



Benson Idahosa University ...A World Class University

# Benson Idahosa University Research News



## MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR



### BIU RESEARCH NEWS MAKES A DEBUT

It gives me great pleasure to introduce the maiden issue of the BIU Research News, a publication of the Directorate of Research and International Programmes of Benson Idahosa

University, Benin City. From its inception a year ago, the Directorate has taken in its strides the tasks of coordinating research activities in the University as well as establishing linkages across the globe. As information is central to research, it became urgent to have an organ for communicating research information both internally and externally. At the Vice Chancellor's visit to the Directorate on June 17, 2019, approval for establishing a research newsletter was sought and obtained. The newsletter, dubbed "BIU Research News", was thus born, to not only provide a platform to document and disseminate research information within the University, but also to open a window to the world. The newsletter will be published twice a year, in September and March; in print and online forms.

Currently, global research objective leans towards social relevance. To achieve this objective, interdisciplinarity and collaboration, whether local or cross border, have been on the rise. BIU as an outstanding knowledge hub cannot hesitate to stamp her mark on the fast-growing global research and development (R&D) template. This is the reason for the internationalisation

policy of this great University which is presently being re-articulated and intensified to ensure innovation in knowledge production in the diverse disciplines of this University.

In this inaugural issue, we share the exciting news of the University's contributions to knowledge creation, exchange and utilization through its various research platforms. The international workshop on academic writing and grantsmanship which was held on April 28, 2019 is one such endeavour. The workshop drew seasoned academics from different parts of Africa who assembled to mentor young academics on the crucial skills of academic and professional writing. The success of this workshop was momentous. We also celebrate in this issue, the successes of three academic staff whose demonstrable contributions to scholarship attracted international recognition in the form of grant awards. Moreover, we tell the stories of a good number of other research events, including new professorial appointments, which contributed to making this academic community boisterous and memorable.

I invite you to read these stories and a few others which provide a bird's eye view of the scope and interest of the newsletter.

**Professor Alexandra Esimaje**  
**Editor-in-Chief**  
**Benson Idahosa University Research News (BIURN)**

Issue 1,  
September 2019

People and Places	- 02
Research Highlights	- 04
Upcoming Events	- 07
Grant Calls	- 08

# PEOPLE AND PLACES



The Vice Chancellor, Prof. Sam Guobadia, on June 17, 2019 visited the Directorate of Research and International Programmes as part of his familiarisation tour of segments of the University. In a welcome address on this august occasion, the Director, Prof. Alexandra Esimaje, remarked that the establishment of the Directorate was a laudable initiative. She further explained that the vision of the Directorate of Research and International Programmes (DRIP) is to make Benson Idahosa University a world acclaimed centre of research; a university where global best practices in research are upheld and research outputs are maximally utilised for individual, institutional and

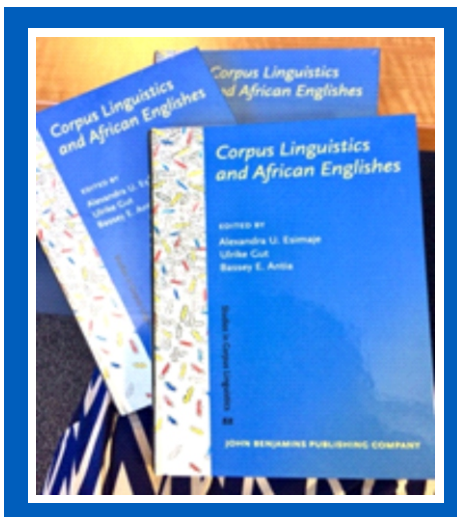
## VC VISITS THE DIRECTORATE

national development.

Earlier in her welcome address, the Director noted that every renowned university gained her relevance in three important ways: the quality of its academic content assessed by the employability quotient of its graduates; the quality of her research output measured by the impact factor of her publications; and the service she gives to her extended community determined through industry-university relations. The Director recommended, among other things, that the University should (i) establish research funds to motivate the staff to engage more actively in research; (ii) register with global research Associations/Networks, such as Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU) to take advantage of restricted opportunities as well as develop wider networks to enhance her image and rating among world class universities; and (iii) create access to research databases to enable the production of quality research by the academic staff.

The Vice Chancellor commended the Director and her team for their efforts toward placing Benson Idahosa University on the global research map. Having been impressed with the success achieved, he further promised to provide the enabling environment and such other supports to enable BIU gain prominence in the community of academic outliers.

