

POSTDOCTORAL FELLOW IN THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF AFRICAN CRITICAL MINERALS

Job Information	
Position Title	Postdoctoral Fellow in the <i>Political Economy of African Critical Minerals</i>
Category	Postdoctoral Visitor
Supervisor(s)	Prof. Richard Saunders
Unit	Department of Politics
Location	Keele Campus, York University (Toronto, Canada)
Background	
<p>Surging global demand for 'critical minerals' used in renewable energy technologies represents unprecedented opportunities and challenges for Southern Africa, home to substantial concentrations of these materials. Experts anticipate that rising international consumption will sustain demand and prices until mid-century due to the impact of the 'Green Transition', the strategic shift led by industrialized countries towards the replacement of carbon-based fuels and energy generation with renewable energy sources and technologies.</p> <p>Yet as Southern Africa emerges as a priority destination for miners and traders of these critical minerals, there are growing concerns in the region about the capacity of local governments to regulate the foreign-dominated industry and ensure their countries' equitable share in the benefits of the sector's rapid growth. Recent African iterations of 'extractivism' –national development strategies which rely heavily on revenues derived from mineral exports – produced disappointing results in the 2000s and 2010s, delivering weak economic growth, few opportunities for local miners, businesses and workers, and poor fiscal support for the strengthening of state social services.</p> <p><i>African Extractivism and the Green Transition (AEGT)</i> is a six-year (2023-2029) project funded by a Partnership Grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC). The AEGT's research focuses on the dynamics of critical minerals' extraction, beneficiation and regulatory innovations in four leading African mineral exporters – the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The partnership includes political economists, anthropologists and sociologists, legal scholars, historians, and policy analysts and advocates from research organizations across Canada, Europe and Southern Africa, with the aim of addressing key research and knowledge gaps and supporting public debates and policy-making initiatives in Southern Africa, and beyond.</p>	
Overall Purpose of Postdoctoral Position	
<p>As a Postdoctoral Visitor working under the guidance of AEGT Director Prof. Richard Saunders, the successful candidate will pursue a research agenda aligned with the project's research priorities (https://www.aegt.ca/) and incorporating one or more of the project's four case study countries. In addition to pursuing their own research, the Post Doctoral Visitor is expected to collaborate with the AEGT's researchers where possible, and contribute to the intellectual life of the Department of Politics at York University.</p>	
Key Responsibilities	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conduct research aligned with the project's research priorities and region of study. 2. Draft and submit manuscripts for publication in a peer-reviewed journal related to their research agenda. 3. Write at least one project policy briefing on their research, for publication on the project website. 4. Participate in and assist with organizing project-sponsored seminars, public lectures, conference panels and workshops. 5. Contribute to the intellectual life of the Department of Politics at York University by presenting their research and participating in departmental seminars. 6. Mentor undergraduate and graduate students in the Department of Politics by working with the AEGT's Research Assistants and possibly teaching one full semester undergraduate course (subject to availability). 	

Skills and Qualifications	
Educational Qualifications	Applicants must have completed their PhD by the position start date. Preference will be given to applicants who completed their PhD in the previous 4 years (2021-2024).
Experience and Skills Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3-4 years' experience conducting research on the extractive industries; • experience in research and/or advocacy related to the projects' 4 research clusters (https://www.aegt.ca/); • evidence of an active research program and publication record; • experience in designing and executing fieldwork research in Southern, Central or East Africa (and notably in the DRC, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe) would be a strong asset • 1-2 years' experience in post-secondary teaching (can include Teaching Assistantships and Tutoring experience); • Ability to teach classes in political economy, international development studies, or on related topics; • Academic proficiency in the English language.
Terms and Conditions	
<p>The position is one year in duration with the possibility of renewal for an additional year. While the preference is for a January 1, 2026 starting date, the starting date is negotiable.</p> <p>International applicants may apply. However, successful international applicants will require a work permit and Canadian Social Insurance Number in order to take up the position. The position will require the Postdoctoral Visitor to maintain residency in the Greater Toronto Area for part of their fellowship (the exact duration of residency is negotiable).</p> <p>The Postdoctoral Visitor will receive the following support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An annual salary of \$70,000 CAD. • All benefits, including a Health Care Spending Account, accorded to Postdoctoral Visitors as outlined in the YUFA Collective Agreement. • The possibility of teaching up to 0.5 FCE in undergraduate courses, subject to availability and confirmation with the Chair of the Supervisor's Home unit. • Research space provided by the Faculty of Liberal Arts & Professional Studies. • Access to support for any External or Internal Funding opportunities for which Postdoctoral Visitors are eligible. <p>Salary: \$70,000 CAD/year</p>	
How to Apply	
<p>To apply for this position, please submit the following documents as <u>a single application package</u>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Research Statement: a detailed (1500 words maximum) description of the research and writing project the applicant plans to pursue during their tenure of the postdoctoral fellowship. • A detailed Curriculum Vitae • Two letters of reference • A writing sample (preferably from a peer-reviewed publication) <p>Please submit all the above listed documentation by email to Project Director Prof. Richard Saunders at rsaunder@yorku.ca and Project Manager Alex Caramento at alexcara@yorku.ca by no later than November 14, 2025. Shortlisted applicants will be invited for an interview to be conducted in-person and/or by Zoom. Only shortlisted applicants will be contacted.</p>	