CEGA Fellowship: Fall 2027 and Spring 2028
Request for Applications

The Center for Effective Global Action (CEGA) invites African researchers and practitioners interested in developing their skills in impact evaluation to apply for its **Fellowship Program** to be completed in **Fall 2027 or Spring 2028**. Selected fellows will audit coursework, develop skills in quantitative development research, access a personalized mentorship program to develop their research ideas, and build their research networks. Fellows will spend 16 weeks either in residence at UC Berkeley or participating virtually.

The application deadline is **5:00 PM GMT on January 17th, 2027.**

If you're experiencing a technical difficulty or have a question before the submission deadline, please direct any questions to our staff team at global-networks-cega@berkeley.edu.

Please submit your application here by Friday, January 17th, 2027 at 5 PM GMT.
Read the following RFA carefully before submission.

Please direct any questions about eligibility to our staff team at global-networks-cega@berkeley.edu

OVERVIEW

The Center for Effective Global Action (CEGA), a research hub based at UC Berkeley, invests in the skills and resources of scholars from low- and middle-income countries (LMIC) to lead rigorous studies on economic development in their home regions (see Global Networks). We've hosted more than 100 CEGA fellows since launching the fellowship program in 2012. Fellows will have access to courses across economics, health, development, public policy, and other topics of interest; as well as participate in workshops on research transparency, cost analysis, data science, qualitative methods, communications, and building an online presence.

Register here for the webinar informational session on December 2nd, which will be at 7:00 PM EAT or 4PM GMT. A recording of the webinar will be uploaded on the CEGA website.

Tracks: Applicants can apply to one of two tracks–the **Practitioner Track** or the **Academic Track–**as either a Resident (in-person at UC Berkeley) or Non-Resident (online) Fellow. Fellows will be given the choice of either Fall 2027 (August through December) or Spring 2028 (January through May). In the application, you will select one preferred track.

Both tracks are open to work in any area of economic development, including agriculture, financial inclusion, gender, technology for development, and energy and climate change. Fellows across tracks will audit tailored coursework, and will be supported by a faculty mentor and PhD peer partner.

Coursework: Fellows in both tracks will take Statistics for Program Evaluation, and Quantitative Methods and Impact Evaluation. Resident Fellows in the **Practitioner Track** might take additional specialized courses including Risk and Optimization Models For Policy, Cost-Benefit Analysis, or other courses specific to their sector. Alternatively, Resident fellows in the **Academic Track** will take more foundational economics coursework such as Applied Econometrics and Microeconomics of Development.

ELIGIBILITY

Across both tracks:

To be accepted to the CEGA Fellowship, applicants must demonstrate the following:

- Be fluent in English (written and spoken), and a strong communicator.
- Be from an East African or West African country and have completed at least up to secondary school education in an African institution.
    - Resident fellows must be from a country eligible for a J-1 visa under current U.S. visa requirements: Djibouti, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Liberia, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Rwanda, Seychelles, Uganda. Please note that this is subject to change dependent on US regulations.
    - Non-Resident fellows will be prioritized from currently subject to U.S. visa restrictions: Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cote d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Togo, Zambia, and Zimbabwe
- Have at least a Master's degree, are currently enrolled in a PhD, or have completed a PhD (within 8 years) in economics, political science, statistics, epidemiology/public health, or another social science discipline.
- Plan to return to an institution in East or West Africa after the fellowship. If currently enrolled in a PhD program outside the African continent, scholars may complete their PhD before their return.

The Practitioner Track is intended for professionals interested in improving their research skills to grow in their careers in African government ministries, think tanks, or NGOs. **Applicants to the Practitioner Track should:** ● Work for an NGO, think tank, or government ministry in East or West Africa, with a goal to grow into more senior careers. ● Be actively using or promoting the use of evidence to improve economic and social well-being for populations. We will select a total of 7 fellows for this track.	**The Academic Track** is intended for early career scholars who intend to pursue an academic career. **Application to the Academic Track should:** ● Either be a doctoral student or hold a current staff position within a university or research institution, preferably one that supports policy-relevant, quantitative social science research. ● Be prepared to develop their own research proposal and/or be embedded within a faculty's existing research project. We will select a total of 4 fellows for this track.

Preference will be given to applicants who are from the country (or region) where they plan to conduct research during their fellowship. Applicants currently living outside of their home countries will be considered, as long as the fellow intends to return to Sub-Saharan Africa. **Female applicants are strongly encouraged to apply.** *Please note that the program does not provide financial support for spouses or other family members.*

FELLOWSHIP ACTIVITIES

During the fellowship, researchers will participate in the following (either virtually or in-person):