## LANDMARK BOOK PUBLICATION



The prestigious John Benjamins Publishers, in The Netherlands, recently announced the release of a landmark book publication entitled **Corpus Linguistics and African Englishes**. The book idea was originated by one of the staff of this University, in the Department of English Studies, Professor Alexandra Esimaje who edited the volume of 15 chapters with her colleagues: Professors Ulrike Gut and Bassey Antia of the University of Munster, Germany and University of the Western Cape in South Africa. In the foreword to the book, a Regents' Professor of Applied Linguistics at North Arizona University, Douglas Biber, states that "There have been numerous books and articles published over the past few decades focusing on the distinctive linguistic characteristics of particular World English varieties. Given the importance of this line of research, it is no surprise that there have been many studies published on the use of English in Africa. There have also been several corpus-

building projects, dating back at least to the 1990s, focused on representing the use of English in particular African contexts. However, no book to date brings together descriptions of those corpora and linguistic studies in a single outlet. The present book aims to fill that gap. The editors – Alexandra Esimaje, Ulrike Gut, and Bassey Antia – are to be congratulated for assembling such an impressive array of authors, who collectively cover a wide range of topics relating to the corpus-based study of African World English varieties. It is highly recommended reading both for scholars in Africa who are interested in learning more about corpus linguistics, as well as scholars around the world who specialize in the study of World Englishes and want to learn more about the initiatives in this domain of research currently taking place in Africa." Such glowing tribute as this, points at the quality of the contribution of this University to global pool of knowledge.



## Announcing New Professors



**Alexandra Esimaje**  
*Professor of English and Applied Linguistics*



**Jesuorobo Emmanuel Idugboe**  
*Professor of Law*



**Mabel Ehigiator**  
*Professor of Geophysics*



**Ruth Urhoghide**  
*Professor of Accounting*



**Augustine Ehije Akhidime**  
*Professor of Accounting  
(Financial Auditing and Fraud Investigation)*



**Theresa Akpoghme**  
*Professor of Public and International Law*

The University Council recently approved the promotion of six eminent scholars to the rank of professor, bringing to 33 the number of professors in Benson Idahosa University. The rank of professor is the apical position in the academic career and it is the dream of many to be so distinguished and acclaimed. We therefore excitedly announce the elevation of six staff of the university who have taken the enviable giant leap in their academic and research careers as professors: Alexandra Esimaje, Professor of English and Applied Linguistics; Jesuorobo Emmanuel Idugboe, Professor of Law; Mabel Ehigiator, Professor of Geophysics; Augustine Ehije Akhidime, Professor of Accounting (Financial Auditing and Fraud Investigation), Ruth Urhoghide, Professor of Accounting and Theresa Akpoghme, Professor of Public and International Law. With these appointments come responsibility, visibility and recognition. This elevation is expected to give the new professors impetus to work with new vigour for the mutual benefit of themselves and the University.

# RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

## Academic Writing and Grantsmanship Workshop



Benson Idahosa University has recently embraced a proactive response to the critical issues of research, grants, impact factor, international publication and international collaboration among its academic staff. It is in this light that the Directorate of Research and International programmes in collaboration with the Centre for Language Research and English Proficiency (CLAREP), organised and hosted an academic writing and grantsmanship workshop. The workshop which was held from April 26th to 28th, 2019 had both international and national participants from 16 universities. In the workshop, expert academics mentored younger and upcoming academics on the skills of academic writing through engagements with draft papers produced by the participants. The outcome was the transfer of skills from the mentors to the mentees whose knowledge were enhanced and who entered into mentoring relationships with the academic mentors as well as forged relationships with fellow participants with whom they can work collaboratively in the future.

## Women in Science Workshop



The Organisation for Women in Science for the Developing World, Benson Idahosa University Chapter (OWSD-BIU), had a two-day workshop in April, 2019. Participants were trained on the use of automated referencing systems, report writing, research design and ethics. Six universities (The University of Benin, Delta State University, Igbinedion University, Edo State University, Samuel Adegboyega University and Well-Spring University) were present during the workshop.

## AgriConnect Workshop



The Faculty of Agriculture and Agricultural Technology, in collaboration with the Corporate Farmers' International, organised a one-day workshop on May 30, 2019, tagged *AgriConnect*. The workshop focused on igniting the passion for agriculture in young people, especially secondary school students, and exposing them to various agribusiness opportunities in Nigeria. It was a well-attended workshop with resource persons drawn from the academia, government and agribusiness sectors.



## PLENARY ON ACADEMIC WRITING

Professor Alexandra Esimaje of the English Studies Department and Director of Research and International Programmes gave a plenary at the Federal University of Technology, Akure during the National Association of Teachers and Researchers of English as a Second Language (Natresl) conference on June 25-28, 2019. The theme of the conference which was “Academic and Professional writing in the digital age” focused on key areas of need for academic practitioners in Nigeria, that is, the significance of building the research skills of academics to enable them make reasonable contribution to national development. The conference was well attended with participants from across universities and colleges of education in the country.

