AIMS-Carnegie Research Chairs in Data Science and its Applications at Quantum Leap Africa

Call for Applications

In partnership with the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the African Institute for Mathematical Sciences (AIMS) is offering promising emerging or senior African data scientists of at least postdoctoral standing or who completed their doctorate less than ten years ago, attractive career opportunities at its pioneering Quantum Leap Africa (QLA) Research Centre in Rwanda. Two outstanding African data scientists in or from the diaspora will be given the opportunity to establish research teams of their own at QLA via the AIMS-Carnegie Research Chairs program in Data Science and its Applications.

The AIMS-Carnegie Research Chairs program in Data Science and its Applications aims to position Africa at the forefront of information science, particularly of the quantum variety. It also seeks to ensure that African scientists including those in the diaspora are able to fully contribute to the said aim. The program will achieve this by offering these chairs to emerging data scientists who may have returned to Africa or are still based outside the continent. The chairs will contribute to research capacity building of postdoctoral fellows, PhD and MSc students; establish an exchange visit program; participate and host scientific events; build active partnerships with other research institutions, industry and government, among other activities.

The AIMS-Carnegie Research Chairs program in Data Science and its Applications has equally been designed to recognise outstanding talent and creative research approaches in data science with exceptional conditions. (i) With an award amount of at least one million USD ($1,000,000) each, the incumbents receive valuable starting capital to spend five years pursuing an innovative research project at QLA. This is without administrative constraints as they will be supported by an excellent administrative team which will allow them to focus on their research. (ii) The establishment of their own research team and possibility to initiate and implement a diverse number of research activities will enable the chairs to lay an important foundation for a promising academic career (at a very early stage).

Eligibility

❖ Applicants should be emerging or senior academics in data science and its related disciplines in/from the diaspora who completed their doctorate less than ten years ago.

❖ Applicants must be of African descent and could be residing anywhere in the world.

❖ If based in Africa, the applicant should have spent a percentage of their postgraduate or postdoctoral or career term outside the continent.

❖ Applicants should have a passion and urge to self-initiate and self-direct an excellent research in their area of interest within the broader data science domain and its related disciplines.

❖ Applicants should be eager to work with younger researchers and contribute to research capacity building of Master's, PhD students, and postdoctoral fellows. A generous funding has been included in the budget to offer scholarships/bursaries/fellowships to research group members who will be recruited by the chair holders.

❖ Applicants should be willing to work from the QLA premises in Rwanda although they will have the freedom to travel and engage with collaborators worldwide.

How to apply

Applicants must use the online application portal to apply and submit before the 1st of February 2019, 11:59 CAT, the below supporting documents:

❖ a completed proposal form,

❖ a letter of motivation,

❖ a curriculum vitae, and

❖ electronic copies of three representative publications on which the candidate is the lead and/or senior author.

These supporting documents should be submitted in a pdf format and named using the following format: "AIMS-Carnegie-Chair–first and last name of applicant-type of document-month year of submission" e.g. "AIMS-Carnegie-Chair–JohnJake-CV-July2018"

Before starting the application process, applicants should provide complete and accurate contact information (email address, title, names) of three referees who will provide confidential letters of support on their behalf. We will request these letters of support directly from the referees. It is the applicant's responsibility to provide their referees with a copy of the 'Terms of Reference' and the 'Instructions for Referees'. The applicant is also responsible for

ensuring that their referees have received the request for a letter of support from us and have submitted the requested letters to us on time.

Applications shall be considered complete if all the documents listed above, including support letters, are received by AIMS on or before the application deadline. For more details on the application procedure, please visit www.quantumleapafrica.org/careers.

Evaluation procedure

Only complete applications received by the application deadline will be evaluated. Applications will initially be screened for relevance and then evaluated by an international selection committee based on the following criteria:

❖ Quality of applicant: academic qualifications; quality of publications; research experience in data science, especially machine learning; real-world impact of their prior research and recognition (e.g. through awards).

❖ Quality of proposed research: novelty; strength of connection to mathematical sciences; experience of applicant in research topic; quality of research design; feasibility; suitability of proposed research environment(s); and quality and realism of budget projections.

❖ Potential impact of proposed research on scientific knowledge, practice and policy.

Short-listed applicants will be invited for an interview at QLA, Rwanda.

Contact

All questions should be emailed to the following address: qlachairs@nexteinstein.org.

We would be grateful if you would disseminate this announcement at your institution and also ask your colleagues to draw the attention of appropriately qualified research talents within their network to this academic award.