



## CALL FOR APPLICATIONS AND NOMINATIONS

### **Omega Resilience Awards - Africa (ORA - A) Fellowships for 2024**

This is a call for applications into the Omega Resilience Awards - Africa (ORA - A) Fellowship programme for 2024. Applications are invited from visionaries, activists, academics, artists, communicators and organisers involved in movements or struggles that highlight opportunities for creating a more resilient future in the face of the global polycrisis.

**Application Deadline:** 15th February 2024

### **About the Fellowship**

The Omega Resilience Awards (ORA) fellowship program is designed to identify visionaries – primarily under the age of 45 – drawn from diverse fields, often working in an intersectional fashion, who can help their society understand the nature of the global polycrisis and imagine what it will take to chart a path toward a more resilient future. Now in its second year, ORA is a project of Commonweal, a US-based NGO dedicated to healing, resilience and justice. For almost 50 years, Commonweal has brought together communities of dedicated people to explore the emerging challenges that face our world.

Omega Resilience Awards -Africa (ORA -A) is designed to specifically identify visionaries, activists, academics, communicators, artistes, and people involved in movements or struggles in Africa - people who can help their communities imagine what will be required to chart a path toward a more resilient future amid the polycrisis. It is one of three cohorts being organised globally with the other two being convened in Latin America and India. The Health of Mother Earth Foundation (HOMEF) is serving as the coordinator for the Africa cohort.

With the ORA-A Fellowship, we are looking for people who understand that the old approach to solving problems in silos is no longer viable and that, instead, we need to apply a systems-thinking lens. But not in a way that paralyses people with complexity. Instead, we want to identify candidates who can translate complexity into actionable steps that help communities slow, if not reverse, the damage being done by the cascading crises enumerated above. And we will invite these same people to frame what a more resilient future might look like for their communities and constituents.

ORA -A fellows are expected to develop new tools and models of thinking, leadership, communication and engagements in response to the challenges of the global polycrisis. The ultimate purpose of the fellowship is to build a cohort of innovative activists/academics and communicators committed to long-term involvement in the generation of knowledge in radical movements for transformation and system change.

The ORA – A fellows are expected to unpack the dimensions of the polycrisis while imagining the future from an African perspective. This they can do by studying traditions and cultures in Africa including subsisting concepts of wellbeing that are not predicated on growth, accumulation, or dispossession. Examples of such concepts in different African languages are [Ubuntu](#), [Eti uwem](#) and

[\*harambee\*](#). *Eti uwem*, for example, captures the idea of living in harmony with nature and all peoples and incorporates dignity, respect, rectitude, integrity, solidarity, and contentment.

### **Who Will Be Considered?**

While the diverse stressors that comprise the global polycrisis are beginning to make themselves felt now in the form of extreme weather, drought, famine, migration, and extinction it is agreed that the bulk of the impacts will be felt by generations just emerging and those yet to be born, with a disproportionate burden falling on people living in the Global South. To that end, the ORA Fellowship Program will be focused primarily on identifying young (under 45) communicators, artists, journalists, activists, and public intellectuals who are engaged in translating for their readers, viewers, and listeners the connections between seemingly disparate phenomena – climate, water, health, and migration – and how they interact within the larger system the comprises the polycrisis. While we realise that communicating the full weight of the polycrisis can be intimidating and sometimes overwhelming, we're looking for people who can render complexity comprehensible and serve as sense-makers for their readers, viewers, and/or listeners.

What does the polycrisis look like in a particular region, country, or community? And what shape does a resilient response take? We believe strong candidates can be drawn from any walk of life – artist, activist, businessperson, journalist, academic, or from the public sector. The critical criteria are an ability to understand the complexity of the polycrisis in how it manifests in their communities and a capacity to communicate complexity that empowers people to act. And a vision for how to facilitate collective action towards a more resilient future. Towards that end, we are looking for candidates who can use different channels, mediums, languages, strategies, and formats to reach diverse audiences. Candidates that have an existing body of work that they think meets these criteria are encouraged to apply as are those who have projects yet to be realised due to a lack of support.

We anticipate that Fellows will use their stories and projects to illustrate the scope of the global polycrisis and the array of skillful interventions in response. In turn, we expect to gain a deeper understanding of how the polycrisis affects different regions and what messages inspire action and hope.

### **Eligibility**

- The fellowship is open to Africans resident in Africa, preferably involved in movements and have their origins in the communities of struggles.
- Applicants/Nominees must not be older than 45 years.
- Applicants/Nominees are expected to show history of experience in activism and innovative thinking.
- All applicants/nominees must be active change-makers in their communities.
- Applicants/Nominees must commit to participate in regular seminars/webinars throughout the programme and be willing to create media (e.g. articles, podcasts, video, photographs, etc.) that can be shared across ORA's diverse media channels
- Applicants/Nominees must provide 2 verifiable references to validate their application.



## Award

- The ORA Africa fellowships are awarded yearly. The 2024 fellows will receive \$10,000 support for individuals.
- ORA Africa fellows would focus on work on the polycrisis.

Candidates can be drawn from a diversity of backgrounds and sectors, however, the goal of the Fellowship is to encourage cross-sectoral thinking and engagement that explores the intersection between issues such as those listed below that are too often treated in isolated silos.

- Environment
- Gender
- Health
- Education
- Agriculture/Food Systems
- Craft
- Economic Inequality
- Politics and Policymaking
- Cultural narratives that undermine tolerance and equity
- Marginalization, prejudice, and discrimination
- Security etc.

## Requirements

- Complete and submit the online application form. Access the form at this [link](#).
- Letter of intent (one page) stating why you think you (or a nominee) should merit consideration to be awarded the fellowship.
- Proposal outlining clearly what you intend to achieve with the fellowship, the nature of the activity/research you wish to carry out, and the resources you will need to reach your set goal if selected. The proposal must show the polycrisis issue(s) that the proposed project intends to address. Such issues may include but are not limited to environment, gender, health, education, agriculture/food systems, craft, economic inequality, etc. Strong preference will be given to candidates working in an integrated fashion across diverse issues.
- Applicants/Nominees should be willing to connect with and be part of a community of other Fellows; they should also be willing to participate in monthly online seminars organised by ORA-A as well as periodic online convenings organised by ORA-Global where all three cohorts are gathered

For any clarifications, please feel free to contact

OduduAbasi Asuquo - [ORA-A@homef.org](mailto:ORA-A@homef.org)

<https://omega.ngo/our-work/ora/>