



DIASPORA
BUSINESS
ROUNDTABLE

Diaspora Business Roundtable | AU Ambassadors Ball 2026 | Call for Roundtable Working Papers

DIASPORA BUSINESS ROUNDTABLE AFRICAN UNITY AMBASSADORS BALL 2026

CALL FOR WORKING PAPERS

Three papers. Three tracks. One December convening.

**From Diaspora to Continent.
From Influence to Infrastructure.**

PROPOSAL DEADLINE | JULY 31, 2026
FULL DRAFT DEADLINE | SEPTEMBER 1, 2026
PUBLIC RELEASE | SEPTEMBER 22, 2026



THE MANDATE

The African Unity Ambassadors Ball is commissioning three working papers for the 2026 cycle, one for each of the three working tracks of the Diaspora Business Roundtable held on December 2, 2026. The papers are the editorial spine of the Roundtable and the public record of the convening's intellectual work.

This is not an academic call. We are looking for working documents written by practitioners and senior analysts who can frame a tractable question and propose a defensible answer that policymakers, investors, and operators can put to work. We are looking for papers that read like the briefing memorandum a sovereign principal or a Fortune 500 CEO would receive on the corridor flight to a meeting they intend to win.

Each paper is circulated to the approximately one hundred and twenty principals invited to the Roundtable two weeks before the December convening. The papers seed the working tracks held on the afternoon of December 2. The track moderators reference the papers from the chair. Outcomes generated in the working tracks are then consolidated into **the Communique released December 4th**, distributed to the African Diplomatic Corps, the U.S. State Department Bureau of African Affairs, the Congressional Black Caucus, the AfCFTA Secretariat, and a press list.

These papers will live in the public record. They will be cited. They will be argued with. They will be reprinted. Submit accordingly.



THE THREE TRACKS

Each working paper sits inside one of three tracks. A single paper covers a single track. We do not accept hybrid submissions. Authors who feel their argument crosses tracks should propose the paper to the track in which their argument is centrally situated and reference the adjacent tracks within the paper.

Paper I · Trade and AfCFTA

Mandate

A working framework for the next decade of African continental trade integration, written from a position that takes both the AfCFTA's operational pilot corridors and the diaspora-corridor commercial reality as parts of the same continental trade architecture. The paper should be read by a sitting trade minister and by the procurement office of a Fortune 500 firm without either feeling it was written for the other.

Working questions the paper may address

- What are the binding constraints to volume in the eight current AfCFTA operating corridors, and which two of those constraints would deliver the largest impact if cleared in the next twenty-four months?
- How should the Pan-African Payment and Settlement System scale beyond its first billion in trade volume, and what is the role of diaspora-corridor banking in that scaling?
- Where does diaspora-built commerce already function as a de facto AfCFTA corridor, and how should formal trade policy recognize, document, and accelerate that work?
- What is the most defensible posture for African trade negotiation with the United States, the European Union, and China over the coming five years, given the new geometry of critical mineral supply chains?

Paper II · Capital and Remittance

Mandate

A working framework for the largest piece of capital flowing onto the continent today, diaspora-bound remittance, and for the rails on which that capital, plus dollar-denominated trade finance, plus diaspora-funded SME lending, will sit over the next decade. The paper should make a defensible case for one significant policy intervention and one significant private-sector intervention.

Working questions the paper may address

- Why does remittance to Africa still cost an average of seven to eight percent when remittance to other emerging markets is approaching three percent, and what is the realistic plan to close that gap?
- What does diaspora-funded SME lending look like at scale, and what are the regulatory and product-design preconditions for putting one billion dollars of it on the corridor in the next twenty-four months?
- How should African sovereign and sub-sovereign debt advisory be organized to use diaspora capital as a credibility instrument rather than a savings deposit?
- What is the structural opportunity inside the new African continental insurance and reinsurance landscape, and which of the current diaspora-built insurance plays are best positioned to capture it?



Paper III · Technology and the Creative Economy

Mandate

A working framework for the next phase of African platform economics and creative-industry capital, written from the position that the two domains are now operationally linked through diaspora-built media, distribution, and consumer technology. The paper should be read by a continental tech founder and by a global studio's continental head of acquisitions without either feeling it was written for the other.

