

Concept Note: Call for the First Cohort of the ARIN Publishing Academy

1. Introduction

Africa is home to a rapidly expanding community of scholars, early-career researchers, technical experts, and policy professionals generating valuable knowledge across climate resilience, biodiversity, public health, governance, and sustainable development. Yet, despite this intellectual vibrancy, African scholarship remains under-represented, under-cited, and often invisible within global knowledge ecosystems. This gap is not a reflection of limited intellectual capacity, but rather of structural, institutional, and systemic barriers that constrain research writing, publishing, and effective knowledge translation.

A significant proportion of Africa-generated research remains unpublished, poorly disseminated, or inadequately translated into policy-relevant formats. Many researchers and practitioners face challenges in manuscript development, navigating peer-review processes, meeting international publishing standards, managing and presenting data, and accessing editorial mentorship. At the same time, policymakers and development practitioners often lack structured training to convert evidence into compelling policy briefs, technical papers, and public-facing knowledge products.

In response to these challenges, the [Africa Research and Impact Network \(ARIN\)](#), in collaboration with global publishing partners, including [Taylor & Francis](#) has established the [ARIN Publishing Academy](#). The Academy is conceived as a pan-African, Africa-led, and future-oriented platform designed to strengthen research excellence, democratize knowledge production, and elevate Africa's voice in global scholarly and policy debates.

2. Rationale for the ARIN Publishing Academy

Across African universities, research institutes, think tanks, and development organizations, strong empirical and applied research is being produced. However, much of this work never progresses to peer-reviewed journals or high-visibility platforms due to limited training in academic writing, manuscript structuring, journal targeting, peer-review navigation, and publishing ethics. High publication costs, limited editorial mentorship, and uneven institutional support further exacerbate these challenges.

Beyond academic publishing, there exists a persistent disconnect between research production and its uptake in policy and practice. Researchers and practitioners often struggle to translate complex findings into concise, policy-relevant outputs such as briefs, technical notes, and op-eds. This limits the influence of African research on decision-making processes, public discourse, and development outcomes.

The ARIN Publishing Academy addresses these gaps by providing a structured, Africa-owned platform that integrates training, mentorship, data literacy, digital publishing tools, and long-term engagement to strengthen the full research-to-impact cycle.

3. Objectives of the ARIN Publishing Academy

The overarching goal of the ARIN Publishing Academy is to strengthen Africa's research-to-impact pipeline by equipping researchers and professionals with the skills, networks, and platforms required to produce, publish, and translate high-quality evidence.

Specifically, the Academy seeks to:

1. Strengthen research writing and publishing capacity among African researchers and practitioners to enable the production of high-quality academic, technical, and policy-oriented outputs.
2. Build inclusive mentorship and publishing networks by linking participants with senior scholars, journal editors, reviewers, and policy communication experts.
3. Enhance data literacy and research rigor through training in data management, analysis, visualization, reproducibility, and ethical research practices.
4. Advance knowledge translation and policy engagement by equipping participants with practical skills to transform evidence into policy briefs, op-eds, technical notes, and advocacy materials.
5. Promote innovative and open dissemination pathways by leveraging digital tools, open-access models, artificial intelligence, and structured publishing workflows to improve visibility, credibility, and impact of African scholarship.

4. Modes of Delivery

The ARIN Publishing Academy will adopt a blended and flexible delivery model to ensure accessibility, inclusivity, and high learning impact across diverse African contexts. Key delivery modes include:

- a) Virtual instructor-led sessions delivered through live, interactive webinars.
- b) Self-paced e-learning modules hosted on the ARIN digital learning platform.
- c) Mentorship and coaching clinics, including small-group and one-on-one engagements.
- d) Peer-learning and review circles to foster collaborative learning and mutual feedback.
- e) Practical writing labs and clinics, focused on real-time manuscript and policy product development.

The first cohort will be delivered over two to three months, with flexible scheduling to accommodate working professionals and early-career researchers across time zones.

