



CERTIZENS EAST AFRICA REGIONAL WORKSHOP

Kampala, Uganda
15-17 January 2024

The CERTIZENS (Certifications of Citizenship in Africa) Research Project invites submissions for a workshop in Kampala, Uganda from 15-17 January 2024 on

Changing ID Systems in East Africa: Histories, Policies and Practices and the Reshaping of States and Citizens

Systems of documenting and distinguishing between citizens have long histories across the globe, each with their context-specific manifestations as well as some borrowing and adopting of ideas and practices across space and time. Such systems, and the different forms of identification documents (IDs) they have generated, are key to the legitimating power of various authorities to recognize and validate (or refuse and exclude) certain populations. While these systems existed well before the establishment of modern-day states, in the contemporary world, control over the rules and infrastructures of identification, registration and certification are key to the relationship between states and citizens. In different parts of the continent, whether in the early decolonial moments or later post-colonial periods, African states have necessarily grappled in different ways with the common challenges of nation-building, governance, security and development, where a focus on identification has played a greater or lesser role. In more recent years, however, there has been a mushrooming across Africa, including in East Africa, of national identification reforms, be these related to new national ID registration systems, birth and death registration systems, voter registration systems, and so on. These have been driven by both external pressures and trends (such as the Sustainable Development Goal 16.9 focused on 'legal identity for all', growing digitization everywhere, and global discourses of securitization) and specific internal political dynamics. These have prompted the introduction of a range of new ID legislation, technologies and bureaucratic practices of recognition, registration and certification, all with consequences both for states themselves and for increasingly differentiated citizens. In turn, there have been varied responses and contestations by groups of citizens and civil society in relation to some of the worst effects.

This workshop is interested in bringing together scholars (PhD level and above) working on such changing systems and their effects on both states and citizens – and the relationship between them – within the East Africa region. All relevant submissions are welcome. However, the CERTIZENS funding is only available for researchers based in the region.

Proposals for papers – with an abstract of maximum 200 words, and institutional location, position and contact details – are invited to be submitted on such themes as:

- Promises and realities of changing national ID registration systems
- Dynamics and effects of new digital technologies on differentiated citizens
- Historical perspectives on earlier forms of identification, registration and certification
- The politics of citizen-making and unmaking through documentation
- Challenges to and from bureaucracies of identification, registration and certification
- Global policy effects on national systems of identification, registration and certification
- Citizen contestations in relation to changed/changing national systems of identification, registration and certification
- Potential futures emerging from new national systems of identification, registration and certification systems
- Any other relevant aspects of national identification, registration and certification

Abstracts must be submitted by mid-day on **Friday 10 November** to both: Dr Godfrey Asiimwe (god.asiimwe@gmail.com) and Dr Toke Møldrup Wolff (taw@teol.ku.dk)

Scholars whose papers have been accepted will be informed by **Tuesday 28 November**, following which arrangements will begin to be made for travel to Kampala for the Workshop.

Successfully selected presenters *based in the region* will have the following costs covered by CERTIZENS Uganda:

- Return flights to Kampala (Entebbe Airport)
- Transport between Entebbe Airport and the workshop venue
- Three nights of accommodation and full board (14, 15, 16 January 2024)

Please note: no per diems will be provided.

A draft of the paper will need to be submitted to the Workshop convenors by **Friday 5 January 2024**.

The Workshop is being convened jointly by the collaborating partners within the CERTIZENS Project, but is hosted locally by the CERTIZENS Uganda Team, led by CERTIZENS Uganda Project Coordinator, Dr Godfrey Asiimwe.

You can read more about the CERTIZENS Project and Team members at:

<https://teol.ku.dk/english/dept/certizens-certifications-of-citizenship-in-africa/>

We look forward to an exciting set of conversations at this Workshop, as well as future networking and collaborations related to this crucial topic.

Amanda Hammar

CERTIZENS Project Leader

Professor of African Studies, Centre of African Studies, University of Copenhagen