



Research Fellowship 2026

A twelve-month, fully-funded position for early-career African AI researchers

Overview

The GCT Exchange Research Fellowship places early-career African researchers in one of our four research pillars — Languages, Agriculture, Health, or Climate — for twelve months of funded, mentored, openly-licensed research. Fellows join a cohort of 8–12 peers and one senior mentor. Output is publication, dataset, or model release; the specific deliverable is co-designed with the mentor in the first month.

What you get

- Monthly stipend benchmarked to local cost-of-living, transparently published.
- Compute: 4,000 A100-equivalent GPU-hours, expandable on request.
- A senior mentor who meets with you weekly.
- A cohort of peers who meet weekly and review each other's drafts.
- A \$4,000 conference travel and publication budget.
- Health insurance and a \$1,200 yearly research allowance.
- First-author credit on whatever you ship.

What we expect

- A clear research question, refined with your mentor in month one.
- Openly licensed outputs (CC-BY or CC-BY-SA for data; Apache-2.0 for code and weights).
- One field check-in with the affected community before final release.
- Weekly progress notes, fortnightly cohort presentations.
- Honesty about what isn't working. We do not penalise negative results.

Who we're looking for

Eligibility is broad on purpose. You should be early in your research career — typically 1–5 years post-undergraduate — and based on the African continent for the duration of the fellowship. We hire across disciplines: machine learning, linguistics, public health, agronomy, climate science, software engineering, design. We do not require a PhD. We do require that you can write clearly about your own work and that you take other people's work seriously.

Timeline

Phase	Dates
Applications open	June 1, 2026
Applications close	July 15, 2026
Interviews	August 4–22, 2026
Offers	September 5, 2026



Fellowship begins	October 1, 2026
Mid-fellowship review	April 2027
Final showcase	September 2027

How to apply

Send a single PDF to fellowships@gctexchange.org containing: (1) a one-page CV; (2) a one-page research statement describing a question you'd want to spend twelve months on; (3) one writing sample of any length; (4) two references with contact details. No cover letter required. We read every application and respond to every applicant.