Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

African Women in Data Science Fellowship

General Information

Q: What is the aim of the African Women in Data Science Fellowship?
A: The Fellowship aims to build a vibrant network of African women data professionals who lead transformative, data-driven solutions in agrifood systems and climate resilience. Fellows will strengthen their technical capacity in data science, receive leadership and mentoring support, and design real-world use cases that inform inclusive decision-making.

Q: Who is eligible to apply for this Fellowship?
A: African women at different stages of their professional careers with at least a Master's degree and 5–10 years of experience in data-related work who are applying or aspiring to apply data science in agrifood systems, climate resilience, and related sectors

Application Process

Q: When does the call to apply for the African Women in Data Science Fellowship open?
A: Applications open on June 10, 2025, and close on July 31, 2025, at 11:59 PM East Africa Time (GMT+3). Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted.

Q: How can I access the application form?
A: Application for the Fellowship is via an online form available on the Fellowship website. Supporting documents and the data exercise must be uploaded through the designated platform.

Q: In which language should I apply?
A: The application form is available in English. Intermediate proficiency in English is required, as all program delivery will be in English.

Q: Can I log back into the application system and continue my application after logging out?
A: Yes, you can return and continue completing your application by accessing the form from the link sent to your email. The online platform automatically saves your work as you navigate through the application form. Once submitted, applications cannot be modified. Review your responses carefully before final submission.

Q: Do I need to attach official academic transcripts/certificates?
A: No, you do not need to upload documents relating to your academic qualifications during the application process. The information provided in the application form is sufficient for evaluation. However, successful applicants will be required to submit their academic certificates and identification documents after selection to verify the information provided. Failure to provide the documents will lead to automatic disqualification.

Q: How can I increase the chances of having a successful application?
A: To strengthen your application, clearly demonstrate how your professional experience and career goals align with the Fellowship's focus on data-driven solutions for agrifood systems and climate resilience. Use specific examples to showcase your technical capabilities in data science and how you've applied them in real-world settings.

Q: What are the common reasons for unsuccessful applications?
A: Common reasons include incomplete applications, minimal information, lack of consistency, and focusing exclusively on personal benefits without addressing the broader impact of skills gained.

Eligibility

Q: What is the minimum education level required to apply for this Fellowship?
A: You must have completed and been awarded a master's degree by the time you apply for the Fellowship.

Q: I am a PhD student and expect to complete my studies soon. Am I eligible to apply for this Fellowship?
A: Yes, you are eligible to apply if you meet the Fellowship requirements. Please indicate your expected graduation date on your application.

Q: I am not sure if my country is eligible for the Fellowship. Where can I find a list of the eligible countries?
A: Eligible countries include Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Kenya, or Malawi.

Q: I am a citizen of an eligible African country but currently reside outside Africa. Am I eligible?
A: No, you must reside in an African country throughout the Fellowship period to be eligible.

Q: I am African, but not from any of the countries listed. Am I eligible to apply?

A: No, you are not eligible. This fellowship specifically targets African women from the above-listed countries.

Q: I am a citizen of an eligible country, but I reside in a different African country. Am I eligible for the Fellowship?
A: Yes. You are eligible. Applicants living outside their country of citizenship may apply but they must reside in Africa throughout the Fellowship period.

Support and Benefits

Q: What kind of support will Fellows receive?
A: While the Fellowship is non-residential with the Fellows expected to remain in their institutions and countries of residence, Fellows will be required to attend various virtual and face-to-face activities that may take place outside their country of residence within Africa. Fellows will receive training in data science, leadership, and mentoring, delivered through both virtual and face-to-face sessions. They will participate in a 7-day face-to-face leadership training, a virtual mentoring orientation workshop with their mentors, modeled on AWARD's proven leadership and mentoring programs. In addition, Fellows will undergo a 2-week intensive data science bootcamp covering core technical skills such as Python programming, machine learning, data visualization, and statistical analysis.

Fellows will also take part in a 2-month virtual course tailored to the practical application of data science in agrifood systems and climate resilience. This training will enhance their ability to apply analytical tools to real-world development challenges. A central part of the Fellowship is the design and implementation of a use-case data science project, through which Fellows will apply their technical skills to address a specific issue relevant to their context or institution.

In addition to the core training, Fellows will have the opportunity to apply for a competitive 1–3-month Advanced Science Training (AST) placement at a relevant institution within their home country. These placements are designed to deepen technical expertise, provide exposure to cutting-edge tools and datasets, and foster collaborative partnerships with leading institutions working at the intersection of data science, agriculture, and climate.

- A 7-day face-to-face leadership training
- A virtual mentoring orientation workshop
- A 2-week intensive data science bootcamp (Python, AI/ML, visualization, statistics)
- A 2-month virtual technical course on data science for agrifood and climate resilience
- An individual use-case project
- A short-term advanced placement (AST) within their country

- Structured mentorship and professional visibility

Q: Will I be assigned a mentor, and how will they support me?
A: Yes. Each Fellow will be paired with a senior data science professional from the agrifood or climate sectors. Mentors will provide one-on-one guidance, technical coaching, and career support throughout the Fellowship. Pairing will be based on technical alignment and regional familiarity. Fellows are expected to engage with their mentor at least monthly.

Q: Will I receive any financial compensation for participating in the Fellowship?
A: The Fellowship does not provide cash payments except for covering direct expenses incurred for participation in events. There are no sitting allowances provided.

Expectations and Responsibilities

Q: What is expected of me during the Fellowship?
A: As a Fellow, you are expected to engage in all components of the program fully. This includes:

- Actively participating in leadership and technical training (both virtual and face-to-face);
- Collaborating with your assigned mentor to support your professional growth;
- Designing and implementing a data-driven Use Case project focused on agrifood systems or climate resilience;
- Taking part in short-term institutional placements to apply your skills in real-world contexts; and
- Contributing to knowledge-sharing sessions, storytelling activities, and monitoring and evaluation efforts.

Fellows are also expected to demonstrate commitment, initiative, and collaboration throughout the program to maximize their impact and learning.

Q: Will I be able to continue working in my current institution and take time off for Fellowship activities?
A: Yes, the Fellowship is non-residential, and participants are expected to remain fully engaged at their institutions. However, attendance at all training courses and activities is mandatory. As indicated earlier, there will be two in-person training courses, virtual training sessions lasting up to two months, with sessions held twice a week for two hours each. Fellows will also need to meet with their mentor at least once a month. There will also be one to three-month placements. As part of the onboarding, we have Institution endorsement to ensure you have

the support of your institution to participate and take time away from work, especially during the placements.