



**4<sup>th</sup> International Symposium of the Dakar Institute of African Studies  
DIAS**

*Bridging the Gap:  
Black Studies Across Social, Geographical, Epistemic, and Linguistic Lines*

**July 6-7, 2018  
Dakar, Senegal**

Fifty years ago, in 1968, minority students across the United States, empowered by the Civil Rights movements and its corollary the Black Power Movement, organized sit-ins and demonstrations demanding a more diverse curriculum in the name of the democratization of knowledge production, one of the essential foundations of a just world. These protests led to the creation of the first Black Studies departments at many academic institutions in the United States. Half a century after this revolutionary moment, scholarship from the perspective of peoples of African descent, cultures, worldviews, and existential experiences has developed all across the world and has produced some of the most groundbreaking and intellectually stimulating works in academia. In the same vein, Black Studies has infiltrated every major area of knowledge production of the anti-black academic world, from the humanities, the arts, and social sciences, to law, architecture, health sciences, evolution and ecology, engineering, food and agriculture, math, biology and so on. And yet, the official discourse on, and of, Black Studies remains centered geographically in the United States and intellectually in the humanities and the social sciences. Moreover, despite the development of Afro-European Studies in Europe, Caribbean Studies in the University of the West Indies system, and African Studies in French, Portuguese, and Arabic on the continent, there has been little contact among scholars who live in different locations, speak different languages, or work in different disciplines. In addition, there is often a disconnect between scholarly discourses and the preoccupations of people of African descent. Africa and African-descended peoples and spaces are often mere “topics” to analyze, examine and explore, while scholars fail to analyze, examine and explore their work’s relevance to the people beyond the ivory tower (from the farmer to the small business owner, from the traditional healer to the community spiritual leader, etc.).

The Fourth International Symposium of the Dakar Institute, in collaboration with Université Cheikh Anta Diop (UCAD), the West African Research Center (WARC), and the Department of Sociology, Psychology and Social Work at the University of the West Indies, Mona, aims to bridge the gap across social, geographical, epistemic, and linguistic lines that plagues the discipline of Black Studies today. The Organizing Committee plans to create a platform that offers the possibility to revisit the transdisciplinary and transnational ambitions of the discipline beyond the aforementioned limits. We welcome papers, panels, and performances (visual, musical, dramatic, etc.) that:

- consider the limits of the US-centered Black Studies model and the constraints of its social, geographical, linguistic, epistemic, and disciplinary boundaries
- explore topics and fields of discussion beyond the US-centered tradition and/or the humanities and social sciences
- decolonize Black Studies from an interdisciplinary perspective
- rethink representation, inclusion, and equality in university institutions, teaching, and research.
- confront legacies of exclusion and oppression to strengthen the rigor and accountability of our teaching, research, and institutional spaces.
- compare discourses from different geographical areas
- provide new readings of the classics of Black Studies that establish a dialogue between early and contemporary generations of black scholars
- address possible radical transformation in African knowledge-making and pedagogies through theoretical and/or practical inquiries from any angle in the humanities, social sciences, arts, health sciences, math, biology, law, medicine, economics, architecture, etc.
- tackle issues in Black Studies from a multi-, inter-, or transdisciplinary perspective, or from the disciplines of education, literature, sociology, history, philosophy, dance, music, linguistics, law, religion, anthropology, economics, political science, and psychology, etc.
- present research related to the theme that has demonstrated its utility and relevance to communities and peoples in Africa and the diaspora

Proposals for papers and panels should be no more than 250 words, with up to 5 keywords.

Proposals for artistic performances should be a maximum of 250 words and state clearly the requirements for staging the work.

*Abstract deadline: March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018*

**Please send your title, abstract, and a short author bio with the subject “Conference2018” to:**

**[conference@thedakarinstitute.com](mailto:conference@thedakarinstitute.com)**



**PARTNERS**

**Université Cheikh Anta Diop**



**Centre de Recherche Ouest Africain**



**University of the West Indies, Mona, Jamaica**

