

## **CALL FOR APPLICATIONS: FULL PHD SCHOLARSHIP AT UNIVERSITY OF GHANA**

**Project title:** Energy struggles: renewable energy in Africa

**Funding agency:** The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, administered by the DANIDA Fellowship Centre.

**Number of Scholarships: One (1).**

The University of Ghana in partnership with the Danish Institute for International Studies (DIIS) is pleased to announce the availability of full funding to pursue a PhD programme for a four-year period, beginning from February 2022.

This PhD position is part of a comparative research project on the political economy of renewable energy in Africa, with a focus on Ghana and Tanzania. The overall aim of the project is to contribute to a better understanding of how a transition to renewable energy can occur in sub-Saharan Africa. Many countries have set targets for solar and wind, but implementation has been slow and uneven. Consequently, there remain significant gaps between targets and actual implementation of policies relating to renewable energy in developing countries. Much of existing literature focuses on how technical innovation in renewable energy can drive a transition of energy systems. Despite the increasing recognition of the centrality of politics and power relations in shaping the prioritization of energy projects, little is known of the political and political economy factors that shape the design and implementation of renewable energy projects in Africa

The project aims to develop a conceptual framework for the study of the political economy of energy that can help explain how different energy types/sources (e.g. renewable, fossil fuel, solar, gas etc.) are prioritized in different countries. Specifically, the project's key research questions are as follows:

- i. What are the most important state organisations in Ghana's energy sectors, and how have they developed their capacity since liberalization?
- ii. What is the capacity of state organisations when planning energy systems and projects, and what are the implications for the prioritization of different energy technologies?
- iii. What are the dominant policy coalitions in the Ghanaian energy sector, and what are the interests, ideas and relative power of their constituting organisations vis-à-vis those excluded in relation to the prioritization of energy technologies and projects?
- iv. How have different policy coalitions promoted or impeded access to new renewable energy in Ghana?
- v. How have political economy dynamics shaped access to energy services among the poor?

The project team intends to use multidisciplinary approaches to undertake research on the relative importance of technological capabilities, state capacity, and policy coalitions in the energy sectors. The project pays particular attention to the role of access to energy services for the poor, which is a priority for both Tanzania and Ghana, as well as for Danish development assistance. The project also aims to provide evidence-based findings that can lead to more informed decision-making in partner countries with regard to the choice of renewable energy technologies.

As part of the project, the University of Ghana invites interested and qualified citizens of Ghana, holding MPhil/MA/MSc degrees in the social sciences to submit their applications for a PhD position. The PhD candidate will be part of the project's work package focusing on decision-making and implementation related to energy sector policies as well as to major energy projects. This could involve research into large-scale energy projects, or off-grid, minigrids, and rural electrification projects.

The successful candidate will be enrolled in the Department of Public Administration at the University of Ghana Business School (UGBS) and receive a PhD in **Public Administration and Policy Management** with a specialisation in the political economy of renewable energy.

The successful candidate will be co-supervised by a research team from the UGBS and the DIIS. He/She will receive a stipend during the 4-year period of his/her studies, and all costs for fieldwork, PhD training-related travel, and conferences abroad will be covered by the project. The scholarship also includes study stays at the Danish Institute for International Studies (DIIS) in Copenhagen, Denmark.

### **Eligible criteria**

Applicants must be Ghanaian citizens who meet the following criteria:

- i. Hold a good masters degree in the social sciences, preferably in Public Administration, Political Science, and Development Studies.
- ii. Be highly motivated to develop a scientific career, and to pursue doctoral studies according to the approved study plan.
- iii. Possess and demonstrate good research and writing skills.
- iv. Have a strong methodological and conceptual background in the relevant scientific disciplines or areas.
- v. Ideally have experience in conducting elite interviews.
- vi. Ideally have good understanding of Ghana's political context and how it shapes elite incentives and behavior.
- vii. Ideally, have at least one publication in a good journal as sole/lead author.  
Ideally, demonstrated ability to plan and undertake quality research, including experience in conducting qualitative interviews in Ghana

Female candidates are especially encouraged to apply to take advantage of the funding opportunity available.

## **Application Process**

Potential applicants are invited to prepare a 4-5-page concept note (maximum 2,000 words) which, outlines a detailed focus for the proposed PhD project as well as research assumptions and questions. The concept note should include the title of the study; problem statement and/or research question; theoretical approach, proposed research methodology, and a study plan.

In addition to the concept note, the application should be accompanied by:

- i. Detailed CV and two letters of academic reference
- ii. Official transcripts and certificates for undergrad and masters degrees
- iii. Sample of publication or any other written material (not more than 7,000 words) of which the candidate is either the sole or lead author.

The application should be submitted by email to Prof. Abdul-Gafaru Abdulai ([agabdulai@ug.edu.gh](mailto:agabdulai@ug.edu.gh)) and copied to Rasmus Hundsbaek Pedersen ([rhp@diis.dk](mailto:rhp@diis.dk)). Both Abdul-Gafaru and Rasmus can be contacted for more information on the renewable energy project. Candidates will be screened against a set of criteria and only those shortlisted will be invited to an online interview.

The assessment committee will consist of a panel of researchers from the UGBS and partner institutions in the Energy Struggles research project. The partners in the research project are the Danish Institute for International Studies (DIIS), Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), UNEP DTU Partnership, the University of Ghana (UG), and Science, Technology and Innovation Policy Research Organization (STIPRO) in Tanzania.

**Deadline for submitting applications is 5pm on 20 December 2021.**