



## **RUFORUM Graduate Research Grants**

### **Call for proposals for Graduate Research Grants**

**Call ID: RU/2023/RU/GRG /2024/0004**

#### **Call for research proposals**

The Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM; [www.ruforum.org](http://www.ruforum.org)) with funding support from Carnegie Corporation of New York (CCNY; <https://www.carnegie.org/>) invites applications from RUFORUM Member Universities in West Africa for the RUFORUM Graduate Research Grants (RU/GRG/2024) call. The GRG is aimed at building the capability of graduate students and post-graduate scientists in West Africa to conduct applied research on agricultural greenhouse gas emission management and measurements in Africa.

The RU/GRG/2024 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.

Climate Change and Food Security issues require urgent attention to develop inclusive strategies that address local contexts. African women are still rare at the higher levels of science, research and at senior levels in universities and indeed in the academic circles in general, 24% of faculty in Africa are women. African climate change scientists' voices have remained very low for the last decades. This is even acute among the women scientists who remain underrepresented and under-engaged in academic circles and research, especially in climate science. Compared with the rest of Africa, West Africa's climate science output remains marginal with a low scientific representation per capita in climate sciences ([AfDB, 2019](#)).

Therefore, the RU/GRG/2024 Call support aims to strengthen the capacity of universities in West Africa to implement inclusive graduate training and research programmes that enhance the Continent's ability to develop scientific solutions to climate change adaptation and mitigation. Specifically, to strengthen capacity, especially of women in West Africa, and at the same time increase the quality of locally relevant research.

This Call for Proposal 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.

The Call will support eight research grants that will support MSc-level training with a maximum funding of 60,000 USD for a period not exceeding two years.

#### **Priority research themes**

The Call will support research addressing smallholder farmers' needs to adapt to climate change, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and promote food security by reducing post-harvest losses and addressing nutrition issues. The Call for research proposals is expected to trigger more female scientists in West Africa to think about these issues and encourage them to reach out to farmers to better understand their needs.

## **Eligibility and Compliance**

1. The Applicant must be a female PhD holder in a relevant academic or professional field, on full-time employment in any one of the RUFORUM Member Universities<sup>1</sup> in West Africa. Research should be conducted in Africa and train 2 MSc students. The team should provide a 250-word capability statement in terms of research experience.
2. The Principal Investigator should only apply for one grant at a time and should not have got twice a RUFORUM GRG.
3. Research teams should have a high representation of women to men.
4. Applicants must not have pending accounting for RUFORUM funds or projects. Applicants who do not currently hold a RUFORUM Grant may be considered as a priority to receive the grant.
5. 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. These must all relate 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.
6. Partnerships with other institutions, faculties and/or departments, whether local, regional, or international are encouraged. 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. Endorsement letters from each partner, indicating their role, must be part of the proposal submission.
7. Only proposals that comply with the budget limit and duration of the project and are achievable within the time limit will be considered.
8. All applications must be channeled 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.

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<sup>1</sup>The grant will be awarded to applicants from RUFORUM member universities with no outstanding membership fees and overdue accountabilities at the time of selection.

9. 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 section below. (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 University administrative office.
  - (ii) Budget and budget justification in the Microsoft Excel template provided. Eligible expenses include monthly honorarium for Investigators, student stipend and tuition, and research stuff (materials, equipment, software, computer; and participation in 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 extended** for receiving applications at RUFORUM Secretariat is **29<sup>th</sup> Nov 2023**
- ii. Administrative check/Compliance, Review and feedback to applicants by 30<sup>th</sup> November 2023.
- iii. Review of Proposals completed by 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2024.
- iv. Communication to Successful applicants by 10<sup>th</sup> January 2024.
- v. RUFORUM Secretariat sends out Grant Award letters by 30<sup>th</sup> January 2024
- vi. Grant advances disbursed by 9<sup>th</sup> February 2024
- vii. Official commencement of project implementation 15<sup>th</sup> February 2024

### **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 the RIMS Administrator has assigned you.
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 the correct call ID which is: **Call ID: RU/2023/RU/GRG /2024/0004**
3. Complete the online application form.

### **For information**

For any quick inquiries, please write to [m.majaliwa@ruforum.org](mailto:m.majaliwa@ruforum.org) or [s.nghituwamhata@ruforum.org](mailto:s.nghituwamhata@ruforum.org) with a copy to [cgs@ruforum.org](mailto:cgs@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](#)<sup>1</sup> and to the Graduate Environmental and Agricultural Research guide ([GEAR](#)).

GOOD LUCK WITH YOUR APPLICATION!