In a paper titled “Is Linguistic Knowledge a Priori or a Posteriori: Questions of Argument, Audience, Application and Assessment”, Professor Esimaje argued that linguistic research is based on both reason and experience; and that it must make good arguments which are based on valid claims which themselves are backed up with good reasons and supported with evidence. She argued that the outcome of linguistic research needs to be relevant whether to its immediate society, i.e. academic communities of practice or its extended society, i.e. its environment and society to justify its continued existence as site of knowledge production.



*Prof. Esimaje receiving a plaque for a noteworthy contribution at the conference*

## Benson Idahosa University Research Committee



Upon the approval of the Benson Idahosa University Research Policy by the University Senate, the Vice Chancellor, Prof. Sam Guobadia further inaugurated an eight-man Central Research Committee to cooperate with the Directorate of Research and International Programmes in coordinating research activities in the University. Members of the University Central Research Committee were drawn from the seven Faculties in the University as follows: Dr. Emmanuel Odjadjare (Science), Dr. Rosemary Obasi (Social and Management Sciences), Dr. Joyce Okafor (Arts and Education), Dr. Christie Omorogbe (Basic Health Sciences), Dr. Anthony Oyeogbe (Agriculture and Agricultural Technology), Dr. Theresa Akpoghme (Law), Engr. Friday Osaghae (Engineering) and Mrs. Faith Amuzie (Minutes Secretary). The Committee which is headed by Professor Alexandra Esimaje, the Director of Research and International Programmes, holds periodic meetings to administer research affairs arising from the Faculties as well as to plan and execute research projects at the university level.

## Benson Idahosa University Research News debuts



*From the left: Mr. Hilary Ayokhai, Dr. Anthony Oyeogbe, Mrs. Margaret Igumah, Mrs. Faith Amuzie, Dr. Christie Omorogbe, Dr. Rosemary Obasi, Prof. Alexandra Esimaje, Dr. Joyce Okafor, Engr. Friday Osaghae, Mr. James Edopkolor, Mr. Frank Onuh and Mr. Temi Esonamunior*

In line with her vision to build a framework for making Benson Idahosa University a world acclaimed centre of research and to create high visibility for the University through international collaboration, the Directorate of Research and International Programmes (BIUDRIP), upon the approval of the Vice Chancellor, established a newsletter called **BIU Research News** to publish news arising from staff research. The newsletter which makes its debut with this issue will be published twice a year, every September and March, in online and hard copy formats.

### ESTABLISHING GLOBAL LINKS

In a bid to widen its international relations and thus cooperate with other institutions in the global space, the Benson Idahosa University Directorate of Research and International programmes (DRIP) has commenced discussions with Oral Roberts University, USA and the Binary University of Management and Entrepreneurship, Selangor, Malaysia. The Director of Research and International Programmes, Professor Alexandra Esimaje, has been in talks with the representatives of the two universities: Wendy Morton who is the coordinator of international initiatives in Oral Roberts University and Dr Osaro Aigbogun and Gilbert Alvin who manage international collaborations in Binary University, Malaysia, on the possibility of establishing cooperation with the two universities.

Areas of cooperation being considered include staff and student exchange, collaborative research, research visits, and research concessions such as fees discount as well as offers of special fee regimes for our staff and students who wish to pursue postgraduate courses or trainings in these universities. To further strengthen global ties for research and development, a number of our staff are actively involved in cross-border relations with international organisations such as the Carnegie Foundation, New York. This foundation recently recognised the contribution of Prof. Alexandra Esimaje to scholarship with an award.



*Prof. A. Esimaje receiving a prize from Andrzej Tymosky, Director African Humanities Programme of the Carnegie Foundation, New York.*

### RECENT GRANT WINNERS/ INNOVATORS



Dr. Emmanuel Odjadjare of the Department of Biological Sciences won a grant for a short research visit to the prestigious Next Einstein Forum, Rwanda where he worked on 'Human Capital Development and Digital Economy in Africa'.



## CONTD. RECENT GRANT WINNERS/ INNOVATORS

Dr. Anthony Oyeogbe of the Department of Agronomy and Environmental Management has just been awarded a grant by the University of Rostock, Germany where he is currently taking a research stay. The research which will last for one year focuses on the influence of phosphorous fertilizer on crop yield, nitrogen transformation and greenhouse gas emission.



