Postgraduate Student/Early Career Essay Competition

October 2, 2020

Postgraduate Student/Early Career Essay Competition

“Subnational Government Responses to the COVID-19 Pandemic in Africa: The Role of International Partnerships and Linkages”

The African Paradiplomacy Network (APN) supported by the Institute for Law, Justice and Society (ILJS) at the De Montfort University Leicester, the Department of Politics and International Relations at the University of Johannesburg, the International Relations Unit in City of Johannesburg and Afronomicslaw.org are pleased to announce a call for papers.

Context

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the associated socio-economic impacts, as well as the anticipated aftershocks, have reverberating effects and

consequences for subnational governments (SNGs)[1] around the world. This is not surprising because SNGs are closest to the communities which have been hard hit by the pandemic. Subnational governments are also at the heart of national and global responses to stop the spread of the virus, mitigate the adverse effects of the worldwide shutdown while planning for life after the pandemic.

Given the monumental task and constraints faced, SNGs have demonstrated resourcefulness, sometimes testing the boundaries of what is constitutionally acceptable nationally to get results. The experiences and responses of SNGs across the world to the pandemic have been as varied as they have been innovative, reflecting significant disparities in legal and institutional contexts, as well as socio-economic circumstances.

Importantly, the ongoing global health crisis comes at a time of increased internationalisation of SNGs, captured in concepts such as paradiplomacy, city diplomacy, decentralised cooperation, city-to-city cooperation or the globalisation of cities. This practice does not only underscore unprecedented transformations in the global political economy but also speaks to a growing recognition of our interconnectedness and shared human destiny, a reality that the COVID-19 pandemic has brought into sharp relief. In this context, partnerships and collaboration across national borders and communities, which allow us to learn from one another and to complement our individual capacities have become indispensable.

It is also in this context that the internationalisation of SNGs assumes salience as a support mechanism for communities worldwide in their attempt to mitigate the spread of the coronavirus and adapt to its lasting socio-economic and cultural effects. This is not without precedent in the pre-COVID-19 period. Consider, for example, how, through the Fast Track Cities network, cities have been learning and supporting one another to end the HIV, tuberculosis, and viral hepatitis epidemics by 2030, or the World Bank-funded partnership between the cities of Johannesburg and Addis Ababa, which among other focuses allowed the two African cities to learn from each other to strengthen their HIV-AIDS interventions.

With its limited financial and technological resources but immense innovative potential, these international partnerships become even more crucial for SNGs in Africa as they navigate the new terrain reality imposed by the coronavirus pandemic.

Aims and Nature of Competition

Through the essay competition, the APN aims to:

1. Document the various initiatives adopted by SNGs in Africa to contain the spread of the coronavirus and adapt to its effects, including through leveraging international partnerships and linkages.
2. Focus scholarly attention on the nature and significance of the internationalisation of African SNGs as a proactive response to the continent's myriad and complex development challenges, including understanding and interrogating the competences and capacities that underpin this practice.
3. Build capacity by encouraging interest among a new generation of students and early career researchers in issues of paradiplomacy from an African perspective.

We invite essay submissions from post-graduate students and early career researchers who are from Africa or researching about Africa in the fields of international relations, political science, law, federal studies, globalisation, global governance, urban studies, local government, comparative constitutionalism, development studies, and comparative foreign relations law.

In keeping with the theme and aims of the competition, each essay submitted for the competition should not only demonstrate familiarity with the response(s) of the candidate's selected SNG to the COVID-19 pandemic but should also reflect critically on the value of the international dimension of these interventions. Where SNG responses have lacked an international component, the essay should reflect on how these interventions could be strengthened through targeted international partnerships and linkages.

To these end, all essays should be made up of three parts as follows:

1. A critical account of the interventions of a selected African local, state, provincial or regional government in dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic, highlighting areas of innovation, success, gaps and challenges
2. A critical reflection on the value of any international engagements that have formed part of your selected SNG's COVID-19 response, or how the effectiveness of this response could have benefitted from international partnerships of linkages.
3. At least three concrete policy recommendations for your selected local, state, provincial or regional government on how it could strengthen its COVID-19 response through a targeted international involvement.

Author Eligibility To be eligible, authors must either:

1. Be currently enrolled in a post-graduate (Masters or PhD) program in international relations, political science, law, federal studies, globalisation, global governance, urban studies, local government, comparative constitutionalism, development studies, and comparative foreign relations law; or
2. Hold a post-graduate degree and have obtained their most recent degree (in any of the disciplines mentioned above) after the **1st of February 2016**.
3. Must be resident in Africa.

Submission Guidelines

1. Length of submissions: a maximum of 5000 words.
2. Essays must be typed, double-spaced, in 12-point Times New Roman with a one-inch margin on all sides.
3. The essay must be the original work of the applicant supported by a comprehensive list of sources. Essays on topics other than the current theme of the APN will not be accepted.
4. Essays must be written in English or French.
5. Essays should not merely be descriptive, but should analytical as well.

6. Essays must be submitted in Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx) format. Essays submitted in any other format will not be considered.
7. The deadline for submission of papers is **midnight** (UK time) on the **13th of November, 2020.**
8. Entries should be emailed to africanparadiplomacy@gmail.com.
9. For any inquiries about the competiion, please contact Dr Ohio Omiunu – omiunu@dmu.ac.uk or Dr Fritz Nganje – fnganje@uj.ac.za .

The Judging panel will comprise of eminent scholars and our subnational government project partners.

Prizes

1. The top 10 papers will be published as a symposium issue.
2. The top three papers will win cash prizes: First Prize (**£500.00**), second prize (**£300.00**) and third prize (**£200.00**).
3. The authors of the top three papers will be invited to present their ideas at a virtual webinar.
4. The APN will also assist authors of selected papers to run them into policy briefs that will be shared with our subnational government project partners.

[1] Subnational government is used here to refer to all levels of government below the national government, including municipal governments, as well as provincial, state or regional governments.

View online: Postgraduate Student/Early Career Essay Competition

Provided by Afronomicslaw