Liberation Alliance Africa

The Sawaba Fellowship

The Sawaba fellowship will create space for thinkers, artists, practitioners, activists and community organisers to engage in reflection and experience-based discourse, research and knowledge production on key topics in pursuit of decolonial feminist futures. The Sawaba fellowship embodies scholarly components and personal and collective explorations on liberation, critical consciousness, and anti-colonial feminist solidarity. **Four fellows** of African descent will be selected. Fellows must reside on the continent. The fellowship will begin with a **three-day** residential retreat in Praia, Cape Verde.

Fellowship Theme — Alchemical Transmutations

The Sawaba Institute of Critical Consciousness fellows will nurture knowledge and anti-colonial indignation under the theme of Alchemical Transmutations. This fellowship is framed to explore alchemical transmutations in ways we unmask coloniality through liberation efforts and challenge its endurance across the dimensions of power, knowledge and being. Alchemical Transmutations is explored here as deconstructing coloniality and repairing relational commitments in thought, behaviour, beliefs, and actions.

Alchemical Transmutations in this context is the permission to explore, re-read and reimagine the abundant resources of African conceptual frameworks in philosophy, feminisms, art, world-building and education systems. The fellows are invited to critically reflect on all the fundamental aspects of decoloniality of the mind through the lens of exposition, framing, reframing and repair.

Critical consciousness invites us to the awareness of normative thought modes that came to us through colonisation and engaging in rigorous interrogation that shifts us from inertia towards reflective choices. To undergo conceptual, intellectual, or ideological decolonisation and decoloniality is to become increasingly conscious of how coloniality frames contemporary thinking and not stop at critique but work towards repair and birthing new realities.

This fellowship's multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary outputs will centre on the interrogation, reappropriation and incorporation of experiences, practices, beliefs, values, and ways of life and being previously subjugated and rendered epistemically incapacitated by colonial knowledge structures that continue to entrench themselves through globalisation.

Expectations

- Prospective fellows will propose an original project of conviction aligning with the theme of Alchemical Transmutations.
- The project should contribute to decolonial feminist liberation. Fellows are expected to conclude or make significant progress on that project during their fellowship term.
- Fellows are expected to attend fellowship gatherings in person and virtually and engage with other scholars, practitioners and organisers within and without the LAA collective.
- Fellows must be available to participate in one in-person gathering in May 2025, fully supported by the Liberation Alliance Africa Collective.

Output

Fellows are expected to contribute significantly to critical consciousness-raising and world-building through preferred mediums, including but not limited to essays, books, journals or podcasts, plays, organising public events or lectures, etc.

Requirements

- Fellows may be artists, academics, journalists, documentarians, thinkers, playwrights, poets, architects, urban planners, novelists, cultural workers, or practitioners in other fields.
- They are critical and futurist voices with deep analysis of normative concepts such as justice, equality, rights, climate, identity, and community, — transcending the limitations of contemporary thought and discourse.
- Successful applicants will be deeply rooted in decolonial feminist politics, anti-imperialist solidarity, feminist world-building and epistemic liberation while being deeply conversant with issues of the region and the planet.
- Fellows will receive a stipend of USD500/month for the duration of the fellowship to cover project expenses.
- The fellowship term is 3 months, but fellows can request a no-cost extension for up to an additional 2 months.
- The fellowship is conducted in the English Language.

Application Process:
The fellowship application can be accessed with this link. This requires a cover letter, your portfolio, a project description (maximum of three pages) and a draft project budget.

Application Timeline:

Fellowship applications must be received no later than 17th March 2025.

Due to the high volume of applications we anticipate, only shortlisted candidates will be contacted. If you do not hear from us by April 4th, we regret to inform you that we have been unable to shortlist your application. We truly appreciate the time and effort you put into applying and wish you the best in your future endeavours.

Applicants will be notified about whether they have received the fellowship by 28th March 2025

All requests for additional information must be directed to hello@liberationallianceafrica.com