5. Core Activities of the Academy

The Academy will implement a set of integrated core activities designed to support participants throughout the research-to-publishing lifecycle:

- i. Structured training in academic, policy, and public-facing writing
- ii. Editorial and peer-review mentorship aligned with journal and policy standards
- iii. Data quality, analysis, and visualization support
- iv. Guided manuscript and policy product development
- v. Exposure to global publishing systems, ethics, and standards
- vi. Networking and engagement with publishers, editors, and policy institutions

These activities are designed not as one-off trainings, but as part of a coherent capacity-building pathway that supports participants beyond the initial cohort period.

6. Training Modules and Areas of Coverage

The first cohort will engage in a structured curriculum covering the following thematic modules:

Module 1: Academic Writing Mastery: Research design alignment, manuscript preparation, argument development, and journal selection strategies.

Module 2: Navigating the Publishing Process: Responding to peer reviews, addressing editorial feedback, managing revisions, and avoiding predatory journals.

Module 3: Research Impact and Open Science: Open-access publishing, research metrics, citation strategies, and enhancing global research visibility.

Module 4: Science Communication for Policy Impact: Writing policy briefs, media engagement, storytelling, and communicating research to non-academic audiences.

Module 5: Ethical Publishing and Research Integrity: Plagiarism prevention, data transparency, responsible authorship, and ethical research conduct.

Module 6: Responsible Use of Artificial Intelligence in Academic Writing and Publishing: This module equips fellows with skills to use AI tools ethically and transparently in literature review, drafting, and editing. It covers limits of AI use, disclosure requirements, data privacy, bias awareness, and alignment with journal policies, emphasizing that AI supports, but does not replace, scholarly judgment, originality, or accountability.

Module 7: Linking Research to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Aligning research questions, methods, and findings with SDG goals, targets, and indicators; articulating development relevance and impact pathways; framing evidence for policy uptake, donor reporting, and global sustainability frameworks.

7. Incentives and Continued Engagements

Participation in the ARIN Publishing Academy extends beyond training sessions and is anchored in long-term professional growth and engagement.

Key incentives include:

- a. **Certification and Recognition:** Participants will receive formal certificates upon completion of Academy modules.
- b. **Mentorship Continuity:** Access to an ongoing pool of mentors, editors, and peer reviewers beyond the cohort.
- c. **Career and Publishing Pathways:** Linkages to funding calls, fellowships, special journal issues, and policy engagement opportunities.
- d. **Alumni Network:** A continental alumni community to support collaboration, co-authorship, and peer learning.
- e. **Awards and Recognition:** Competitive awards for outstanding journal articles, policy briefs, and public engagement outputs.
- f. **Opportunity for a publication in high impact international journal:** Candidates will have the opportunity to publish a paper in a high impact journal or book series as part of application project for the training.

8. Cost of Participation

Participation in the ARIN Publishing Academy costs USD 500 for Africa-based participants and USD 750 for international participants.

9. Application Requirements

- Demonstrated interest in research, publishing, or policy-oriented work
- Early-career or mid-career researcher, professional, or postgraduate student
- Basic research and/or writing experience
- Proficiency in written English
- Reliable internet access and ability to attend virtual sessions

- Motivation statement outlining goals for joining the Academy
- Draft abstract, concept note, policy brief idea, or manuscript to be developed during the programme
- Commitment to complete all training and mentorship activities

10. Mode of Application

Complete the **online application form** provided in the call for applications

11. Application Deadline

Applications must be submitted on or before **28th February, 2026**. Late submissions will not be considered.

12. Equity and Justice Verbatim

The ARIN Publishing Academy applies a differentiated fee structure to promote equitable access for African scholars while ensuring the financial sustainability of the programme. International participant fees partially subsidize Africa-based participants and support inclusive, continent-wide capacity strengthening in research writing, publishing, and policy engagement.