

Call for Applications

Advanced Research Design for Policy Oriented Research Course



March 2018

The Partnership for African Social and Governance Research is currently accepting applications for the **March, 2018 Advanced Research Design for Policy Oriented Research**.

COURSE STRUCTURE AND DATES

This is a residential programme that will be offered in two consecutive blocks, including a *mandatory pre- and post-workshop online engagement*:

Block 1: Advanced Research Design (11 training days: March 14-24, 2018)

Designing Social Inquiry
Multi-Methods Research Strategies
Critical Policy Engaged Research
Ethics for Social Science Research

Block 2: Elective Modules (4 training days: March 26-29, 2018)

Impact Evaluation
Interpretive Methods and Ethnography

NOTE: For Block 2, participants: (i) are expected to choose only one elective, and (ii) must have previously taken PASGR's Advanced Research Design (ARD) course or Multi-Method Research Course (MMRC). Participants registering for the Block 1 course are encouraged to also register for an elective (Block 2) module. The electives will run concurrently.

APPLICATION CONTENT

- Application Form (Download from website)
Advanced Research Design: <http://bit.ly/2ik9BoD>
Impact Evaluation: <http://bit.ly/2ik2Ymf>
Interpretive Methods & Ethnography: <http://bit.ly/2AkxtPS>
- Applicant's CV

UPLOAD APPLICATION and CV TO:

Advanced Research Design: <http://bit.ly/2zOPntp>
Impact Evaluation: <http://bit.ly/2j3yX6A>
Interpretive Methods and Ethnography: <http://bit.ly/2zTky4E>

ELIGIBILITY

These are high level professional development courses for active and committed African researchers interested in broadening their knowledge and skills in design and execution of research that lends itself to a multi-method approach application in policy-oriented social science and governance questions.

Applicants working in think tanks, universities, policy research oriented NGOs, civil society, media or government departments are encouraged to apply.

In past years, faculty who teach research methods have incorporated PASGR's training in their courses. It may also benefit university teaching staff engaged in Ph.D or post-doctoral research.

PARTICIPATION FEE

This is a subsidized training programme Participants are encouraged to bring some money to cover any incidentals, dinner and out-of-pocket costs.

Block	Conference fees	Accommodation	Total
1	USD 385	USD 540	USD 925
2	USD 140	USD 225	USD 365

This training will be held in Nairobi, Kenya and the actual training location will be communicated to selected participants.

DUE: JANUARY 14, 2018

FOR QUESTIONS AND/OR CLARIFICATION

please email: nirungu@pasgr.org

Testimonials

“I attended the March-April 2016 PASGR Multi-Method Research training in Nairobi. The training deepened my research capability by advancing my skills in using both qualitative and quantitative methods of research. Prior to the training, much of my strength in research lay in using mostly the qualitative research methodology. However, the training introduced to me innovative ways of using quantitative methods within the qualitative ones. This has advanced my research competence as well as made research more fun to undertake”. - *Gilbert Muyumbu; Governance and Accountability Advisor for CARE International UK*

“It changed my whole approach to research and policy engagement. I consider my participation in PASGR training courses as one of the most transformative experiences of my life”. - *Dr. Connie Nshemereirwe, Independent Educator and Researcher*

“I wish to clearly state that PASGR was instrumental for my success in the application for the fellowship, which is usually competitive. The exposure I got during my training in the Research Methods Workshops and my subsequent participation as a facilitator in the ARD workshops were life-changing experiences that did not only influence my approach to research but my entire career”. - *Prof. Ernest Onyishi (University of Nigeria Nsukka) is currently on two year Georg Forster Research Fellowship for Experienced Researchers at the Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster, Germany*

COURSE OVERVIEW

The training is unique in using participants' research and small group work to explore design innovations in multi-method research that engages public policy. The training emphasises the design of mixed methods strategies, and explores some of the different ways and moments throughout the research cycle that researchers could engage with different policy actors. It is applied and participant-centred, and uses innovative alternative pedagogic approaches such as e-cases, simulations, animations and peer-learning.

DETAILED COURSE CONTENT

BLOCK 1: ADVANCED RESEARCH DESIGN

DESIGNING SOCIAL INQUIRY

The module's first goal is to develop participants' critical engagement with the existing state of knowledge in their respective fields. It equips participants with the competencies to question conventional definitions of the problem, the categories or techniques used for its analysis, and possible interpretations.

It also helps participants to turn ideas or assumptions into researchable questions. This involves making explicit not only one's own possible explanations or hypothesis, but also rival ones that exist in the literature, or circulated through other media. An important part of this process is to explicitly and carefully define the key concepts in a study. Finally, it introduces participants to advances in concept formation and illustrates how concepts can be modified, redefined, or created to accurately capture the empirical events, actors, or processes being investigated.

