

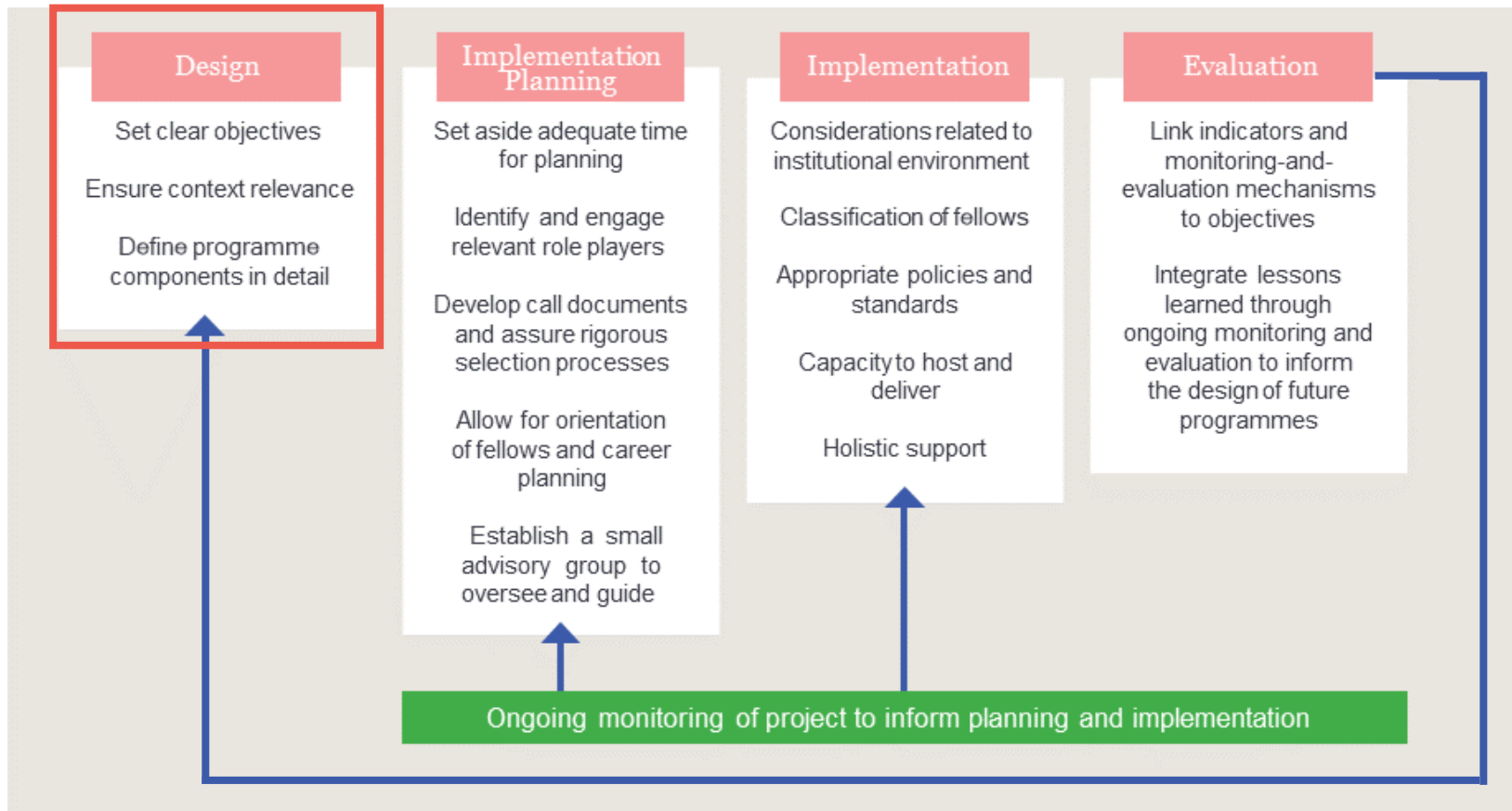
Designing high-impact programmes

Professor Frans Swanepoel

PERKA Principal Investigator



Lifecycle of a programme



“

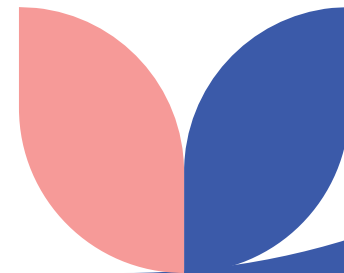
A well-conceptualised programme lays
a strong foundation for impact.

Programmes need to be intentionally
designed and effectively implemented.

”

Designing for impact

- Clearly articulate programme objectives
- Ensure programme objectives are relevant to the institutional, regional, and/or continental context.
- Define specific programme components.





Designing for impact

Programme objectives

Although the objectives of post-PhD support programmes will (and should) differ by context, a clearly defined set of objectives that inform the programme design is critical.

