Call for Proposals: Data Governance in Africa Research Fund
Apply for a research grant to contribute to Africa's knowledge base on data governance

Mozilla Foundation and he Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ) African Union, under the Data Governance in Africa Initiative have collaborated in a project to increase awareness on and support the domestication of the African Union Data Policy Framework (AU-DPF). The AU-DPF was endorsed by the Executive Council of the Commission at its 40th Ordinary Session in February 2022. The framework aims to boost the development of human rights respecting, sustainable and inclusive data-driven economies through the creation of a common data space and interoperable data governance mechanisms.

About Mozilla

Mozilla funds people and projects that are creating better futures using technology. Mozilla Fellowships support innovators who are imagining, advocating for, and building better futures that put people first. And through strategic partnerships with organisations who believe in our vision, we hope to grow innovative ideas into sustainable projects that have impact in real communities. This work of supporting change-makers and forming strategic partnerships to find tech and policy solutions that put people first is designed to fuel a better, more humane innovation ecosystem.

About GIZ African Union

GIZ is a provider of international cooperation services for sustainable development. Under the Data Governance in Africa Initiative, GIZ African Union and partners are supporting the African Union (AU) and its member states to develop harmonised data policies that encourage innovation and increasing regulatory and institutional capacity. In addition to data policies, the wider Initiative supports development-oriented and human-centric data use and data infrastructure at continental, regional and member states levels. The Initiative provides concrete support for a single digital market in Africa by harmonising regulations on data, creating cross-border data flow and promoting investments in secure and sustainable data infrastructure facilities.

About this grant

We are looking to recruit four (4) African-based researchers to undertake research that will respond to current data governance trends in the region and identify policy recommendations in one of the four topic areas listed under the scope of work below. Researchers will work with the Mozilla 2025 Senior Africa fellow to each conduct an empirical study proposed according to their expertise.

Throughout the grant period, researchers will be expected to design an implementation plan that clearly outlines the process for their data collection, analysis, and outreach for their findings and then to execute this plan within the grant period. They will also be expected to attend periodic workshops and meetings organised by the Senior fellow to share progress updates. Researchers will be a part of a regional strategy to distribute and share the findings and recommendations of the research to different stakeholder groups particularly policy influencers and makers in the focus countries or regions of their study.

Four research grants of $10,000 USD, each, will be made to support the production of the reports and the dissemination of the research findings to key stakeholders

Applicants should be confident writers or researchers and demonstrate previous experience of studying or working on internet and/or technology policy processes in the region. This could include journals, news articles, blogs, and opinion pieces in either professional, academic, or activist publications.

Applicants must meet the following requirements

- Be individuals, networks, and/or organizations that are based in Africa

- Be legally able to receive funds in the form of grants from the Mozilla Foundation, a U.S. 501(c)(3) non-profit organization

Scope of work

This research series will serve as a resource that will assist African Union member states to implement responsive data policies. Applicants may choose to focus on no more than two of the continent's five sub regions - East, West, South, Central and North Africa They can select to study up to two countries in one region or up to four countries across no more than two regions. The research methods under this project are expected to incorporate a human rights based approach.

The final reports aim to provide evidence of rights respecting data governance practices, therefore preference will be placed on empirical research.

Researchers may :

- highlight or evaluate existing data governance initiatives, practices or programmes in order to assess their impact and inform upscaling strategies.

- highlight and connect cross-cutting data justice issues such as gender equality, economic and labour rights or environmental or climate change

- explore existing policies that promote the competition, trade or taxation objectives outlined in regional or continental agreements

For this call, we welcome proposals which respond to one of the following areas:

A. **Legitimate and trustworthy data systems**: What existing standards or practices are ideal for a rights respecting data environment? Who are the new and old actors or institutions? What is their role? What measures can be put into place to limit their power over people? Are there any existing regulatory practices that can be strengthened or changed in order to support a safe and secure data environment?

B. **Public value of data** : How can data value be collectively defined? What data models i.e. open, shared or closed can governments use to optimise public value? What capacity exists in public institutions to efficiently and securely manage data in order to meet national development goals? What data literacy and awareness initiatives can increase appreciation of the value of public data and trust between citizens and public institutions?

