

3RD ANNUAL CANADA–AFRICA ACADEMIC COLLABORATIONS CONFERENCE (CAACC) 2027

Conference theme:

Co-Creating Equitable Futures: Africa- Canada Academic Partnerships for Impact

February 25–26, 2027 / Virtual

Conference Overview

The first two editions of CAACC, held in 2025 and 2026, built a strong foundation for Africa-Canada academic exchange, bringing together researchers, students, and institutional partners across disciplines. Delivered virtually on 25–26 February 2027, the third edition builds on that foundation and takes the next step: from exchange toward co-creation and sustainable impact.

Academic collaboration between Africa and Canada has often been structured around one-directional models, where expertise, funding, or research priorities flow predominantly from high-resource institutions. This year's theme responds directly to that pattern. It asks what changes when partnerships are built around shared leadership, reciprocal knowledge systems, and joint accountability for outcomes, rather than around one partner setting the terms.

This shift extends beyond universities. Governments, civil society organizations, industry, funders, and community partners all hold knowledge and stake in the outcomes CAACC exists to advance. The 2027 conference is designed to bring these voices into direct conversation with researchers and institutions, not as an afterthought but as core participants in shaping what equitable partnership looks like in practice.

Objectives

- To advance equitable, reciprocal Africa-Canada research partnerships built on shared leadership and mutual accountability.
- To translate research and collaboration into locally relevant policies, practices, services, technologies, and community outcomes.
- To provide practical, skill-building spaces alongside traditional presentation formats, so participants leave with tools they can apply, not only ideas they discussed.
- To offer a welcoming entry point for students, trainees, and early-career researchers into Africa-Canada academic collaboration, with works in progress and emerging findings welcome.

Conference Theme:

"Co-Creating Equitable Futures: Africa-Canada Academic Partnerships for Impact"

This year's theme explores how Africa-Canada partnerships can co-create knowledge, strengthen institutions, advance innovation, and generate meaningful and sustainable societal impact. While academic collaboration is central, the theme extends beyond university-to-university partnerships to include civil society organizations, communities, governments, health and social service organizations, industry, professional associations, funders, and other knowledge and implementation partners.

It emphasizes reciprocal and equitable approaches to collaboration that value diverse knowledge systems, promote shared leadership and mutual learning, strengthen sustainable capacity, and translate research and innovation into locally relevant policies, practices, services, technologies, and community outcomes. Against a backdrop of growing attention to security and to the resilience of democracies, in Canada and globally, the theme also invites reflection on how Africa-Canada partnerships can contribute to safer, more accountable, and more democratic societies.

Sub-themes

Track 1: Transforming Education, Knowledge, and Research Capacity

Explores how teaching, training, and research systems in Africa and Canada can be strengthened together, with attention to who builds capacity, for whom, and on whose terms.

- Pedagogy, curriculum development, and academic/student mobility
- Mentorship, research training, and interdisciplinary collaboration
- Sustainable research infrastructure and locally grounded knowledge systems

Track 2: Advancing Health, Wellbeing, and Sustainable Development

Approaches health and sustainable development through a planetary health lens, recognizing that human wellbeing is inseparable from the health of the ecosystems, climate, and food and water systems on which communities depend.

- Public, community and planetary health, health systems, and health equity
- Planetary health, climate resilience, environmental sustainability, and clean energy
- Food and water security, and inclusive economic development

Track 3: Leveraging Technology and Innovation for Development and Impact

Considers how technology and innovation can be developed and governed so that their benefits, data, and decision-making remain accountable to the communities they serve.

- Responsible AI, data governance, and data sovereignty
- Digital transformation, digital infrastructure, and open science
- Technology transfer and locally responsive innovation

Track 4: Policy, Partnerships, Governance, and Research-to-Impact

Focuses on the structures that turn collaboration into lasting impact, including how research informs policy, strengthens accountable institutions, and contributes to security and democratization in Canada and across Africa.

- Equitable partnership models and research governance
- Evidence-to-policy and evidence-to-practice approaches
- Implementation science and scaling collaborative outcomes
- Security, democratization, and resilient democratic institutions

Track 5: Equity, Reciprocity, and the Future of Africa–Canada Partnerships

This track examines how equitable, sustainable Africa–Canada partnerships are formed, governed, funded and sustained. It takes a critical look at power, knowledge, leadership and accountability in academic and cross-sectoral collaboration.