Typical programme objectives

**Knowledge production
and dissemination**

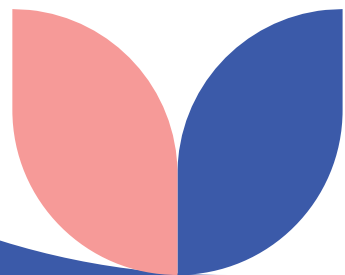
Capacity Development

**Strengthening African
institutions and
systems**

**Building academic
networks and
communities**

Promoting diversity

**Contributing to
development in Africa**



Designing for impact

Ensuring relevance

There is no one-size-fits-all model for post-PhD support programmes in Africa. Context relevance is critical.

This allows programmes to position themselves for impact by matching the programme's objectives to the particular circumstances where it will be delivered

Objective – Relevance – Design

Diverse models

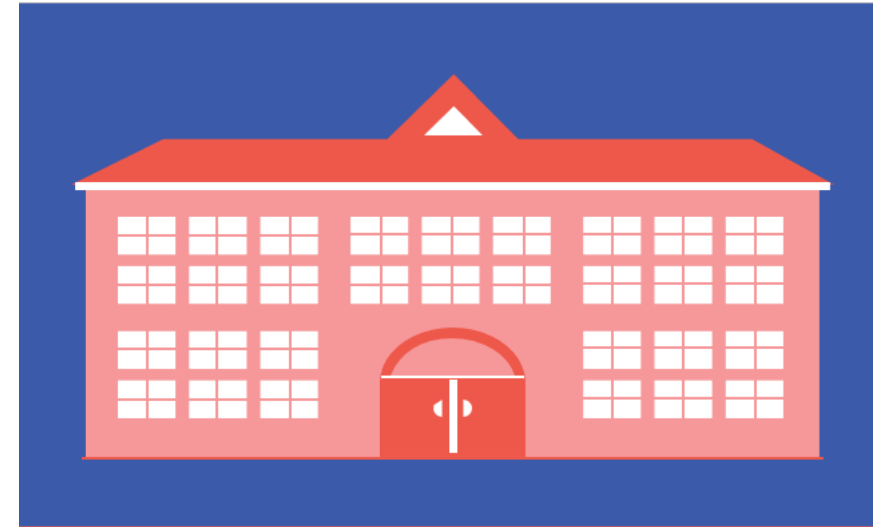
Discipline focus



Publication focus



Institutional retention





Designing for impact

Defining programme components

Programmes need to be intentionally designed to provide fellows the opportunities that will empower them to acquire the skills needed for a successful research career.

The common thread connecting all post-PhD support programmes should be an emphasis on developing skills.

