

Guest Speakers



Prof. Nemata Blyden (University of Virginia, USA)

A historian and scholar of African American, African diaspora, and African history. Her teaching and research center on the transnational and “Global Black” experience, examining migration, identity, and cultural exchange across the Atlantic. Her works, including *African Americans and Africa: A New History* (Yale University Press, 2019), reposition African-descended peoples’ histories through comparative and diasporic lenses. Her scholarship challenges conventional boundaries of African Studies by reimagining Black historical narratives that connect the Americas, Africa, and the Caribbean.



Dr. Panashe Chigumadzi (Brandeis University, USA)

An award-winning writer, scholar, and historian specializing in African and diasporic intellectual traditions. She holds a PhD from Harvard University’s Department of African and African American Studies and an MA in African Literature from the University of the Witwatersrand. Her work traverses literature, religion, art, and feminist theory, reflecting deep engagement with the politics of memory and liberation. A founding editor of *Vanguard Magazine*, a publication for Black women in post-apartheid South Africa, she is also a contributor to Afro-feminist anthologies such as *New Daughters of Africa* and *Surfacing: On Being Black and Feminist in South Africa*. Her essays on decolonial theology and Black thought have appeared in leading journals and art catalogues across the globe.



Prof. Eveline Compaoré (Joseph Ki-Zerbo University, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso)

A sociologist and research leader in science, technology, and innovation studies. Her scholarship focuses on agricultural innovation systems, gender, climate change, and the social management of natural resources. As head of the Socio-Economy Unit at Burkina Faso’s National Center for Scientific and Technological Research (CNRST), she has contributed to national and international research projects funded by the EU and Germany’s Federal Ministry of Education and Research. She serves as Gender and Diversity Officer for the African Cluster Centres and lectures on innovation and sustainable development. A laureate of the African Women in Agricultural Research and Development (AWARD) fellowship, she has published extensively on intersectionality, gender, and environmental policy in West Africa.

Prof. Jarpa Dawumi (Howard University, Washington D.C., USA)



An Associate Professor of Political Science and qualified barrister-at-law, she is a comparative scholar of gender, law, and democratization. Her research examines women's access to justice, judicial politics, and international human rights. With field experience across more than ten African countries, Europe, and the Americas, her work combines rigorous qualitative research with feminist legal perspectives. She is the founding Director of the Howard University Center for Women, Gender, and Global Leadership, established in 2020, and a recipient of numerous international fellowships, including Carnegie and Fulbright awards. Her publications include *International Courts and the African Woman Judge: Unveiled Narratives* and *Gender and the Judiciary in Africa: From Obscurity to Parity?*, which have significantly advanced feminist legal scholarship in Africa.

Prof. Catherine Kiprop (Moi University, Eldoret, Kenya)



An Associate Professor of Educational Management and Leadership with over two decades of teaching and research experience. Her work centers on institutional culture, gender equity, and leadership in education. She is a principal investigator for major projects, including a U.S.–Kenya collaboration to strengthen institutional responses to sexual misconduct in higher education. Her previous roles include Gender Specialist for international research partnerships and mentor for the East and South African Centre of Excellence for Educational Research. Deeply committed to mentorship and community service, she serves on several education boards and advocates for women's empowerment and leadership in education management.

Dr. Rahab Njeri (University of Cologne, Germany)



A leading scholar and consultant in anti-racism and equality policy. She coordinates racism critique and anti-discrimination strategies within the University of Cologne's Department for Equal Opportunities. Her work integrates African humanist philosophies such as Utu and Ubuntu to reimagine institutional approaches to justice and belonging. Recognized as the "Best African Scholar in Germany" at the 2023 AFRONEWS Awards, her forthcoming publications address racism in European universities through decolonial and intersectional frameworks. She continues to shape inclusive policy and critical discourse across German academia.

Prof. Faith Smith (Brandeis University, USA)



An Associate Professor of African and African American Studies and English and American Literature, with additional appointments in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies and Latin American and Latino Studies. Her research investigates Caribbean intellectual and cultural histories, focusing on how gender, sexuality, and sovereignty intersect with modernity. Her recent and forthcoming publications include essays on Caribbean literature, kinship, and aesthetics in the *Routledge Handbook of Caribbean Studies* and *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*. Her scholarship highlights the creative interplay of intimacy, memory, and postcolonial subjectivity in Caribbean thought.

Prof. Fatou Sow (Senegal)



A pioneering sociologist and feminist activist whose career bridges academia and activism across Africa and Europe. She has held leadership roles in several major feminist networks, including DAWN and Women Living Under Muslim Laws, and has contributed to advancing women's human rights across francophone Africa. Her teaching and research address gender, social transformation, language, and globalization. Her extensive publications have shaped feminist sociology in Africa, including seminal works on women's health, reproductive rights, and feminist epistemologies in francophone contexts.

Prof. Olajumoke Yacob-Haliso (Brandeis University, USA)



An Associate Professor of African and African American Studies, with prior appointments in Political Science and International Relations. Her interdisciplinary research traverses refugee and forced migration studies, women's and gender studies, and African politics. She is co-editor of *Women in Africa* (Routledge, 2025) and *The Palgrave Handbook of African Women's Studies*, both of which have reshaped the field of African feminist scholarship. Her work examines racism, feminism, and global knowledge production, bridging continental and diasporic feminist discourse. A prolific scholar and public intellectual, she advances decolonial and intersectional frameworks that reimagine African feminist thought for global contexts.

Katharina Oguntoye (Joliba e.V; ADEFRA Afro-Deutsche Frauengruppe; Initiative Schwarze Menschen, Germany)



Katharina Oguntoye is an Afro-German writer, historian, activist, and founder of Joliba – Interkulturelles Netzwerk in Berlin e.V. Her work “Farbe bekennen” (Show Your Colors), which she published together with May Ayim (then May Opitz) and Orlando Verlag, is a milestone in Afro-German literature, highlighting and honoring the voices of Black people in Germany.

Katharina Oguntoye is a tireless fighter for justice and equality. Her commitment has been recognized with awards such as the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany (May 2022) and the Rosa Courage Prize (May 2023). She also received the Obermayer Award (January 2024) for her contribution to educating and raising awareness about the history and identity of Black people in Germany. One of Katharina Oguntoye's key concerns is the redefinition of terminology. Together with other activists, she coined the term “Afro-German,” which symbolizes respect for Black people in Germany and overcomes old, externally imposed terms with negative connotations. Katharina Oguntoye is a living example of how experiences of discrimination and injustice can give rise to positive energy and love.