Mr. Ojo Idahosa of the Department of International Studies and Diplomacy is among the few Africans who received grants from Gerda Henkel Foundation and the University of Hamburg, both in Germany, to conduct research on the globalization of African collections. Mr. Idahosa is working on how to internationalize the Benin bronzes.

Mr. David Momodu, a staff in the ICT unit, won a national patent for his innovation in creating Smart Electronic Bead Board (SEBB)—a smart electronic led system, engrafted with luminous beads effecting lighting illumination projected through plain glass. The SEBB has several ports which send micro electrical charges to several LEDs and can provide uninterrupted power supply to an entire building. The innovation has already been patented (NG/P/2018/262).



## UPCOMING EVENTS



### THE BENSON IDAHOSA UNIVERSITY DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH & INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMMES *Organises*

## A ONE-DAY WORKSHOP ON DISSERTATION WRITING THEME: RESEARCH TOPICS, TITLES AND PROBLEMS 31 OCTOBER, 2019

#### WRITING WORKSHOPS

As part of her plans to further develop research culture in the University, the Directorate has scheduled a series of workshops for academic staff and students in the 2019/2020 academic session.

#### Staff Workshops

Plagiarism: How to Avoid it  
Extracting Papers from Thesis  
Converting Thesis to Book

#### Dates

November 2019  
January, 2020  
March, 2020

#### Postgraduate Workshops

Topics, Titles, and Research Problems  
Using Research Sources Accurately  
Thesis arguments: claims, reasons, evidence, and warrants

October, 2019  
December, 2019  
February, 2020

#### Undergraduate Workshop

Project writing demystified

April, 2020

For more information, visit the Directorate of Research and International Programmes or email us at [researchdirector@biu.edu.ng](mailto:researchdirector@biu.edu.ng)

# GRANT CALLS

## APPLY FOR A GEORG FORSTER RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP: POSTDOCTORAL AND EXPERIENCED RESEARCHERS

**Fellowship offer:** A monthly fellowship of €2,650 for postdoctoral researchers (doctorate completed within the last four years) or €3,150 for experienced researchers (doctorate completed within the last 12 years).

**Apply at:** <https://www.humboldt-foundation.de/web/georg-forster-fellowship.html/>

**Deadline:** Application can be done all year round.

## APPLY FOR TWAS FELLOWSHIPS FOR RESEARCH AND ADVANCED TRAINING

TWAS offers fellowships to young scientists in developing countries to enable them spend 3 to 12 months at a research institution in a developing country other than their own.

**Apply at:** <https://twas.org/opportunity/twas-fellowships-research-and-advanced-training/>

**Deadline:** October 1, 2019

## APPLY FOR ACLS'S AFRICAN HUMANITIES PROGRAM: POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIP

ACLS provides fellowship opportunities to conduct humanities research in Sub-Saharan Africa.

**Award offer:** Stipend of \$19,000, plus an additional \$1,000 per Fellow for books and media and up to four months research stay at an African institution.

**Apply at:** <https://www.acls.org/programs/ahp/>

**Deadline:** November 2, 2019.

## APPLY FOR WARC TRAVEL GRANT

West Africa Research Council grant supports West African postgraduate scholars and researchers (in all disciplines) carrying out research on the African continent and provides travel costs up to \$1,500 and a stipend of \$1,500 to present papers at conferences, visit libraries or archives and/or travel to research sites.

**Apply at:** [https://www.bu.edu/wara/fellowship/fund\\_travel/](https://www.bu.edu/wara/fellowship/fund_travel/)

**Deadline:** December 31, 2019.

### SUBMISSIONS

Please consider contributing a story for the next issue of the BIU Research News. Spread the news!!!

Have you won a research grant, published a paper in a notable journal/book, attended a conference/workshop, given a plenary/keynote/inaugural, made a research visit, or has your student produced a project worthy of publicity?

Send us an email at [researchdirector@biu.edu.ng](mailto:researchdirector@biu.edu.ng). We will be glad to report your successes.

#### Publisher

Benson Idahosa University

#### Editor-in-Chief

Prof. Alexandra Esimaje

#### Research News Committee

Mr. Elijah Ojete

Mr. Frank Onuh

Mrs. Margaret Igumah

Mr. Temi Esonamunjo

Mr. Hilary Ayokhai

Mrs. Josephine .O. Adeyeye

#### Editorial Board Members

Dr. Emmanuel Odjajare

Dr. Alex Umuerr

Mrs. Faith Amuzie

Barr. Tunde Ebozogie

**Office of the Vice Chancellor: The Directorate of Research and International Programmes,  
Benson Idahosa University, Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria.**