

LIVIN SPACES

HEINRICH BÖLL STIFTUNG
NIGERIA

ACID

African
Collaborative
Institute of
Design



THE ACID FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

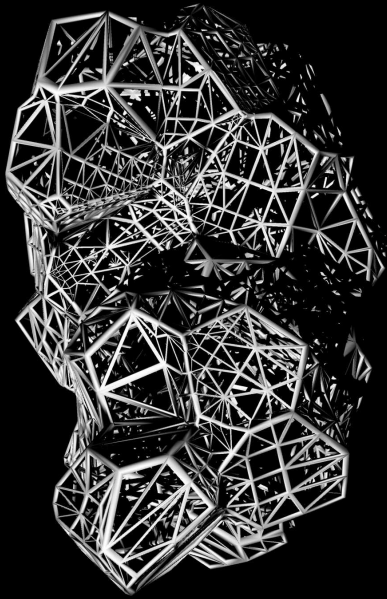
who we are...

"Our effort comes from the need for the African continent to radically engage architecture, planning, circular economy and design..."

The African Collaborative Institute of Design (ACID) is a new-age critically evaluating 'place' for thinking at various current levels that is mostly anchored in the African context. Our effort comes from the need for the African continent to radically engage architecture, planning, circular economy and design, not for the sake of purely breaking rules but for the pristine essence of pushing the boundaries of current knowledge and the impacts that such knowledge are capable of. As a research think tank, one of the primary tasks of ACID is to evolve Architecture, Planning, Economics and Design to meet up with the tempo and demands of the contemporary African context, drawing capacity from an interdisciplinary base. In 2011, ACID was founded by the Nigerian architect, artist and writer Stephen Ajadi with the aim of furthering the perspective of approaching the dogmatism of Design Practice, scholarship and pedagogy. It started as a pedagogical cluster, developing ideas and informally delivering education to curious cohorts across schools with overlapping interests. It later developed by building up an expertise level to the point of international engagement and consultancy. The institute is currently semi-nomadic in its operations with locations straddling African cities and the suburbs. This is a deliberate attempt to oscillate comfort zones with a penchant for new experiences coupled with the discovery and indulgence of various methods and avenues of investigation. ACID is highly experimental in its pedagogy but also realistic in its concerns which may be conventional or non-conventional. It strives to present a stage where cutting edge insights and investigation methodologies collide with real, current and futuristic African issues and phenomena. ACID does not strive to have a permanent manifesto, it is constantly protean in scope and interest, usually with a concentration in Africa as a context. It also engages connected global issues that duly or apparently intersect a wide array of areas, ideologies and scenarios in Africa.

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THE ACID FELLOWSHIP



Research has shown that the continent can use a rise in scholarship and the built environment is not exempted. Most of the production of work in the African built environment are not backed up with formal research motives, procedures and decisions. The activities and processes of 'looking', 'finding' and 'using', are constantly being re-ordered very randomly with little consideration to scenario or context. This seems to be stifling innovation and significant incremental development that is sustainable, inclusive and humanly empathic. Africa has a unique need to help engage and tackle the millennium developmental goals. This feat cannot be done alone. It will take everyone. Research from ACID shows that the qualitative blurring of the boundaries of personnel in the practice and in academia/scholarship will noticeably improve the innovative tempo of the African built environment. The formal, cultural and social dichotomy existing between those who find knowledge and those who use knowledge is becoming untamed and therefore counter-productive. With the advent of the konratiev-like wave of information technology, powered by the internet and more recently; social media (which is inherent in the internet but has strong manifestations and overlaps with the real world society), things are changing. Collaboration is emerging as the only key for development. Problems caused by everybody may need to be solved by everybody for lasting solutions.