MULTI-METHODS RESEARCH STRATEGIES

There is a growing interest in mixed method research among social scientists due to its relevance for policy-oriented research. The practice of mixing methods has emerged as a suitable complement to the dominant quantitative and qualitative paradigms.

This module provides insights into the mixed method approach and its utility for policy engaged research. It examines the basic assumptions of the mixed method tradition and its fundamental principles. The module further discusses how to mix and sequence methods within a mixed method research design.

The final sessions of the module provide hands-on opportunity for participants to critique selected mixed-method studies. Participants also build skills that they can apply to their own research.

CRITICAL POLICY ENGAGED RESEARCH

Researchers engaged in policy-related work stand to benefit if they interest policy actors in the work they are doing, involve them in the various stages of their research project, and get their feedback to enrich the research design. This module aims to enhance researchers' capacity to strengthen their relationship with policy actors in order to improve their research design and the chances that their findings will be used to engage policy.

The module helps participants develop knowledge and skills related to building relationships with various policy actors and decision makers. It re-nes participants' ability to communicate research ideas and findings. It equips them with skills to distil the key message(s) they would like to communicate to relevant policy actors.

Testimonials

“If I had my way, I would take all my Ph.D students and supervisors through PASGR’s Professional Development and Training (PDT) course before starting their doctoral work. PDT is first and foremost a training in research design, and design is everything. If the doctoral thesis is faulty in design, it’s going to be faulty all through.”

- Prof. Ayobami Ojebode Communications Research Methods scholar University of Ibadan

“Coming from a country that is devastated by civil war with limited educational facilities, I count my self lucky to have had the opportunity to attend three Advanced research method modules with PASGR . They were instrumental in reshaping my thoughts about research and increased my interest to learn more. In particular, the training increased my analytical abilities in the review of research and policy orientated papers, the use of multi- method approaches in research and survey, formation of clear and focused research questions. The networking experience and opportunity gained is an additional asset”. - Margaret Mathiang; Gender Advisor, Catholic Relief Services- South Sudan

Certificates of Completion will be issued on successful attendance of all modules participants are selected into; as well as completion of all required course/peer reading, reviews and assignments.

DETAILED COURSE CONTENT

ETHICS IN SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH

What is the most important consideration in social science research? Ethics is. While a lot of emphasis has been laid on the importance of appropriate research methodology for validity and reliability of social science research findings, the ethical aspects of research practice has not been given adequate attention.

This course is designed to (re)introduce both novices and experienced research practitioners to the theory and application of the three universal basic principles of research ethics: Respect for human persons, beneficence/non-maleficence, and justice. Further, participants will demonstrate appreciation of the negative implications of research misconduct (including plagiarism and academic fraud) and demonstrate how to avoid these acts of misconduct.

BLOCK 2: ELECTIVE MODULES

IMPACT EVALUATION

This module teaches elements of impact evaluation methods of welfare programmes in developing countries. It is designed for an audience of social scientists and is presented at a low-medium level of technical difficulty. The course focuses on the design of a rigorous impact evaluation rather than on statistical or econometric analysis. The module is not only designed for researchers interested in conducting impact evaluations, but also for those interested in overseeing, commissioning or studying impact evaluations conducted by other researchers.

INTERPRETIVE METHODS AND ETHNOGRAPHY

Interpretive social science rests on the idea that unlike the world of physical objects, the social world is made up of thinking and feeling beings engaging in meaningful action. To understand the social world, then, we must grasp the point of view of the actors who inhabit it and the context in which they do. Interpretive methods, used by various branches of the humanities and social sciences, frequently play a role in concept and theory generation, and can be used in conjunction with comparative case studies, action research, and network analysis. They can also be used, at various stages of a research project, to inform or complement quantitative methods.

Interpretive methods are particularly central to anthropology and ethnography, on which we focus here. In particular, this module provides training in two of ethnography’s core techniques: participant observation and semi-structured interviewing. Participants will also practice coding and analysing the data generated by these techniques.

ABOUT PASGR

PASGR is an independent, non-partisan pan African not-for-profit organisation established in 2011 and located in Nairobi, Kenya. Currently engaged in more than 26 African countries, PASGR works to enhance research excellence in governance and public policy that contributes to the overall wellbeing of women and men. In partnership with individual academics and researchers, universities, think tanks, civil society organisations, governments and policy communities both in the region and internationally, PASGR supports the production and dissemination of policy relevant research; designs and delivers suites of short professional development courses for researchers and policy actors; and facilitates the development of collaborative higher education programmes.