Oct. 2023	Reminder to students and follow up + programme	Visting fellows 2023 cohort to send to Mourine for distribution	
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25th October 2023	Fourth Paper Presentation Seminar /wrap up seminar with farewell reception	MHA/Becky and Mourine	2023 cohort + home supervisors and mentors	Hybrid – students onsite and with Zoom link for online participation
12th – 14th October 2023	Globelics Conference	Students must apply if they want to participate – this is NOT an automatic part of the VFP!	Students with accepted papers only!!	Globelics Call and invitation if applicable.
17th November 2023	Submit papers for Paper Presentation Seminar on 28th November	Mourine to remind students and follow up (share programme in advance)	Visting fellows 2023 cohort to send to Mourine for distribution	By mail
28th November 2023	Fifth Paper Presentation seminar with wrap up and farewell reception	Becky/UJ staff	2023 cohort + mentors and home supervisors	Hybrid – students onsite and with Zoom link for online participation.
16th Dec 2023	Day of Reconciliation in South Africa			
18 December 2023	Touch base meeting	Becky/MHA + Mourine	2023 cohort	Zoom invitation
18 December 2023	End-of-Year celebrations – all AfricaLics alumni	AfricaLics Secretariat	Visiting fellows and PhD academy participants; members of AfricaLics network.	Poster with link to registration will go out by SoMe and mail
February 2024	Touch base meeting re: follow up	MHA/Becky/Mourine	Visting fellows	Outlook invite with Zoom link