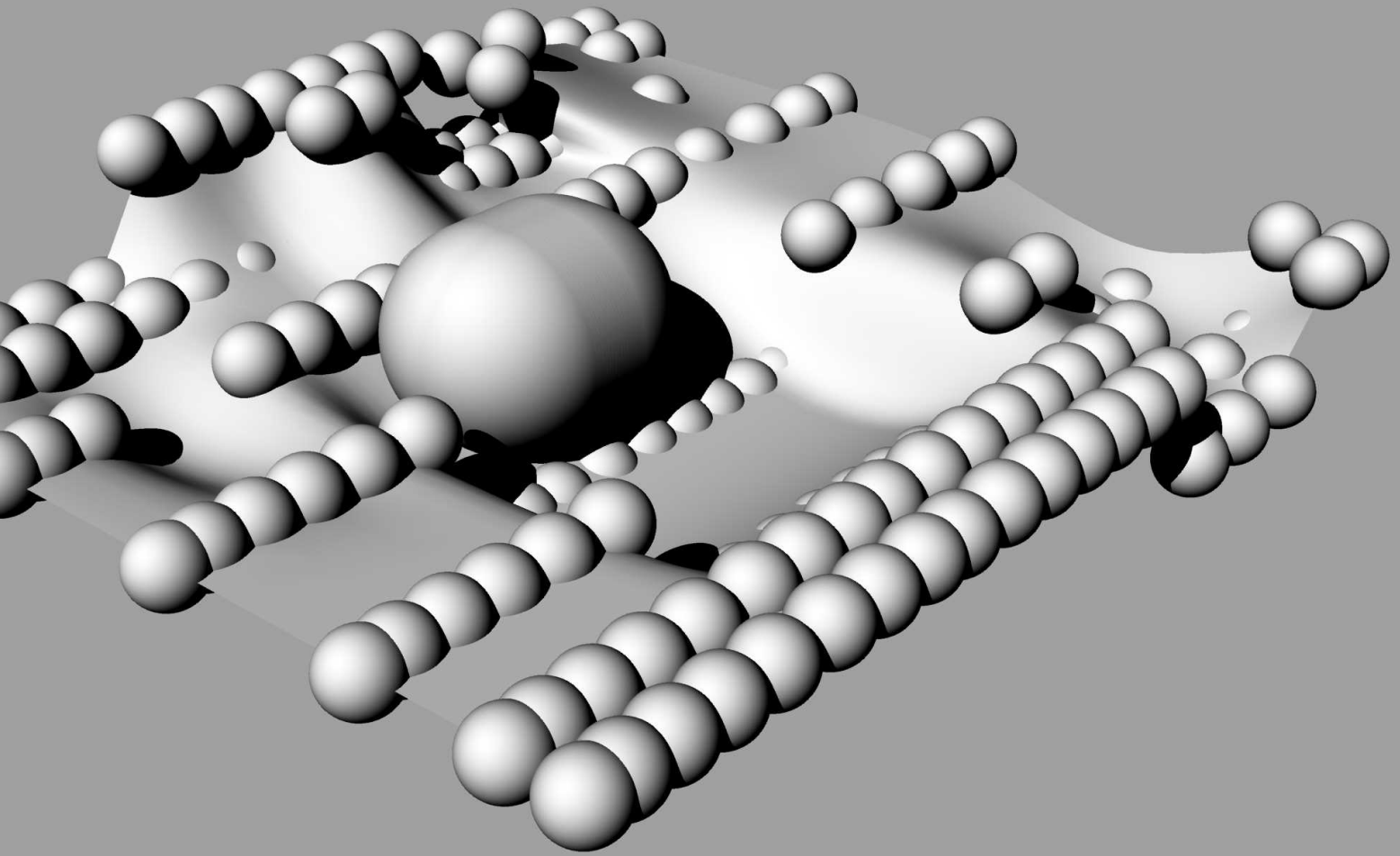
"The formal, cultural and social dichotomy existing between those who find knowledge and those who use knowledge is becoming untamed and therefore counter-productive."

ACID has speculated on this issue of enormous impact and scope over the past two years. In the built environment; an attempt to merge and consolidate the huge innovation capacity found in both the world of practice and academia is seen as a step towards maximizing human and intellectual capacity for sustainable development. If professionals learn how to search better and the academia had a firsthand experience of the application of knowledge in the real world, a positive change in development can be fostered. This will be even more effective if the experience and knowledge is drawn from a coalition of collective opinions which comes from everyone related to the built environment of Africa.

