

# CALL FOR PROPOSALS

## Writing Research from the African Continent

*an edited collection with*

**The International Exchanges on the Study of Writing Book Series | The WAC Clearinghouse**

The field of international and transnational writing studies has explored various geographical locations to understand postsecondary writing praxis outside of Anglo-American contexts, including perspectives from Latin America<sup>1,2</sup>, the Russian Federation<sup>3</sup>, the Middle East and North Africa (MENA)<sup>4,5</sup> as well as other regions. Yet, the larger field of writing studies has not fully engaged the rich histories of writing research in varied contexts across Africa. In fact, much of the work on writing and writers in Africa is found in other disciplines (e.g. literary studies<sup>6,7</sup>, applied linguistics<sup>8,9</sup>, TESL<sup>10</sup>, education<sup>11</sup>). And that which exists in writing studies tends to foreground specific countries (e.g. South Africa<sup>12,13</sup>). But, Africa is comprised of many countries, creating a densely layered contact zone –characterized, for instance, by high linguistic diversity, post-colonial legacies, global influences in higher education, varied histories of writing and literacy instruction—making it a particularly important site for productive cross-country theorizations of writing.

With this collection, *Writing Research from the African Continent*, we seek to add to the growing transnational writing studies scholarship by inviting voices from the African continent that speak to the complex and localized writing theories, programmes, and pedagogies in post-secondary settings (e.g. universities, colleges, technical institutes, private higher educational institutions, public higher educational institutions, local campuses of foreign institutions).

**We aim for the chapters in this book to collectively answer the following overarching question:** *What are some of the specific histories, experiences, concerns, concepts, and/or challenges that influence the writing research, writing instruction, and writing programme administration in the African region?*

To that end, we are most interested in proposals by local writing scholars/instructors/researchers from all the subregions on the continent (North, South, East, West and Central Africa), but are also open to considering diasporic authors.

We invite chapters that address any of the sub-questions below as they relate to writing pedagogy, writing theory, writing programmes, or writing center work in the postsecondary contexts in Africa.

**Submissions may address, but are not limited, to the following sub-questions:**

1. How have or are colonial, social, cultural, political, historical, and/or economic factors influencing the tutoring, teaching and learning of writing?

2. What unique approaches to teaching writing or teaching *with* writing have arisen as a result of institutional needs, local pressures, constraint, cultures or literacy practices?
3. How might linguistic plurality contribute to the histories, experiences, concepts and concerns surrounding the teaching of/teaching with or tutoring of writing?
4. How are indigenous literate traditions some of which predate the introduction of Christian and Islamic literacies on the continent (e.g., the hieroglyphs, Lusona, Tifinagh, Samai, Adinkra, Ge'ez and Nsibidi)—and other more recent practices—creatively appropriated in today's writing classrooms and spaces?
5. How do transnational institutional partnerships (e.g. international branch campuses, collaborations between independent universities, cross-university writing initiatives, etc.) affect the way writing is perceived and taught in your institution?
6. What concepts/issues are currently being taken up in your local post-secondary context and how might they inform transnational writing research/theory (by concepts/issues, we mean writing studies theories, literacy traditions, pandemic-induced pedagogies, digital literacies, linguistic diversity, and any other relevant issues)?
7. What influence (if any) have other contexts, such as, but not limited to, the Global North, had on your scholarship, publishing goals, and/or pedagogical approaches to writing in your environment?

**Methods/Genres:**

We seek chapters that present qualitative, empirically-driven theoretical work, mixed-methods research, and theoretically-informed reflective narratives. Interdisciplinary collaborations are welcome.

