

KEY QUESTIONS

African traditional values and spirituality with reference to religious experience: African traditional values and spirituality percolate across the church, public and academy. Here follows a preliminary list of key questions: In a continent beset by corruption, conflicts, and diseases including the global crisis precipitated by COVID-19, might it be possible to see African values and the abundant religious expressions on the continent as part of the solution rather than a source of the problem? How might theologians identify values that are grounded in African traditions but also enhance human flourishing in rapidly changing Africa? How have traditional spiritual traits survived in the contemporary scene and modulated within Christianity? How has this spirituality accommodated itself to urbanization and technological, political, and socioeconomic changes?

Religious innovation and competition focusing on African sources for innovation: Religions constitute some of the most dynamic forces in Africa today, and researchers are trying to catch up with their numerical growth, proliferating forms and cultural influence. Christianity in Africa is amazingly innovative, diverse and competitive. To what extent are religious innovation, diversity and competition vehicles or drivers of creative change? Is religious competition a destructive or a constructive force? What happens to secularity in the context of religious innovation and competition? What is the relationship between religious innovation and commercial entrepreneurship? How do new religious forms and patterns relate to broader social and institutional changes in contemporary Africa? How do local religious initiatives relate to global trends and movements, as in the worldwide rise of Pentecostalism?

Visit nagelinstitute.org for a comprehensive list of questions

PROPOSALS ACCEPTED IN ENGLISH, FRENCH, OR PORTUGUESE

Letters of Inquiry due **September 15, 2020**

Full Proposals (by invitation only) due **December 1, 2020**

Visit nagelinstitute.org for the RFP and complete instructions

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NAGEL INSTITUTE
FOR THE STUDY OF
WORLD CHRISTIANITY

ENGAGING AFRICAN REALITIES

INTEGRATING SOCIAL SCIENCE WITHIN AFRICAN THEOLOGY



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

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Painting by Charles Nkomo: guruve.com/Gallery/Artists/charles-nkomo/W019

AWARD ANNOUNCEMENT

The Nagel Institute, with generous support from the Templeton Religion Trust, invites project proposals for “Engaging African Realities: Integrating Social Science within African Theology.” Its aim is to support African theologians to engage in fresh social scientific integrated approaches with the goal of producing creative and original projects in grounded theology. We understand grounded theology as an attempt at realizing the potential of theological creativity from the bottom-up, as opposed to a top-down. The project seeks to emphasize how grounded theology is compatible with grounded theory in social sciences as a method for seeking hidden patterns and meanings through ethnography, a way to unearth stories and enable answers to questions from African realities.

Beginning in January 2021, this initiative will select outstanding early-career African theologians with compelling research project ideas and make 12 grants of not more than \$50,000 USD each for three-year research and curricular development projects. The awards will enable grantees to participate in three intensive workshops on social science theory, methods and skills needed for grounded theology, and provide support for research on one of two topical areas:

1. Traditional values and spirituality with reference to religious experience
2. Religious innovation and competition focusing on African resources

PROJECT FOCUS

- To equip early-career African theologians to exemplify the use of social science research methods and grounded theology scholarship in their pursuit of research, publication, and curricular development in one of the two areas.
- To engage grantees in three intensive project workshops.
- To focus on ethnography and the various theoretical approaches to it, and to support grantees to gain fresh theological insights, and thus make progress in theology.
- To facilitate mentorship and networking in interdisciplinary settings:
 1. Senior project advisers from both theology and the social sciences to provide guidance and support,
 2. Opportunities to spend 2-4 month period for library research and writing time at robust theological libraries, and
 3. Dissemination and media opportunities to lay a foundation for a sustained, interdisciplinary engagement and networking.
- To incorporate discoveries into curricular development, thus strengthening social sciences and grounded theology’s integration into African theological education.

PROJECT CHAIR

Afe Adogame, Maxwell M. Upson Professor of Religion and Society, and Chair of History and Ecumenics, Princeton Theological Seminary, USA; also, Professor Extraordinaire at Stellenbosch University, South Africa