C. **Harmonizing sector policies to enhance data value** : What existing public sector policies e.g. health, education, finance etc must be revised or formulated to align to the AU-DPF principles[1]? What socio-economic, political and/or technological challenges may be encountered during the process? What interim provisions can be made?

D. **Optimizing innovation**: What best practice regulatory measures or systems support sustainable innovation at national, regional or continental levels? Who are the key actors?

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[1]Cooperation, integration, Fairness and inclusiveness, Trust, safety and accountability, Sovereignty, Comprehensive and forward-looking, integrity and justice

What are the limitations in current regulatory approaches and practices? What new experimental approaches can be adopted to ensure a replicable model?

Review and Selection

Grantees will be selected based on a review of applications by Mozilla's grantmaking team. The criteria for reviewing applications will consider the following:

- Geographic location

- Applicant experience in the internet, AI and digital technology sector in Africa

- Applicant familiarity with national or regional contexts, clear articulation of the data justice issue

- Clearly defined methodology and impact, research plan, and budget

Only those projects that meet the grant criteria for this funding opportunity will be reviewed. All proposed grant decisions are subject to a legal review to confirm the applicant's eligibility.

Key Dates & Deadlines

- Applications open : **Mar 3, 2025 8:30 AM GMT+2**

- Complete initial application account registration on Fluxx : **Mar 11, 2025 6:30 PM GMT+2**

- Full applications close **: Mar 31, 2025 6:30 PM GMT+2**

- Grant period **: Apr 30, 2025 – Oct 31, 2025 3:00 PM**

Grant Agreement

Neither Mozilla nor any potential grantee responding to this Call For Proposals shall be considered to have entered into an agreement, until and unless both parties have signed a separate definitive grant agreement.

Reporting Requirements

At the end of the research grantees are expected to:

- Submit a final report, including a budget report

- Attach the final research output

- Submit a copy of the report and/or other related media outputs made publicly available

Additional reporting may be required of non-501(c)(3) or equivalent grantees to demonstrate appropriate charitable use of all grants.

Grant Track Contact

Please direct questions specific to this funding opportunity to Senior Program Officer, Koliwe Majama, on the email koliwe@mozillafoundation.org

Questions

Please consult our Mozilla Awards FAQ page.

For questions not answered there, or for assistance using Fluxx to submit your application, please email grants@mozillafoundation.org.

Application Process

The application process begins on Mar 11, 2025 8:30 AM GMT+2 All research proposal applications are submitted via Fluxx at by Mar 31, 2025 6:30 PM GMT+2

Important Notes:

- All registrations and submissions must be in English.

- No responsibility is assumed for lost, late, incomplete, invalid, illegible, incorrect, inaccurate, or misdirected registrations or submissions; or for any error, human, technical, or otherwise, that may occur in the processing of submissions.

- With applicant permission, submitted applications may be shared with other projects within Mozilla, other foundations, and partner organizations.

- Grantees are responsible to pay their own taxes on the grants. Mozilla reserves the right to withhold taxes as it believes necessary under applicable laws, and to reduce the net grant provided to the grantee accordingly.

Tips for Using Fluxx:

- You must complete the initial Fluxx registration by **Mar 11, 2025 6:30 PM GMT+2** in order to gain access to the full application. You will receive an emailed invitation to claim your Fluxx account and access the full application within 1-2 business days after registration.

- In the full application, the information you submit will not auto-save. Therefore, always save your draft using the 'Save' button at the top before returning to the main page or exiting Fluxx. This ensures that you can return to continue editing.

- Only click the 'Submit' button when the page is complete. Once you submit, you will no longer be able to edit.

- Fluxx uses a character count system. Spaces are considered characters. To avoid copy and paste issues, it may be easiest to type your answers directly into the Fluxx application.

- Fluxx is not mobile friendly. Plan to complete your application using a laptop or desktop computer.

- If you need to edit your contact info or need additional assistance, please reach out to: grants@mozillafoundation.org.