

THE PASET REGIONAL SCHOLARSHIP AND INNOVATION FUND

Call for Proposals

FOR AWARDING RESEARCH GRANTS FOR EARLY CAREER SCIENTISTS

(RSIF Junior Investigator Research Award- RSIF JIRA)

Opening Date: March 9,2022

Closing Date: June 30,2022

Summary

Purpose of the Call	To support RSIF PhD graduates to advance their research career after completing a Ph.D. degree by allowing them to lead research projects
Eligible applicants	RSIF doctoral graduates with a post-doctoral position in an academic institution or research centre in SSA
Grant budget per project	USD 80,000
Period of grant	2 Years
Number of grants available for award	10

1. Introduction

The [Partnership for skills in Applied Sciences, Engineering and Technology](#) (PASET) is an African-led initiative to strengthen skills in the Applied Science, engineering and Technology to further socio-economic transformation in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). The [Regional Scholarship and Innovation Fund](#) (RSIF) is a flagship program of PASET. The primary objective of RSIF is to train high quality PhD and post-doctoral students to address the human resource gap in the fields of applied sciences, engineering, and technology (ASET) and to contribute to improving research and innovation capacities in those fields in sub-Saharan Africa. RSIF supports Ph.D. students, post-doctoral scientists and universities in SSA to establish a high-quality training, research and innovation environment and to develop their institutional capacity for the benefit of the continent.

RSIF is currently funded by contributions from African governments, the World Bank, The European Union and the Government of Korea; and implemented by the [International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology](#) (*icipe*), Nairobi, Kenya, as the RSIF Regional Coordinating Unit (RCU).

2. The RSIF JIRA call

The **RSIF JIRA** supports RSIF post-doctoral scientists to establish their research careers. JIRA enhances research excellence within the organization by unlocking the research potential of newly graduated RSIF PhD scholars. It also increases the institution's research capacity when new PhD graduates who are staff gain experience in leading research projects.

Beneficiaries of JIRA acquire research leadership and managerial skills and helps the emerging scientists to settle down at their home institutions to establish research careers, building on existing and new networks with local and international partners.

3. Call Guidelines

Who can apply?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Call for JIRA is open to recent (i.e., not more than 2 years) graduates from the RSIF PhD program who get a staff appointment ¹either a permanent, temporary or post-doctoral position in a university or research centre in Sub Saharan Africa. ▪ The applicants should have completed their PhD study or demonstrate that they have met all the university’s requirements for the award of the degree. ▪ The applicant must demonstrate her/his interest in JIRA and potential to be a future research leader through their research work, and other activities during their PhD studies.
What is the team composition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The RSIF graduate shall be the Lead Applicant. He/She should have at least one international collaborating partner. The team should not exceed four members, including the RSIF graduate.
Which scientific areas are eligible?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Proposed projects should be aligned with PASET priority sectors, which are: ICTs including big data and artificial intelligence; food security and agribusiness; minerals, mining, and materials engineering; energy including renewables; and climate change. ▪ Projects should be relevant to the priorities and needs of SSA countries.
How will the award be administered?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The award will be administered by the organization (RSIF Host University or any other University or research centre in SSA as the legal entity) that employs the RSIF graduate. ▪ The applicant should provide a letter of support from the host organization. The letter should indicate commitment by the organization to administer the project including administration of funds, and support for the applicant to successfully implement the project.
How many proposals can an applicant submit?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An applicant may submit only one proposal where he/she is the project leader but may also be a collaborating partner in only one other proposal submitted.
What are the budget requirements?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The total project funding requested from RSIF shall be up to US\$80,000 for a period of 2 years. The host organization may provide additional funds or other in-kind support.
What are the allowable project costs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Direct project activities that can be financed include: (a) expenses associated with visiting academic staff and attending relevant short courses; (b) software, hardware and research equipment; (c) inputs including research materials and tests; (d) minor constructions and

¹ We understand as staff appointment to be either permanent, temporary, part-time at the university or research institution in Africa.

	<p>remodeling of laboratories;(e) knowledge transfer and dissemination;(f) cost of protection of knowledge (patents and similar copy rights instruments). See the budget template and guidelines provided for more details.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Please note the grant may include application of the instruments described in the RSIF Research and Innovation Grants Manual and Procedures available here.
<p>How should the proposal be structured?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The proposal should have the following sections: Introduction, problem statement, objectives, expected outcomes and outputs, methodology, description of activities, gender considerations, environmental and social management plan, ethical considerations, alignment to country strategies and overall socio-economic impact, partnerships, budget, and references. The proposal should not exceed 15 pages including references. It should be written in Times New Romans font, size 12, single spacing, normal margins. Click here for the proposal guidelines and template.