**Proposal Submission Guidelines**

**For the proposal, please include the following:**

- A 75-100 word biography for each of the authors that includes their institution's name
- A 750-1000 word proposal that includes:
  - A clear statement of purpose that answers how you see your chapter addressing the collection's overarching question and one or two specific sub-question(s)
  - Explanation for how your contribution is important for both a local audience and a wider international readership.
  - Background scholarship that situates the argument/contribution within a discipline-specific or interdisciplinary research landscape and shows engagement with previous research questions;
  - Description of the method/genre (see the 'Methods/Genre' section above) and your reasoning for that choice

*Note: We are also open to contributions that do not follow the traditional academic research paper format provided the submission accounts for a grounding in theoretical frameworks that are relevant to the book's guiding questions. Please query us if you are interested in this approach.*

### **Languages:**

Submissions can be in localized Englishes, a mix of English and local languages, or standard English. If a mix of English and the local languages is used, the writer needs to include a translation to ensure that their work will speak to other interested researchers who may not be familiar with the languages used.

### **Estimated Timeline:**

- Friday Feb 16<sup>th</sup> 2024 : Chapter proposals due. Please submit to [ieafricacollection@gmail.com](mailto:ieafricacollection@gmail.com)
- Friday April 5<sup>th</sup> 2024 Notifications/acceptances sent
- Friday October 4<sup>th</sup> 2024 Complete draft chapters due
- Friday, January 24<sup>th</sup> 2025: Editorial feedback provided
- Friday, April 12<sup>th</sup> 2025: Initial revisions due to editors and manuscript sent for external review
- Friday September 13<sup>th</sup> 2025: Final revisions due to the editors
- January 2026: Target publication date

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Questions to the editors can be sent to [ieafricacollection@gmail.com](mailto:ieafricacollection@gmail.com).

## Endnotes

1. Ávila Reyes, N., Calle-Arango, L. & Cortés Lagos, A. (Eds.) (2021). *Multilingual Contributions*
2. Moyano, E.I, and Vidal Lizama, M. (Eds.) (2023). *Centros y Programas de Escritura en América Latina: Opciones Teóricas y Pedagógicas para la Enseñanza de la Escritura Disciplinar*. WAC Clearinghouse.
3. Squires, L. A. (Ed.). (2021). *Emerging Writing Research from the Russian Federation*. WAC
4. Arnold, L., Nebel, A., Ronesi, L. (Eds.) (2017). *Emerging Writing Research from the Middle-East North Africa Region*. WAC Clearinghouse.
5. Hodges, A., Ronesi, L., & Zenger, A. (2019). Learning from/in Middle East and North Africa Writing Centers. *The Writing Center Journal*, 37(2), 43-60.
6. Brock-Utne, B., & Desai, Z. (2010). Expressing oneself through writing—a comparative study of learners’ writing skills in Tanzania and South Africa. In *Language of instruction in Tanzania and South Africa-Highlights from a project* vol. 5. (pp. 11-31). Brill.
7. Blommaert, J. (2008). *Grassroots literacy: Writing, identity and voice in Central Africa*. Routledge
8. Ssentanda, M. E. & Nakayiza, J. (2017). Without English there is no future: The case of language attitudes and ideologies in Uganda. In A. E. Ebongue & E. Hurst (eds). *Sociolinguistics in African Contexts* (pp. 107 - 126). Springer.
9. Deumert, A., & Lexander, K. V. (2013). Texting Africa: writing as performance. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, 17(4), 522-546.
10. Tembe, J. & Norton, B. (2008). Promoting local languages in Ugandan primary schools: The community as stakeholder. *The Canadian Modern Language Review*, 65 (1), 33-60.  
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11. Mfum-Mensah, O. (2006). The impact of colonial and postcolonial Ghanaian language policies on vernacular use in schools in two northern Ghanaian communities. *Comparative Education*, 41 (1), 71-85. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03050060500073256>
12. Archer, A. (2010). Challenges and potentials for writing centres in South African tertiary institutions. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 24(4), 495-510
13. Chaka, C., Lephahala, M., & Ngesi, N. (2017). English studies: Decolonisation, deparochialising knowledge and the null curriculum. *Perspectives in Education*, 35 (2), 208–229.  
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