

Saharan Crossroads Fellowships

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS: *Saharan Crossroads Fellowships 2013-2014*

The American Institute for Maghrib Studies (AIMS) and the West African Research Association (WARA) announce the second annual *Saharan Crossroads* Fellowship Competition.

Saharan Crossroads seeks to counter the conceptual divide separating North and sub-Saharan Africa and the tendency to view the Sahara Desert as an impenetrable barrier dividing the continent into the northern “white” and sub-Saharan “black” Africa. Countries to the north often find themselves placed in Mediterranean, Islamic, and Middle Eastern studies with little consideration of cultural, historical, or artistic contact with sub-Saharan countries, which are often considered more authentically “African.” Despite trans-Saharan cultural contact spanning centuries, this inaccurate perception of Africa as two distinct zones separated by an empty wasteland of desert continues to influence the way people think about this region and the continent as a whole.

Contact among traders, scholars, artisans, and nomads set the stage for the emergence of richly diverse aesthetic expressions along the web of North to South and East to West routes crossing the Sahara as well as at their beginning and ending points. The Sahara and its peripheries continue to be platforms of interconnected peoples and cultures. *The Saharan Crossroads Initiative* is a partnership of AIMS, WARA and the Saharan Studies Association (SSA) that provides support for research, conferences and publications exploring the culture, geography, history, and sociology of this region.

US, North African and West African Scholars interested in conducting research in North or West Africa concerning *Saharan Crossroads* are encouraged to apply for short-term fellowships (up to three months) for awards up to 3,000 USD. US scholars flying from the United States will receive an additional travel stipend.

Priority will be given to scholars conducting fieldwork in Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia or anywhere in West Africa. Priority will also be given to scholars who have not received AIMS or WARA funding in the last two years. All Fellows are required to give a public lecture at an AIMS or WARC research center or other affiliated institution.

The competition is open to students, senior or independent scholars holding at least a Master’s Degree. Research must be completed before Dec 31, 2014.

Applications must be submitted online. The deadline for submission of applications is October 15, 2013.

Awards will be announced in December 2013. This year there is funding for only three awards which will be given to one N. African scholar, one W. African scholar and one US Scholar.