Programme components



Skills development



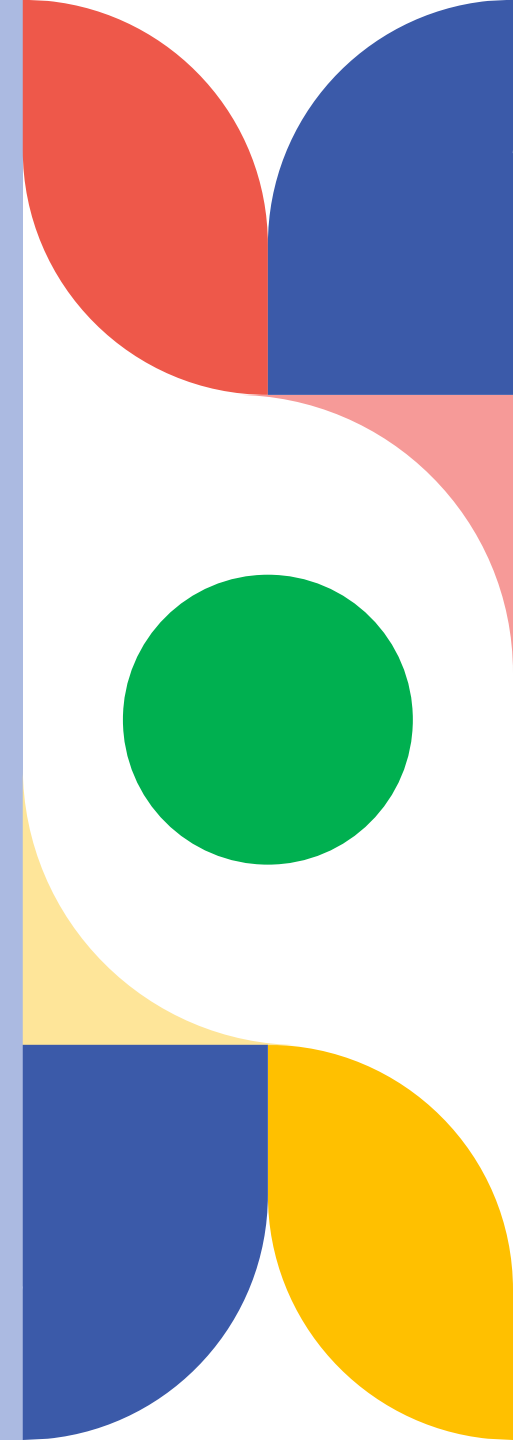
Mentorship



Networking



Time-away/residencies



Skills development

Research skills

Disciplinary knowledge and skills

Skills to design research programmes

Conduct responsible research

Supervision skills

Analyze and interpret data

Publish as senior author

Multidisciplinary research skills

Complementary skills

Teaching skills

Leadership skills, including conflict resolution

Project management skills

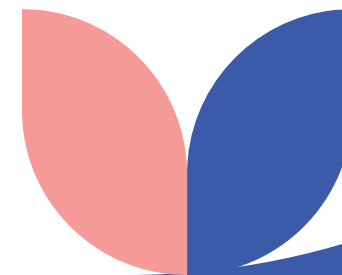
Fundraising skills

Time management skills

Networking

Communication outside academia

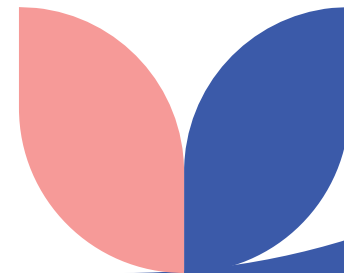
Resilience



Mentorship

Mentorship matters and can make a substantial difference

- Distinguish between supervision and mentorship
- Many models – formal or informal
- Invest in monitoring mentorship, and supporting mentors
- Include training programmes for mentors
- Consider incentives



Networks and collaboration

Networking

Conference attendance and professional meetings

Opportunities to build long term collaborations

Time away/ residencies

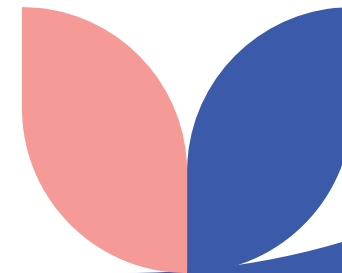
6 weeks to 6 months typical

Short-term repeat visits

Outside home institution

Often outside country of residence

Consider funding to “fill the gap”



AESA–Regional Initiative in Science and Education (RISE)

Background	<p>The Alliance for Accelerating Excellence in Science in Africa (AESA) is an agenda-setting and funding platform established by the African Academy of Sciences (AAS) to catalyse investments, strategies, and programmes that promote the brightest minds in Africa, foster scientific excellence, inspire research leadership, and accelerate innovation.</p> <p>The Regional Initiative in Science and Education (RISE) is a component programme of AESA and is a successor to a previous Carnegie-funded master's and PhD support scheme that ended in 2017.</p>
Network	AAS
Aim and objectives	<p>To train postdoctoral researchers to support globally competitive research in African universities and contribute to the creation of knowledge-based economies on the continent.</p> <p>To provide a quality and structured postdoctoral training programme to nurture the next generation of researchers.</p> <p>To promote the production, reproduction, and transition of knowledge.</p>
Fellowship types	No fellowship sub-types.
Length	3 years.
Target group	The fellowship is open to all RISE/Carnegie-funded PhDs.
Disciplinary focus	Not a discipline-specific programme.
Country focus	In 2019, AESA-RISE supported seven postdoctoral researchers from Nigeria, Botswana, Malawi, Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania.
Selection processes	<p>Applicants need to submit a comprehensive research proposal of 2,000 words with a 200-word summary in which they demonstrate a thorough understanding of their research area. Applicants must have obtained a PhD not more than 7 years prior, and preference is given to interdisciplinary research areas that are critical to sustainable development in Africa and complementary to other AESA programmes.</p> <p>Applications undergo expert review, followed by in-person interviews and a final decision by the Steering Committee.</p>

Structure

- **Capacity building**
Leadership capacity building and other capacity-development workshops to address critical gaps.
- **Mentorship**
Structured mentorship component.
- **Time away/residency**
An optional residency component outside of the fellow's country of full-time employment.

Funding provided

The programme includes 3 years of funding.

The full cost per fellow is a maximum of USD 144,447.10. This covers the following expenses:

- Direct research inputs/running costs.
- Home-institution support at USD 500 per month (pm).
- Fellow's salary pegged at an average of USD 1,400 pm to cover for salary top-ups at 3% annual increment.
- Fellow's external stipend while on 3-month study abroad.
- Fellow's travel costs for the 3-month research/mentoring visit.
- Allowances for technicians calculated at USD 250 pm for one technician per fellowship for 8 months per year.
- Cost of mentorship.
- Networking and collaboration costs in Year 2, which include establishing a community of practice.
- The costs of accommodation, travel, meal visas, and any other costs directly related to a fellow's participation.

Let's talk!

