RUFORUM Global Research Alliance Graduate Research Grants

Call for proposals for Graduate Research Grants
Call ID: RU/2023/2nd call for proposals GRA-RUF/0001

The Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM; www.ruforum.org) and the Global Research Alliance on Agricultural Greenhouse Gases (GRA; https://globalresearchalliance.org/) invite applications from RUFORUM Member Universities for the second Global Research Alliance Graduate Research Grants (GRA-GRG) call. The GRA-GRG is aimed at building the capability of graduate students and post-graduate scientists in Africa to conduct applied research on agricultural greenhouse gases in non-Annex I countries in Africa.

The GRA-GRG will be managed using the RUFORUM Competitive Grants System, whose common goal is to support the development of capability in RUFORUM member universities to enable Africa to respond to the goals established by the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as well as national and regional priorities of African States.

Africa's livestock is one-third of the global livestock population and provides about 40% of the agricultural GDP in Africa. Livestock will be increasingly important in the future in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) because the demand for animal-source food is projected to increase due to population growth, increased incomes, and urbanization.

This second round of the GRA-GRG will support participatory research and training on topics related to the measurement and management of greenhouse gas emissions and removals in pastoral and agro-pastoral livestock farming systems in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Funding for the GRA-GRG is provided by the Government of New Zealand through the Ministry for Primary Industries, in support of the GRA.

This Request for Proposal (RFP) seeks to extend university activities to work more closely with rural communities through multi-disciplinary and multi-institutional partnerships involving key stakeholders such as research, extension and development agencies, policymakers, and the private sector.

This Call will support eight research grants that will support MSc-level training with a maximum funding of 80,000 USD for a period not exceeding two years.

Priority research themes

Priority research themes and focus areas for the eight MSc research proposals supported by this call include the following:

i)   ***Improving African Livestock GHG Inventories***

- Optimising protocols for activity data collection and use.

- Collection of on-farm animal productivity and management data in sub-Saharan Africa to determine production parameters and ascertain if certain management practices lead to difference in farm production.

ii)   ***Quantification of CH_4, N_2O and CO_2***

- Estimation of enteric methane emissions from ruminants.

- Estimation of livestock demographic parameters (e.g. herd/flock numbers and structure) and identification of mitigation strategies.

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- Quantification of GHG emissions (CO_2, CH_4 and N_2O) from soils.

iii)   ***Diet composition***

- Quantification of feed intake levels, description of diet and impact on animal performance in agro (pastoral) systems.

- Assessment of seasonal fodder balance at local or national level.

iv)   ***Manure management***

- Assessing effects of diets on CH_4 and N_2O emissions from manure management of different livestock species.
- Quantifying GHG emissions from manure management in pastoral systems focusing on livestock enclosures

- Developing emission factors for manure management in different livestock systems.

- Assessing the mitigation potential of improved manure management practices.
- Life cycle assessment and optimising biogas production and nutrient recycling from livestock manures in smallholder settings to increase uptake of biodigesters among farmers.

v)   ***Soil Organic Carbon stocks***

- Assessment of soil carbon stocks in different management systems to support decision making. Assessment of pools and fluxes linked to soil carbon cycling and storage to better understand the underlying processes.

vi)   ***Traditional/indigenous farming systems***

- Quantifying the impact on emissions of indigenous farming techniques.

- Incorporation of Indigenous farming techniques with potential to increase production or reduce emissions into modern large-scale food systems.

vii)   ***Extension of mitigation knowledge to farmers***

- Integrating livestock GHG emissions management and mitigation into national extension programmes and farm-level activities.

- Opportunities and challenges to adoption of context specific agricultural actions that reduce emissions.