4. Evaluation process and criteria

a. Evaluation Process

- All proposals will be screened to ensure that they meet the minimum eligibility requirements outlined in the Call for Proposal.
- All eligible proposals shall be evaluated by at least 2 internationally recognized independent experts.
- Evaluated proposals shall be submitted to the RSIF Grants Independent Technical Committee (GITC) for final selection and recommendations to PASET Executive Board (EB) for funding.
- The PASET EB shall make the final decision on projects to be funded in line with the recommendations of the RSIF GITC. The decision of the PASET EB shall be final and binding on all applicants.
- The list of the projects selected for co-financing shall be published on the RSIF website.

b. Evaluation Criteria (Table 1)

The proposal evaluation will be guided by the following criteria

Table 1- Evaluation Criteria

No.	Criteria	Max Score
1	<p>Scientific/technological quality of the project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Scientific/technological significance and originality of the proposed project; ▪ Clarity of the goals and objectives of the project; ▪ Suitability of the methods to be used– including feasibility of the work plan and budget; ▪ Relevance of the project to SSA countries; 	50
2	<p>Leadership potential of the applicant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Research excellence demonstrated by quality of publications; 	30

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Strength of the letters of recommendations (referees); ▪ Well-articulated vision for career growth as outline in the personal statement. 	
3	<p>International collaborators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Commitment from the international collaborators expressed in the letter of support. ▪ Scientific capacity of the collaborator based on publications, citations (Web of Science) or patents or number of competitive research grants received. 	20
4	Total Score	100

5. Ethical issues

In the process of preparing the project application, the Applicant is obliged to observe ethical principles and rules and describe how ethical issues in the application will be addressed. The applicant should indicate plans to obtain ethical approval from relevant bodies, if the project application involves human or animal subjects.

6. Risk Analysis

The applicant should provide a risk analysis and contingency plan, including specific risks related to COVID-19 measures. This should include the potential physical, environmental, political, economic and social risks expected from the conduct of the research and mitigation strategies. The proposal should be submitted along with the completed environmental and social screening template that is provided).

7. Application templates

- i. Complete the online application and submit together with the required supporting documents via the online system using this [link](#)
- ii. Refer to the Proposal Template (for guidance in completing your application. Should there be any challenges navigating the application system, contact rsifgrants@icipe.org
- iii. The online system will accept the following file types doc, docx, pdf, rtf, zip, rar, jpg, jpeg, png, bmp, tif. The maximum file size accepted for any single file is 5 MB.
- iv. The proposal must be written in English or French
- v. Applicants must provide official signed letter of support from the host institution as commitment to administer the grant.
- vi. Applications for the Call should be submitted no later than **June 30, 2022, by 17.00 hrs EAT**
- vii. The table below provides a summary of the documents required for completion of the application:

Documents required for RSIF -JIRA application	
1.	Project Proposal using the template provided
2.	Project Budget using the budget template provided
3.	Curriculum vitae of key research team members, max 4 CVs
4.	Letter of support from host university or research centre
5.	Letter of support from collaborating international partner
6.	Personal career vision statement
7.	Letter from AHU on graduation / meeting requirements for graduation

8. Additional Information

- a. Letters rejecting or accepting proposals, with statements of opinion, will be sent to all applicants within three months after the application deadline.
- b. The summaries of successful proposals will be published on the RSIF website.
- c. Please, note that the submission of project proposal does not establish any form of legal claim or responsibility of RSIF nor *icipe* as the RCU. All decisions of the PASET EB are final and are not subject to further claims or revisions, with exception of administrative mistakes.
- d. All selected applicants will be required to sign a Project Grant Agreement with *icipe*. The Agreement provides general and specific terms and condition for the efficient and effective management of the grant. All applicants are encouraged to review the Project Grant Agreement and the RSIF Research and Innovation Grants Manual which can be found [here](#).

9. Contact Information and Support

A webinar session to provide clarifications on the call will organized.

Further enquiries can be sent to rsifgrants@icipe.org
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