What is RSIF?
The Regional Scholarship and Innovation Fund (RSIF) is an initiative of the Partnership for skills in Applied Sciences, Engineering and Technology (PASET), launched in 2013 by sub-Saharan African (SSA) governments with facilitation by the World Bank, in response to the need for a highly skilled scientific and engineering workforce in the region.

The RSIF is:
- Increasing sustainable funding for PhD training research and innovation, with support from African governments, donors and private sector partners.
- Supporting all levels of capacity building from doctoral and postdoctoral, to research and innovation and institutional strengthening, with excellence at the core.
- Building a cadre of women PhD holders in ASET fields in SSA.
- Linked to socio-economic transformation initially targeting five priority sectors.
- Fully Africa-led by ministries of education, science and technology in participating countries.
- Managed by an African institution, the International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology (icipe), an organization reputed for strong processes and systems, governance, world-class research and development, research commercialisation, and demonstrated experience in capacity building in Africa.

RSIF supports five priority thematic areas:
- ICTs including big data and artificial intelligence
- Food security and agribusiness
- Minerals, mining and materials engineering
- Energy including renewables
- Climate change

RSIF aims to
- Strengthen research, development and innovation capacity in selected Host Universities
- Support the use of transformative technologies to tackle the continent’s most pressing challenges
- Provide a model for inter-Africa study, pan African collaboration and knowledge exchange
- Build a critical mass of highly skilled science and engineering leaders, innovators and entrepreneurs

RSIF design
- A Permanent (Endowment) Fund expected to grow to USD 15 million by 2024, through contributions from African governments, donors, private sector and philanthropists. Proceeds will be channeled into the General Fund.
- The General Fund expected to grow to USD 50 million to support PhD training, research and innovation projects, and institutional capacity building.

Competitive PhD scholarships provide 3-4 year training for citizens of SSA countries at Host Universities in Africa, and ‘sandwich’ training at selected international Partner Organizations. Priority is given to women and faculty without PhDs.

Competitively selected Host Universities gain access to institutional capacity building opportunities for graduate program management, research management, ICT, curriculum design, faculty training, and innovation hub development. Hosts can also benefit from international collaboration and partnership opportunities with world-class institutions and universities outside the region to improve curricula, teaching and research methods, develop joint R&D and innovation projects, and arrange exchange visits.

Competitive research grants open to scholars who have completed PhDs and for faculty engaged in doctoral training in Host Universities in SSA, as well as for RSIF graduates who obtain a post-doctoral or permanent position in an academic institution or research centre in SSA.

Competitive innovation grants for RSIF scholars and faculty who submit joint innovation project proposals with private companies. Innovation grants enable faculty and researchers to collaborate with industry and translate outputs of their research into practical uses either through existing companies or by starting up new enterprises.
African RSIF Host Universities

- Are competitively selected universities or institutes/centers that offer a PhD program in any one of the priority thematic areas.
- They host RSIF PhD scholars and develop the next generation of African scientists.
- They have access to research grants and grants for innovation projects in the selected thematic areas.
- They receive institutional capacity building.
- The following universities have been competitively selected to host RSIF PhD scholars in 2019/2020.

**UNIVERSITY OF GASTON BERGER – SENEGAL**
- Africa Center of Excellence for Mathematics, Informatics, and ICT (MITEC), PhD in Computer Science

**UNIVERSITY OF FELIX HOUPHOUËT-BOIGNY – CÔTE D’IVOIRE**
- Africa Center of Excellence for Climate Change-Biodiversity and Sustainable Agriculture (CCBAD), PhD in Climate Change and Biodiversity

**UNIVERSITY OF GHANA – GHANA**
- PhD in Applied Agricultural Economics and Policy/Agricbusiness

**UNIVERSITY OF PORT HARCOURT – NIGERIA**
- Africa Centre of Excellence for Oilfield Chemicals Research (ACE-CFOR), PhD in Petroleum and Gas Engineering /Energy Economics

**AFRICAN UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY – NIGERIA**
- Africa Centre of Excellence: Pan African Materials Institute (PAMI), PhD in Material Science and Engineering

**BAYERO UNIVERSITY – NIGERIA**
- Africa Center of Excellence for Dry Land Agriculture, PhD in Natural Resource Management and Climate Change

**UNIVERSITY OF RWANDA – RWANDA**
- African Center of Excellence in Internet of Things (ACEIoT), PhD in Internet of Things: Embedded Computing Systems

**KENYATTA UNIVERSITY – KENYA**
- PhD in Materials Science

**UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI – KENYA**
- PhD in Physics

**UNIVERSITY OF RWANDA – RWANDA**
- Africa Center of Excellence: Water Infrastructure and Sustainable Energy Futures (WISE-Futures), PhD in Materials Science and Engineering

**SOLOMON UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURE – TANZANIA**
- Africa Centre of Excellence for Infectious Diseases of Humans & Animals in Southern & Eastern Africa (SACIDS), PhD in Veterinary Medicine

**NELSON MANDELA AFRICAN INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (NM-AIST) – TANZANIA**
- Africa Centre of Excellence: Water Infrastructure and Sustainable Energy Futures (WISE-Futures), PhD in Materials Science and Engineering

Beneficiaries of RSIF

- Priority is given to women and existing young academic faculty at African universities;
- Young African scientists and engineers who are entering academia, industry or business;
- African institutions that train PhD students and become internationally recognized in applied sciences, engineering and technology fields;
- Faculty and students of African institutions hosting or hiring RSIF scholars who benefit from the improved quality and capacity of the institutions;
- Industries that will be able to employ better graduates, increase innovation capacity and use transformative technologies;
- Society, which will benefit from the use of transformative technologies.

Current funding*

- Contributions from African governments: US$ 2 million each received from governments of Kenya and Rwanda, and US$ 1 million from the government of Côte d’Ivoire.
- The World Bank and the Government of South Korea.
- The RSIF initiative is expected to grow to >US$ 100 million by 2024 through contributions from African governments, other donors, the private sector and philanthropies.

How to partner with RSIF

1. International institution expresses interest to engage in RSIF partnership (email RSIF@icipe.org).
2. icipe holds discussions with international institution, followed by signing of MoU with PASET.
3. Partner Institution enters into detailed discussions with African Host Universities to determine which ones it can support.
4. Partner Institution signs an Agreement with one or more Host University.

International partners who join PASET and invest in RSIF are able to:

- Access a continental platform (PASET-RSIF) to support sustainable PhD scholarship, research and innovation, and the creation of Africa-led solutions for the continent’s most pressing challenges.
- Contribute to the goal of improving participation of women in ASET fields.
- Boost their role and recognition in Africa’s socio-economic transformation, with RSIF as a novel platform that targets five selected priority economic areas.
- Enhance their country’s scientific collaboration and broaden and deepen knowledge generated in their institutions novel research topics with emerging African scholars.
- Increase capacity of their research communities by hosting exceptional PhD scholars from across sub-Saharan Africa.
- Connect their institutions with a broad range of partners, including private sector actors, centers of excellence across Africa, and world-class institutions from around the globe.
- Contribute to implementation of the universal sustainable development goals and Africa’s Agenda 2063.

RSIF grants

- **Innovation Grants:** Call opens July 2019
- **Research Grants:** Call opens September 2019

For more information contact

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*as of July 2019*