Working questions the paper may address

- Africa added 200 million mobile internet subscribers between 2020 and 2025. What does the next 200 million in subscriber growth produce, and where will the operating leverage on that growth accrue?
- What is the realistic continental case for AI infrastructure investment over the coming five years, including compute, data, and talent; and where does the diaspora play a load-bearing role?
- How should the continental creative-economy capital stack be organized so that African music, film, fashion, and design retain operating control and balance-sheet upside as their global market share grows?
- What is the diaspora-built distribution architecture for African creative product in the United States, the United Kingdom, and continental Europe, and which two pieces of that architecture should be invested in by the close of the 2026 cycle?



AUTHORSHIP AND RECOGNITION

Who we are looking for

Each paper is led by a single named principal author. A second named contributor may be attached if the principal author requests one. The principal author is responsible for the editorial position taken by the paper. The Ball does not commission unsigned papers.

We accept submissions from practitioners (senior operators, founders, and executives with a working stake in the question), policy analysts (think tank, foundation, and academic figures whose work has visible institutional reach), and senior journalists of record. We do not accept submissions from currently serving heads of mission or sitting U.S. federal political appointees while in office; their voice belongs in the Roundtable conversation itself, not in the seeding documents.

What naming on a paper produces

- Named contributor recognition on the Roundtable agenda, the printed program of the African Unity Ambassadors Ball, and the December 4 Communique.
- A seat at the December 2 Roundtable, at the working table for the track the paper seeds.
- A seat at the December 3 Ball as a guest of the Steering Committee.
- Quoted standing in two press placements during the runway period (one at paper release, one in the post-Communique press cycle).
- Permanent inclusion in the Ball's public editorial archive, hosted on the African Unity Ambassadors Ball website.

Compensation

There is no honorarium for the working papers. The Ball offers, in exchange for the time and intellectual property of the named author, the platform on which the paper is heard and the relationships that platform makes available. Authors retain copyright. The Ball publishes under a Creative Commons Attribution-NoDerivatives license.



FORMAT AND SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Length and structure

Each working paper runs between four thousand and six thousand words, inclusive of footnotes. Longer papers are returned with a request to compress. We are looking for the discipline of brevity, not the comfort of scale.

Each paper opens with a one-page executive summary readable in two minutes. The executive summary lays out the central proposition, the three most important supporting points, and the single most consequential recommendation. The body of the paper develops the argument. A closing recommendations section names one significant policy ask and one significant private-sector ask, each costed at the order-of-magnitude level.

Style

Plain prose. No marketing voice. No bullet-point-only documents. We accept tables, charts, and small data graphics where they earn their place. We do not accept papers written in the register of a consulting deck.

Footnotes preferred over inline citations. References cite original sources, public filings, named interviews, and primary data where available. Secondary syntheses are acceptable when properly attributed.

Submission format

- Document: Microsoft Word (.docx) or PDF. No Google Docs links.
- Tables and graphics: Word
- Author biography: 100 words per author, written in third person.
- Disclosure statement: any business, financial, or professional interest of the author or co-author in the subject matter of the paper, disclosed in full at submission.
- High-resolution head shot (300 DPI, neutral background) for the published edition.

[Click Here for the Submission Form Link](#) or visit www.auambassadorsball.com/roundtable to submit



EDITORIAL PROCESS

Editorial Committee

Each paper is reviewed by a three-person editorial sub-committee assigned to its track. The sub-committee comprises one practitioner, one analyst or academic, and one journalist. The Chief Publicist of the African Unity Ambassadors Ball chairs each sub-committee in a non-voting capacity. The names of the sub-committee are disclosed to the author on commission and published with the paper.

Review

Each draft passes two editorial passes. The first pass tests the argument: is the proposition defensible, is the evidence base credible, and does the recommendation stand on its own merits. The second pass tests the prose: is the executive summary tight, is the body of the argument clear, and does the closing produce a tractable ask. The author retains editorial control of the argument; the editorial committee retains editorial control of presentation and citation rigor.