Potential areas include:

- Equity, reciprocity and shared leadership
- Knowledge sovereignty, diverse knowledge systems and decolonizing research
- Equitable funding, authorship and recognition
- Partnership governance, accountability and co-leadership models
- Community-led approaches and youth and emerging scholar leadership
- Long-term institutional capacity and partnership sustainability
- Equitable research-to-impact and knowledge translation
- Security, democratization and resilient institutions

Cross-Cutting Priorities

Equity and reciprocity are foundational to the CAACC 2027 conference and are not confined to a single track. All submissions across Tracks 1–4 are encouraged to give explicit attention, where relevant, to the cross-cutting dimensions of Africa–Canada collaboration, including equity and inclusion; reciprocity; co-creation and shared leadership; youth and emerging scholars; knowledge sovereignty; community engagement; sustainable institutional capacity; research-to-impact; power imbalances; equitable funding; authorship; decolonization; partnership governance; institutional sustainability; models of co-leadership; and security and democratization.

For 2027, security and democratization is also included as a cross-cutting priority, reflecting increased attention, in Canada and globally, to security and the resilience of democratic institutions. Contributors in every track are invited to consider how academic partnerships can help strengthen both.

Conference Design: From Dialogue to Action

CAACC 2027 is deliberately structured to produce more than conversation. Alongside keynotes, panels, and oral and poster sessions, this year's program introduces workshop-format sessions built around practical output: partnership-design exercises, research-to-policy translation tools, and skills relevant to sustaining cross-border collaboration beyond the conference itself. The intent is for participants to leave each session with something usable, whether that is a partnership framework, a concept note structure, or a concrete next step for a collaboration already underway.

Expected Outcomes

- Strengthened, more equitable Africa-Canada partnerships across disciplines and sectors.
- Practical tools and frameworks produced through workshop-format sessions, usable beyond the conference.
- Greater visibility and participation of students and early-career researchers, and stronger connections with established Africa-Canada collaborators.
- Policy briefs and evidence-based recommendations arising from selected sessions.
- A published conference report documenting proceedings and outcomes.

Target Participants

Researchers, students and trainees, academic institutions, governments and policy makers, civil society organizations, communities, health and social service organizations, industry, professional associations, funders, and other knowledge and implementation partners across Canada and Africa. Submissions from students, trainees, and emerging scholars are strongly encouraged.

Call for Abstracts

Abstract Submission Deadline: 6 November 2026

[CAACC 2027 – Call for Abstracts Submission Form](#)

Submissions should clearly demonstrate their relevance to the CAACC 2027 theme and select the conference track that most closely reflects the primary focus of the submission. Across all tracks, authors are encouraged to identify and meaningfully engage with relevant cross-cutting priorities. Submissions primarily focused on these priorities may be submitted under Track 5.

Submissions from students, trainees and emerging scholars are encouraged.

Presentation Categories

Please indicate the preferred presentation format:

- Oral presentation
- Poster presentation
- Panel/Symposium
- Workshop
- Other

Abstract Format

Submissions should include:

1. Title
2. Author(s) and academic credentials
3. Institutional affiliation(s)
4. Country/countries represented
5. Primary Conference Track: Select one of Tracks 1–5.
6. Cross-Cutting Priorities: Select all that apply.
7. Presentation category
8. Abstract (300 words) focusing on:
 - Background/context
 - Purpose/objective
 - Methods/approach
 - Outcomes/findings or anticipated outcomes
 - Relevance and impact for Africa–Canada academic engagement
 - Future work/implications

Panel/Symposium Proposals

For proposed panels or organized sessions, please include:

- Session title
- Session purpose and relevance to the CAACC 2027 theme
- Proposed moderator/chair, speakers/panelists and affiliations
- Brief description of each participant's contribution
- Intended participant/audience outcomes

Review and Selection

Submissions will be reviewed by the CAACC 2027 Abstract Review Committee based on criteria including:

- Alignment with the conference theme and selected track
- Academic/scholarly quality and clarity of the submission
- Relevance to Africa–Canada collaboration
- Consideration of relevant cross-cutting priorities, including equity, reciprocity and co-creation
- Potential contribution to policy, practice, institutional development, innovation or community impact and to the multidisciplinary nature of CAACC

Successful applicants will be notified in **December 2026**.

Registration Information

Register for #CAACC2027 today: [CAACC2027 Registration](#)

About the Organizer

The Africa Institute at Western University is a multi-disciplinary research centre advancing knowledge sharing, partnerships, context-specific and collaborative research and academic engagement across Canada and Africa. The Institute works to strengthen reciprocal relationships between researchers and institutions in Canada and Africa and to create opportunities for research, education, knowledge exchange, capacity strengthening and partnership development across disciplines.

Find out more about [The Africa Institute](#).

The Africa Institute

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