



IU BLOOMINGTON

EMERGING AREAS OF RESEARCH

Abstract Template -- Due June 30, 2017

Title of initiative to be proposed:

New Media and Global Africa

Name of lead PI, with title, department/school:

John H. Hanson, Director, African Studies Program, School of Global and International Studies, and Associate Professor, History, College of Arts and Sciences

Key team member names and departments/schools (up to 10 names):

Akin Adesokan, Media School and Comparative Literature; Vincent Bouchard, French & Italian; Beth Buggenhagen, Anthropology; Jane Goodman, Anthropology; Marissa Moorman, Media School and History; Michelle Moyd, History; Daniel Reed, Folklore & Ethnomusicology

Description of area to be proposed. What constitutes this area of research or creative activity as emerging?
(Word limit=500)

New Media and Global Africa is a research initiative that analyzes how new media transforms African cultural expressions and how these expressions shape the contemporary world. New media includes recent advances in digital formats but also earlier technologies associated with cinema, music, photography, and radio. The focus is global because African artists, on the continent and beyond, engage the world, shape political debates and economic affairs, and influence religious and social movements. It is an emerging area because new media productions by Africans are a growing influence on and off the continent. This project is collaborative and cross-disciplinary, moving beyond standard formulations of "traditional" and "modern" and area studies paradigms to analyze global expressions of exchange, elaboration, and innovation in a new conceptualization of African artistic expressions. We will achieve this goal of reshaping African Studies in the direction of the global by producing new scholarly publications, writing grants to secure external funding, documenting African cultural expressions digitally and archiving on an IU website, and hiring strategically in key disciplines that will further this new research agenda. The project taps IU's extensive and unique Africana resources in the Archives of Traditional Music, the Black Film Center/Archive, the Eskenazi Museum of Art, the Lilly Library, the Mathers Museum, the Wells Library, and other repositories. It builds on a series of workshops organized by members of the team, including an international symposium at the IU Berlin Global Gateway in June 2017. Our project will extend the internationally-recognized research of current faculty and add new members to propel IU, already a leader in African Studies and in research on new media and global Africa, to the top ranks internationally.

Please submit to earprogram@indiana.edu