Fact check

All quantitative claims are independently verified by the editorial committee against original sources before publication. Any claim that cannot be verified is rewritten or removed. Authors will be asked to provide working notes for any contested data point.

Final approval

Final approval of each paper rests with the named principal author. The Ball reserves the right to decline publication of any paper that has not cleared editorial review, in which case the author retains all rights and the Ball releases the manuscript without claim.



TIMELINE

June 1, 2026 — Call opens

Public release of this call. Distributed to the African Unity Ambassadors Ball's standing relationship list and to relevant institutional press.

July 31, 2026 — Proposal deadline

Two-page proposal due. Proposal includes the working title, the central proposition, the working questions the paper will engage, a one-paragraph methodology, and the author biography and disclosure statement. [Click here to submit](#) or visit <https://www.auambasadorsball.com/roundtable>

August 7, 2026 — Commission decisions

Each track selects one paper. Authors of commissioned papers are notified. Authors of declined proposals receive a written editorial note. One alternate author per track is held in reserve.

September 1, 2026 — Full draft due

Complete draft of each commissioned paper delivered to the editorial sub-committee. First editorial pass begins immediately. [Click here to submit](#) or visit <https://www.auambasadorsball.com/roundtable>

September 15, 2026 — Editorial sub-committee returns notes

First editorial pass returned to the author with written notes and any flagged factual queries.

September 19, 2026 — Revised draft due

Author returns revised draft. Second editorial pass focuses on prose and citation rigor.

September 22, 2026 — Public release

All three working papers released simultaneously on the African Unity Ambassadors Ball website and distributed under embargo to the Roundtable invitee list and the standing press list.

November 15, 2026 — Reading week

Roundtable invitees confirm receipt and engagement with the relevant track paper. Track moderators receive their final reading copies. Authors begin preparation for the December 2 working session.

December 2, 2026 — Diaspora Business Roundtable

Each working track convenes for sixty minutes seeded by its commissioned paper. Authors sit at the working table for their track. Outcomes consolidated into the Communique.

December 4, 2026 — Communique

Communique released. Author names and paper titles recognized in the Communique. Permanent archive entry created on the African Unity Ambassadors Ball website.



WHERE THE PAPERS LIVE

The working papers live in three places, in this order of permanence.

The public archive

Each paper is hosted in perpetuity on the African Unity Ambassadors Ball editorial archive, indexed by year, track, and author. The archive is open-access, searchable, and cross-linked to the corresponding Communique.

The Roundtable record

Each paper appears in the printed Roundtable program distributed at the December convening. The printed program is produced in a limited run; the digital version is included in the standing Communique distribution.

The press record

Embargoed copies are distributed to the African Unity Ambassadors Ball's standing press list two weeks before public release. Each paper is positioned for press uptake through a coordinated press kit including author availability, the executive summary, and a one-paragraph editorial framing prepared by the editorial sub-committee.

The Ball does not exclusively license the papers. Authors are welcome to republish, syndicate, translate, or excerpt their work after release. The Creative Commons Attribution-NoDerivatives license under which the papers are first released governs use by other outlets. The Ball asks only that subsequent publication or reproduction cite the African Unity Ambassadors Ball as the original commissioning publisher.



TO SUBMIT

Two-page proposals are submitted to the African Unity Ambassadors Ball by July 31, 2026 via this form link. Late submissions are reviewed only at the discretion of the relevant track lead and only when the alternate author for that track is unavailable.

Submission form link

[CALL FOR PAPERS SUBMISSION FORM LINK]

Save Document As

DIASPORA 100 WORKING PAPER_TRACK NUMBER, I / II / III_PRINCIPAL AUTHOR SURNAME

Materials included with the proposal

- Working title and proposed central proposition (one paragraph).
- Working questions the paper will engage (three to five).
- Methodology summary (one paragraph).
- Primary author biography (100 words, third person).
- Co-author biography if applicable (100 words).
- Disclosure statement (any business, financial, or professional interest).
- Indicative reading or citation list (no more than ten sources).

We are looking for fewer than ten papers of consequence per year. Submit only if the work is yours to do.

Press and editorial inquiries:

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