ACID therefore presents a fellowship program which enables professionals to be selected for extended research in an area related to Architecture, Planning, Economics and Design within the institute. They will set aside some time out of their busy schedule to work on a self-chosen research project which will be carried out formerly with the help of ACID and other partners. The project is expected to give highly prolific and talented working professionals an experience of scholarship while enabling them to feed their curiosity about various phenomena that seem to be of interest to them. The Fellowship is expected to be held in simultaneity with their professional career which provides a unique perspective to their work approach.

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Twice a year, one fellow will be chosen from a shortlist of applicants to take part in the program. The program will run for 6 months in which the chosen fellow will work on a project in collaboration with ACID, a support agency and a relevant academic advisor. The project will be chosen by the prospective fellow and will be assessed based on the strength of the application for prospects of feasibility and result. It must be noted that while the themes related to this fellowship remain largely within the domain of the built environment, applications are welcome from professionals outside the built environment. The fellowship is embarked on with primary support from ACID and it is concluded with a publishable piece of writing which will appear on various media including a journal.

At the start of the program, the research must be designed and calibrated so as to fit into the 6 month-duration and the professional life of the prospective fellow. The selected fellow undergoes two part- time courses of research:

- Introduction to Research
- Introduction to Ethnography

These short courses are taken within 6 weeks and form a foundation for the work the fellow plans ahead to embark on. Some of the courses may be taken with ACID interns who also may have overlaps in research interests with the fellow. The work will start with an in-depth review of literature which will reframe or elucidate the research topic. Field study (if relevant) will follow after careful planning with the supervisor(s). The field work will then be analyzed and deductions/recommendations will be made. A lecture on the project will be given to the public on a set occasion by the fellow. At this event, the public will get to know about the project and a narrative of the findings. The work is expected to feature in various media and journals (as articles, other media and a research paper). The *raison d'être* of the fellowship is to bring forth new knowledge while trying to create a sustainable, developmental, collaborative relationship between the professional world and academia. The work developed in this regard is expected to help the fellow conduct a more informatively sophisticated practice while providing insights of coordinated opinions to the society at large.

courses



introduction to research

This module provides a foundation to research and its basic technicalities. The thinking, gathering, and writing of it will be discussed, taught and practiced. Various aspects of critical thinking as a skill in approaching methodologies for research will also be proper points of discussion. This course is the most important course of the internship in terms of pedagogical progression. This is because skills and techniques learnt in this course will be needed throughout the other courses. Especially in the IPP.

ethnography for development planning

This module is an exploratory course that attempts to understand how people live and work in their communities in relation to their cultural experiences and shared languages. Over the years, ACID has worked on developing bespoke techniques and methods of ethnography. Ethnography will be studied as an art and a method of enquiry. Existing methods of ethnography will be studied, debated and contextualized in various scenarios and domains of knowledge enquiry. This will help in understanding how to obtain knowledge without altering or adversely evading the giver(s) and the knowledge itself. Ethnography in itself will also be experimented on as a direct tool for sustainable urban development.

eligibility

Considering the goal of the program, applications are expected from professional individuals who have a positional stance to impact their environment positively through their work place. A fellow is therefore expected to be in some form of leadership position within a business/office with a perceived motivation to push the current boundaries of the practice to benefit society. A least 5 years of experience is desired

application

There are two ways to get into the ACID fellowship program: through an application and via nomination. Standard applicants learn about the fellowship and apply typically. Nominees can also be made by selected individuals within the professional and academic circle. Either way, an application must be filled and accompanied with a research proposal that will be evaluated. It will be helpful to contact the institute with a brief description of your proposed topic before completing an application. This is necessary so applicants can be sure there will be adequate assistance for their desired project. Eventually, one fellow is chosen to embark on a research project for 6 months. Application requirements include:

- A completed and signed form
- A portfolio of a maximum of two projects relevant/related to the proposed project (if relevant, links to works online will be accepted provided that the authorship can be ascertained)
- A Curriculum Vitae
- A minimum 1500 word (excluding references) research proposal explaining the project to be embarked on. The proposal must contain a review of existing literature showing a good knowledge of the trend and current discourse of the proposed topic. It must also contain an explanation of the project significance to the society and environment, proposed methodologies of research, and a suggested timeline for the project (which is subject to change when the fellowship commences).