	Resident Fellows (based at UC-Berkeley, 40 hour per week commitment)	**Non-Resident Fellows** (remote participation, 15-20 hours per week commitment)	**Both Resident & Non-Resident**
Coursework and workshops	Audit in-person UC Berkeley courses	Audit one MIT MicroMasters course online	Participate in CEGA-led hybrid workshops/seminars on research transparency and reproducibility, communications, qualitative data analysis, and cost-effectiveness analysis
Renumeration	Funded room and board, health insurance, visa fees, round-trip economy airfare, and a modest stipend	A modest stipend	
Presentations	Visit and present in-person at UC Berkeley and other campuses, such as UC Santa Cruz, University of Chicago, UC Davis, Stanford University.	Present virtually to CEGA staff and UC Berkeley graduate students for feedback.	
Mentorship			Support from CEGA Faculty Mentor and PhD Peer Partner
Events	Attend in-person CEGA events such as the Berkeley Initiative for Transparency in the Social Sciences Annual	Attend virtual events	Funded Attendance at one Africa Evidence Summit

	Meeting, the Research Retreat, and the Pacific Conference of Development Economics		
Post fellowship support			Post-Fellowship Pilot Project or Professional Research Placement

POST-FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

After successful completion of the fellowship, fellows who complete all their deliverables will be eligible for post-fellowship support, including:

- A funded Pilot Research Grant or paid Professional Research Placement within an institution. These funds will cover the scholars' time, and/or research costs. Of note, the Practitioner Track Fellows will only be eligible for the professional research placement.
- Eligibility to apply for funding for activities that support their home institution to train other scholars in evidence generation and/or and build a culture of evidence use.
- Sponsorship to attend one of CEGA's annual Africa Evidence Summits, an event held in a different East or West African country each summer.
- Invitation to join the Network of Impact Evaluation Researchers in Africa (NIERA), an association of African scholars seeking to advance decision-focused impact evaluation of development programs through capacity building, evidence generation, and policy outreach.

HOW TO APPLY

To respond to this RFA, please submit the following information and documents through this Submittable portal by Friday, January 17th, 2027 at 5 PM GMT:

Application Components

1) **[Both Tracks] Personal Statement**: Not to exceed 1 page. Please describe your personal motivations for applying to the CEGA Fellowship--of all fellowships available to you, why are you particularly interested in this program? What do you hope to accomplish during the fellowship and beyond? Please also comment on your ability to commit to the fellowship and how this will fit into your current commitments.
2) **[Both Tracks] Curriculum Vitae/Resume:** Not to exceed 2 pages. In your CV, please also include relevant quantitative coursework you have completed.
3) **[Practitioner Track] Policy Statement.** Not to exceed 2 pages. Refer to this template and see this example.
4) **[Academic Track] Research Proposal:** Not to exceed 2 pages. Refer to this template and see this example for reference.
    a) During the fellowship, you will develop a research project based on the research proposal submitted in your application, but it will be adapted throughout the fellowship.
5) **Name and contact information for two references:** Please provide a name, email, phone number, and affiliation for two individuals (supervisors, senior colleagues, professors) who can speak to your qualifications for the CEGA fellowship.
6) **Evidence of Leave Approval or Letter of Support** from the applicant's supervisor or department chair demonstrating support and certifying that, if the applicant is selected, he/she will be able

to take either a full-time leave of absence for the Resident Fellowship (40 hours/week) or part-time leave of absence for the Non-Resident Fellowship (15-20 hours/week), both for 4 months. See example.

7) OPTIONAL: You may attach one **working paper** or **publication.**

AI Disclosure

Generative AI tools cannot be used to write your personal statement and full proposal (i.e. do not submit verbatim drafts of content generated by AI—we will not review them). You should be prepared to defend your ideas in an interview if need be. However, Generative AI may be used as an assistive tool for:

- Grammar, spelling and punctuation of your proposal.
- Synthesizing verified literature (please share your methods to cross-check the accuracy).
- Generating tables and graphics.

Please review AI generated content for accuracy, and disclose if and how you have used AI (specifying the model) in your proposal.

TIMELINE & SELECTION CRITERIA

November 2, 2026	Release of Request for Applications
December 2, 2026	Webinar Information Session (Register here)
January 17, 2027	Application deadline
January 18 - February 7, 2027	Application review
February 8-12, 2027	First round interviews
February 22-26, 2027	Final interviews
March 1-12, 2027	Notification of final selection
August-December 2027	Fall 2027 Fellowship
January-May 2028	Spring 2028 Fellowship

Successful candidates must:

- Demonstrate strong analytical skills, with past coursework in quantitative methods;
- Have participated in or have familiarity with impact evaluation research (either randomized or quasi-experimental studies), policy analysis, and/or field data collection;
- Demonstrate a commitment to evidence informed policy making, either through direct experience or an understanding of the process;
- Demonstrate a commitment to building the capacity of African institutions.
- Dedicate the time required to engage fully in the fellowship (Resident Fellows spend at least 40 hours/week and Non-Resident Fellows spend at least 20 hours/week on the fellowship over 4 months).
- Submit a Letter of Support from their supervisor or department chair demonstrating approval for either: a) a full-time leave of absence for the Resident fellowship, or b) a 20-hour per week leave of absence for the Non-Resident fellowship–each of which will be four months.