



A Partnership between Africa University & Wesley House Cambridge



Funded PhD Programme for African Methodist Theological Educators

Applications are now open for a funded PhD programme sponsored by the Central Conferences Theological Education Fund and the Innovation Fund of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry. 12 places will be available for a December 2018 start on this cross continental programme in theology offered through a partnership between Africa University, Zimbabwe and Wesley House Cambridge. **Applications will be until 31 May 2018.**

What is the hope?

- The programme aims to equip a cohort of Methodist theological educators from across Africa for research-led thinking and formation that is theologically astute and responsive to African needs in a global context.
- The programme will bring together theological and contextual expertise from across continents and Methodist traditions to build a community of African Methodist researchers in theology and religion with global connections and reputation.

What is the programme?

- It is a five year part time programme, beginning in 2018 with a Postgraduate Certificate in Theological and Religious Research offered by Africa University that will equip students with advanced research skills and enable them to locate their research project within its appropriate theological discipline, as Methodist theology and within an African context. This work will lead to a robust PhD proposal to be submitted to Wesley House's partner in Cambridge, [Anglia Ruskin University](#).
- In January 2020 successful students will progress to the PhD by research. They will work with at least two supervisors – one from Cambridge and one from an African context. Each student will remain in their current post and work from home but spend a three month period on study leave in Cambridge during the course of the

degree and return to Cambridge towards the end of the programme to finish their dissertation.

- Throughout the five years students will remain in their teaching posts but travel twice a year to Africa University to meet with their peers, learn research skills, discuss theological concepts and insights from other disciplines and work together with staff from Wesley House and from Africa University.

Who is it for?

The programme is for United Methodist theological educators teaching in Methodist related African theological/higher education institutions. Successful applicants will need:

- An MA in theology or religious studies recognised by the validating bodies
- To be able to work in English at doctoral level
- A viable research project idea that has the backing of their bishop
- To be supported by their theological/higher education institution in order to be released from work for 8 hours per week for the duration of the programme; to visit AU for 2 fortnights each year; to visit Cambridge twice during the programme.
- To undertake to continue to work for a Methodist-related African theological/higher education institution for 3 years post qualification
- Evidence of their ability to fund their living expenses whilst at AU and in Cambridge.
- Access to zoom technology and internet whilst away from AU/Cambridge.

What kind of research project will be suitable?

Successful research projects will

- **Address a contextual African issue or question from a theological or religious studies perspective** (e.g. assess the theological contribution of a particular African theologian; investigate the impact of a particular mission strategy in a particular context; explore the relevance of an aspect of Wesleyan theology or practice in the context; conduct qualitative or quantitative research to explore what is happening on the ground in a particular context.

and/or:

- **Build up an identified theological/religious studies expertise** needed by the theological/higher education institution in which the applicant works (e.g. Biblical studies; Patristics; Ethics; Missiology) through a contextually relevant piece of research.

What is funded?

- Course fees and tuition for 5 years
- Required travel to/from AU and to/from Cambridge

- Visas and study permits
- One laptop computer per student
- Accommodation whilst required to be at AU and in Cambridge
- Access to the internet and library resources whilst at AU or in Cambridge

What is not funded?

- Subsistence (food, travel, other expenses) whilst at AU or in Cambridge
- Books or other study materials or devices
- Teaching cover whilst students are away at AU or in Cambridge or studying in between times
- Internet access at other times than whilst at AU or in Cambridge

Programme Structure

Year 1 – Postgraduate Certificate in Theological and Religious Research

The first year of the five year programme is a taught postgraduate certificate that is designed to prepare candidates for engagement in doctoral level research in theology and religious studies in an African and global context. It will enable candidates to locate their research interest appropriately within the discipline(s) of theology and/or religious studies. It will equip candidates for writing a viable research proposal that attends to context, conceptual framework, research methodology, research design and research methods that conform to ethical standards of research.

The Postgraduate Certificate will be awarded by AU and will be co-taught by AU and Wesley House staff at AU.

Fortnight 1 at AU (December 2018)

- Induction to the programme, resources and academic expectations
- Taught module on postgraduate theological methodology supported by virtual learning module
- Submission of assignment of 7000 words – May 2019

Fortnight 2 at AU (June/July 2019)

- Taught module on post-graduate research methods supported by virtual learning module
- Submission of assignment of 7000 words – September 2019
- Preparation for submission of formal application to ARU (November 2019)

Students who successfully complete the Postgraduate Certificate will be supported to submit their application to ARU for MPhil with progression to PhD. Those who do not pass the certificate programme will not be funded to progress to the PhD stage.

MPhil (with progression to PhD) awarded by ARU

The second phase of the programme is the thesis stage. Successful applicants will become registered students of Anglia Ruskin University. The primary mode of working from now on will be by supervision. Students will be allocated at least two supervisors (one from Cambridge and from an African context). Classes will be held twice yearly at AU. Students will be expected to attend these and to be released from their work for a three month sabbatical in Year 2 or 3 of the programme in order to engage face to face with ARU in Cambridge and to gain cross continental experience. During the fifth year of the programme students will be expected to spend a further two weeks in Cambridge preparing for their viva and completing their thesis.

Progression through the programme

Student progress will be monitored throughout the programme. Only students who successfully complete each phase will move to the next phase. If a student fails to progress as expected by the validating university the funding will be withdrawn.

How to apply

Applications should be sent on the form provided to principal@wesley.cam.ac.uk by 31 May 2018 together with:

- An academic reference
- Their bishop's endorsement
- A letter from a line manager in a Methodist related African School evidencing employment and permission to apply for the programme
- Degree certificates
- A piece of academic theological writing authored by the applicant e.g. MA dissertation or published article

Applicants will be selected for a funded place by a panel involving representation from Africa University, Wesley House & GBHEM using the following criteria:

- Evidence of academic ability to progress to doctoral level
- Evidence of academic integrity
- Academically viable research idea
- Strategic value to the mission of the United Methodist Church in Africa

Shortlisted candidates will be interviewed by Skype between June and September 2019

Successful applicants will be notified no later than 1 October 2019.