

**OPEN CALL FOR ONE POSTDOCTORAL CONTRACT ASSOCIATED WITH ERC  
STARTING GRANT AFDEVLIVES TO STUDY THE AFTERLIVES OF DEVELOPMENT  
INTERVENTIONS IN EASTERN AFRICA WITH FOCUS ON TANZANIA**

Deadline: 20 November 2023

The Centre of International Studies (CEI) at Iscte - University Institute of Lisbon (Portugal) announces the opening of a competition for 1 postdoctoral contract in the area of African Studies or related fields. The position is part of ERC Starting Grant "AfDevLives: The Afterlives of Development Interventions in Eastern Africa (Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique)" (Ref. 101041788), hosted by CEI-Iscte and led by Dr. Yonatan N. Gez.

AfDevLives studies the legacies of development interventions and their long-term impact on local communities. Exploring links between the past, the present, and the future, it revisits interventions' representational and material remains from below, as experienced and re-appropriated locally over time. The selected candidate will develop a case study related to the afterlives of development in Tanzania in line with the project's objectives, and will contribute to the project's methodological toolkit, outputs (academic and public-facing), and general implementation. Together with other team members, they will partake in the creation of a new phenomenologically inspired participatory approach designed to reflect the close connection between people and their physical environment. The nominated researcher will be based in Lisbon and will conduct multiple rounds of fieldwork around a selected case study (or case studies) in Tanzania, with possibility of drawing on parallels in Kenya and/or Mozambique. Acknowledging the project's sensitive themes and applied potential, Project AfDevLives encourages participatory approaches as well as benefit sharing and science communication. The selected candidate is expected to reflect these values and, next to their research *sensu stricto*, actively promote the project's wider goals.

NB:

- Although the position is framed as a postdoctoral contract, there is no limit on the date of completion of the candidate's doctoral thesis. Note, however, that the selected candidate will need to have obtained her/his doctoral diploma by the starting date of their contract.
- Special consideration will be given to equally qualified candidates from the Global South, as well as from Ukraine.

**Scientific area:** African Studies or related fields

## 1. Application

The competition is open between 1 October and 20 November 2023 (midnight). Applications and supporting documents will be submitted by email to both [recruitment.cei@iscte-iul.pt](mailto:recruitment.cei@iscte-iul.pt) and [afdevlives@gmail.com](mailto:afdevlives@gmail.com). Incoming applications will receive an acknowledgement of receipt. To minimize communication problems, candidates are encouraged to make sure that their application has indeed been received and acknowledged.

## 2. Type and duration of the grant

The call is aimed at one candidate. Should no suitable candidate be found, the selection committee reserves itself the right to conclude the call without admitting any candidate. Similarly, in the case of multiple, highly suitable candidates, the committee reserves itself the right to expand the call to more than one position.

The selected candidate will be hired for 18 months, with the possibility of renewal up to a total of 36 months. The contract will start by 1 March 2024, with some flexibility and preference for an early starting date. In the case of candidates arriving from outside Portugal, the date of relocation to Lisbon may be negotiated on a case-by-case basis. Specific questions may be addressed to the project's PI, Dr. Yonatan N. Gez ([afdevlives@gmail.com](mailto:afdevlives@gmail.com)).

## 3. Necessary requirements:

- Academic training of relevance to the position (e.g., African studies, social anthropology, development studies...)
- Readiness to relocate to Lisbon and to conduct multiple fieldwork rounds in Tanzania (with possibility for additional fieldwork in Kenya and Mozambique)
- Good interpersonal skills and ability to work in a team
- Excellent knowledge of English and at least basic knowledge of Swahili

## Assets:

- Established familiarity with Eastern Africa, including ethnographic experience
- Excellent Swahili skills and knowledge of other relevant languages spoken in Eastern Africa, notably Portuguese
- Experience working with, and possibly developing, creative and participatory research methods of relevance to the project
- Established knowledge of the international development sector (e.g., through academic research, employment history, and/or voluntary work)
- Experience with academic collaborations and with interdisciplinary research projects
- Experience publishing in peer-reviewed academic outlets

## 4. Application documents

Applications must include the following documents:

- Cover letter (1-2 pages) introducing the candidate's relevant background and skills as well as their interest in the project
- Essay (1-2 pages, excluding bibliography and images if relevant): **"Which research approaches and methods would you like to develop that will align with Project AfDevLives' rationale and objectives?"** Candidates are welcome to suggest creative and 'out of the box' approaches but should pay attention to potential risks. They may also propose a tentative case study (or studies), mindful that such plans may eventually change. In preparing their essay, candidates are encouraged to familiarize themselves with Project AfDevLives' rationale and objectives (see sections 6 and 7 below).
- Complete academic CV and publication list (if available)
- Two writing samples (e.g., PhD chapter, academic publications if available)
- University grade sheets and proofs of academic degrees. Copies of additional diplomas and training certificates, as well as proofs of employment history, are welcome but not mandatory.
- Names and contact details of three referees. Should the candidate be shortlisted, some or all referees may be contacted directly by Project AfDevLives to request a letter of support.

The application will be written in English. All application material must be submitted in PDF format.

## 5. Evaluation criteria

Candidates that meet the application conditions will be scored on a scale of 0 to 100 based on the submitted documents. Assessment will be made based on the following evaluation criteria:

Criterion A: Motivation and vision for the position: 40%

Criterion B: Relevant academic experience and merit: 40%

Criterion C: Non-academic experience and additional skills (e.g., languages): 20%

Shortlisted candidates will be invited for an online interview (dates TBD).

## 6. About the project

International development involves ideologies and activities ostensibly directed towards the improvement of well-being of populations in the Global South. Mainstream development interventions emphasize forward-looking ideas of progress and advocate for novelty. In so doing, however, the sector is often myopic, as evidenced by countless unintended consequences that stretch beyond interventions' official life cycle. Whether deemed as success or failure, such interventions leave behind a long trail of tangible and intangible traces. Project AfDevLives explores how development interventions' representational and material remains are experienced, utilized, and re-appropriated by local actors over time, and how such active immanence of the past affects people's life-worlds. It weaves together three temporal gazes: prospective (development's blueprints); retrospective (sediments of the past, shorthand as interventions' 'afterlives'); and present-time lived experience. Consciously de-centering formal development discourse and temporalities, the project develops and applies a phenomenological framework oriented around the embodied interweaving of people, objects, and space. Using an interdisciplinary approach centered on social anthropology, research will be conducted in Kenya, Tanzania, and Mozambique, neighbouring Eastern African countries that are among the highest recipients of development aid and whose past and present hold both continuities and ruptures. The project will unfold via an iterative process involving four complementary work packages: Movement, Image, Storytelling, and Synthesis. Working across work packages, countries, and case studies, the project will pursue three categories of objectives: conceptual (methodological toolkit), empirical (based on extensive ethnographic fieldwork), and practical (aimed at the development sector, local heirs of interventions, and the public at large). The project will result in a robust set of outputs.

## 7. Additional references

- <https://blog.cei.iscte-iul.pt/erc-grant-yonatan-development-east-africa/>
- <https://erc.easme-web.eu/?p=101041788>
- Gez, Yonatan N. 2021. "The Afterlives of International Development Interventions: A Site-Specific Approach." *Journal of Development Studies* 57(9): 1511-1526
- Gez, Yonatan N., Fouéré, Marie-Aude, & Bulugu, Fabian. 2022. "Telling Ruins: The Afterlives of an Early Post-Independence Development Intervention in Lake Victoria, Tanzania." *The Journal of Modern African Studies*: 1-26.

## 8. Recruitment process and salary scale

The position is for an employment contract, corresponding to the category of an Assistant Researcher (*'Investigador Auxiliar'*) presented in the Regulation 912/2022 of Iscte - University

Institute of Lisbon. After receiving the applications, the hiring committee will analyse and select candidates for possible interviews and eventual hiring as an Invited Assistant Researcher at Iscte. The salary will be adjusted to the experience of the selected candidate, to the corresponding stage ('*escalão*') of Assistant Researcher (195, 210, 230 or 245 - full time - '*tempo integral*'). Should no suitable candidate be found, an additional recruitment phase may be launched.