Applications will be reviewed and a suitable applicant will be chosen for the fellowship.

A number of Research assistance will be made available for the first set of fellowship projects. Interactions with the supervisors will be coordinated scheduled and minimal. Fellows are therefore expected to be capable of largely independent work with a lot of self-motivation.

primary supervisors

Prof. Taibat Lawanson



Taibat Lawanson is an Associate Professor of Urban Planning at the University of Lagos, Nigeria. She holds a PhD in Urban and Regional Planning from the Federal University of Technology, Akure, Nigeria. She has conducted extensive research on issues relating to urban informality, environmental justice and pro-poor development, collaborating with various groups including DFID, UNHABITAT, Heinrich Boell Stiftung Nigeria, and the African Urban Research Initiative. She is interested in how formal and informal systems can synthesize in the emerging African city, and has written and/or co-authored over 50 articles in peer-reviewed journals, books and conference proceedings. She serves on the advisory board of Area Development and Policy Journal of the Regional Studies Association, and the board of directors of the Lagos Studies Association. She is also a United Nations policy expert on Governance, Institutional Capacity and Development. Taibat is a 2013 World Social Science Fellow of the International Social Science Council, and is a proud recipient of the prestigious Rockefeller Foundation Bellagio Academic Residency and DAAD Research Fellowship.

Prof. Joseph Igwe



Joseph Igwe is a professor of History and Theory at the department of Architecture, University of Lagos. He is an award winning architect and scholar. With a stellar background in academia and public leadership, Joseph Igwe's unique body of work has been published globally. He has served as Department head, faculty dean and a special national adviser to the universities commission among others. His work revolves around the history and theory of architecture. He also has extended interests in Housing and its overlaps in architecture. His recent work revolves around the theories of religious architecture, their history and relevance in modern society. He is also interested in the historical narratives of Lagos city and its architecture. He will soon commence work on the influence of digital technology on the architecture of religion. Professor Igwe is the Chief Editor of the Lagos Journal of Architecture.

Stephen Ajadi



Stephen Ajadi is the founding director of the African Collaborative Institute of Design (ACID). He is an award-winning architect, artist and writer with projects and publications around the world. Amongst others; he won the FESA School Prize for the most outstanding architecture in 2010, the Yakubu Gowon National Prize for writing in 2011 and a Norman Foster RIBA honorary mention in 2013. He is also a 2015 Commonwealth Alumni. He holds a BTech Degree in Architecture as well as three professional certifications. Post graduate education include a Postgraduate Diploma in Management, a Masters in Architecture from the University of Lagos, and a Master of Design from Cranfield University in the UK— all with distinctions. He has taught and practiced architecture and design at a number of academic levels. He is credited with developing the first template for benchmarking circular economy in Sub Saharan buildings. His work pivots around Design, Architecture, Development Planning, Internal Displacement, and Circular Economy. He has been a visiting consultant and collaborator to many individuals/organisations which include ETH Zurich, MIT, Yale, Columbia, Oxford, Cambridge, Tesco (UK), BREEAM (UK), BAM Construction (UK), Delta Development (USA & Netherlands), Turntoo (Netherlands), Ouroboros (Denmark & Norway), The Heinrich Böll Foundation (Nigeria, Germany), Nsibidi Institute (Nigeria), Patrick Waheed Design Consultancy (Nigeria), The London Waste and Recycling Company and the Ellen MacArthur Foundation (UK). He is currently an Institut Francais de recherche en Afrique Fellow (Paris & Nigeria).



credits

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