Eligibility and Compliance

1. The Applicant must be a PhD holder in a relevant academic or professional field, on full-time employment in any one of the RUFORUM Member Universities. Research should be conducted in Africa and train 2 MSc students. The team should provide a 250 words capability statement in term of research experience.
2. The Principal Investigator should only apply for one grant at a time.
3. Collaborating researchers may be from government departments, local and international research centres, NGOs, private sector or other relevant institutions.
4. Research teams should have equal representation of women and men.
5. Applicants must not have pending accounting of RUFORUM funds or projects. Applicants who do not currently hold a RUFORUM Grant may be considered on a priority basis.
6. The research should be participatory and demonstrate its relevance and/or response to demand. It must have a monitoring and evaluation component and a dissemination strategy for the results of the research. This must all be specific to the particular issues being researched by the two students. The research activities for each of the two students must be separately and clearly specified.
7. There must be partnerships with other institutions, faculties and/or departments, whether local, regional or international. Partners may include private universities, government departments, local and international research centres, NGOs, community or farmer organisations, the private sector, and development agencies or other relevant institutions. Letters from each partner, indicating their role, must be submitted.
8. Only proposals that comply with the budget limit and duration of the project and are achievable within the time limit will be considered.
9. All applications must be channelled through respective University offices (usually the Deans or Principals). The Dean/ Principal is required to provide a signed covering letter (scanned copy) indicating that the proposals have undergone internal review and received approval within their respective institutions
10. The proposal should be no more than 10 pages (A4, 12-point Times New Roman, single spaced with 1-inch (2.54cm) margins on either side) and follow the proposal writing guidelines contained within the CGS Manual.

Submission of applications

a) Applications should be done via the RUFORUM Information Management System (RIMS) http://rims2.ruforum.org/
b) Prior to submission, prepare the following items:

   (i) Register in RIMS as outlined in the below section. Only the Lead Researcher is required to register
   (a) Proposal document in a pdf file
   (b) CVs of the Lead Researcher and Co-researchers in a single pdf file
   (c) Capability statement of the Team in terms of research experiences
   (d) Cover letter supporting the application from the authorized administrative office.

   (ii) Budget and budget justification in Microsoft excel template provided. Eligible expenses include monthly honorarium for Investigators, student's stipend and tuition, and research stuff (materials, equipment, software, computer; and participation to conferences, project-related travel) and field

expenses. Institutional overhead at a maximum rate of 5% of the total amount requested.

Time Frame

The foreseen time frame for the award process is as follows:

   i. The deadline for receiving applications at RUFORUM Secretariat is 10th April 2023
   ii. Administrative check / Compliance Review and feedback to applicants by 15th April 2023.
   iii. Review of Proposals completed by 5th June 2023.
   iv. Communication to Successful applicants by 10th June 2023.
   v. RUFORUM Secretariat sends out Grant Award letters by 20th July 2023
   vi. Grant advances disbursed by 10th August 2023
   vii. Official commencement of project implementation 10th August, 2023

1. Please complete the application online.
1. Open this website link: http://rims2.ruforum.org/
2. If you do not have an account you will be asked to register here: http://rims2.ruforum.org/contacts/register/
3. After registering successfully, you will be taken to your dashboard. What you see on your dashboard depends on the permissions that you have been assigned by the RIMS Administrator.
4. For most members of the RUFORUM network we have captured your emails in RIMS. So, the system might tell you that your account already exists. If this is the case, then follow the steps related to resetting your password or forgotten password

What to do if you have forgotten your password or need to reset your password
1. Open this website link: http://rims2.ruforum.org/
2. Instead of logging on, Click "Forgot Password"
3. You will be asked to enter your email address and then click reset password
4. The link to enable you to reset your password will be sent to your email address. Please also check for this link in your spam folder in case it is delivered to your spam. Follow the instructions to reset your password
5. Use your email and the new password to log into RIMS
6. After successfully logging on you will be taken to your dashboard. What you see on your dashboard depends on the permissions that you have been assigned by the RIMS Administrator

How to log on if you have an existing account

1. Open this website link: http://rims2.ruforum.org/
2. Click to log into RIMS by entering your email as the username and your password
After successfully logging on you will be taken to your dashboard. What you see on your dashboard depends on the permissions that you have been assigned by the RIMS Administrator.

How to submit a fellowship grant application via RIMS
1. After successfully logging on click '**Apply for a Grant'**
2. Choose correct call ID which is: **Call ID: RU/2023/2nd call for proposals GRA-RUF/0001**
3. Complete the online application form.

For information

For any quick inquiries, please write to m.majaliwa@ruforum.org or s.nghituwamhata@ruforum.org **with a copy to cgs@ruforum.org. For further details,** please visit the project website at:
RUFORUM: https://www.ruforum.org

Potential applicants are invited to use this Application template, CV template and Budget template for the Call.

For further information on the GRG and the application process for the second funding round please refer to the Competitive Grants System Manual[1] and to the Graduate Environmental and Agricultural Research guide (GEAR).

GOOD LUCK WITH YOUR APPLICATION!

The grant will be awarded to applicants from RUFORUM member universities with no outstanding membership fees and overdue accountabilities at the time of selection