



CALL FOR PROPOSALS

DOCTORAL REGIONAL RESEARCH GRANTS TARGETING BARLEY, FINGER MILLET, PEARL MILLET, AND SORGHUM

Call ID: [RU/2016/DRRG/ CGIAR](#)

RELEASE DATE: 28th January, 2016
APPLICATION DEADLINE: 30th April, 2016

This Call for Doctoral Research Grants is being sponsored and supported by the CGIAR Research Program on Dryland Cereals and is designed to increase capacity for research on barley, finger millet, pearl millet, and Sorghum. Where appropriate the grantees are expected to work closely with ICARDA (*International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas*) and ICRISAT (The International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid-Tropics) scientists. The awards are being made through Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM) which will monitor and oversee the grant implementation process.

About the Call / Grant

This is to announce a Call for Applicants registered in RUFORUM Regional PhD Programmes for a **Doctoral Regional Research Grant to support their doctoral research over two years**. These doctoral research grants are to address issues that specifically affect **barley, finger millet, pearl millet, and sorghum** at any one point/s along the value chain from soil fertility to consumption including breeding, agronomy, marketing, processing and information dissemination for uptake.

It is a requirement that students applying for these grant must have completed and passed all their coursework. However, where there is a strong case for support, applications can also be submitted before the final examinations have been written, but no award will be made until all courses have been passed.

The grants are for **a maximum of US\$15,000 over a period of two years**, and are meant to provide funds for student research, support supervision, produce the thesis and related publications, as well as report back to the communities they worked with. The students who apply for these grants are those who are self financed or are sponsored through grants which do not provide for research funds.

Pre-proposal (preparatory) grants are not funded. **The grants WILL NOT cover tuition fees or stipend for the students.**

Eligibility

1. Applicants must be registered at one of the RUFORUM member Universities for MSc or PhD Programmes and must have completed and passed their course work before the grant can be awarded. If applicants have not yet completed their coursework by the deadline, a proof





of successful completion of semester one must be included and two motivation letters from the applicant's lecturers and / or supervisor(s) must be given that indicate his/her progress on courses of semester 2.

2. Applicants will not be eligible if they have pending accounting of RUFORUM funds or projects.

Requirements

- Each proposal will need to clearly articulate which Dryland Cereals focus crop this research will address and how it will contribute to the Intermediate Development Outcomes (IDOs) of the Dryland Cereals program.
- Research should normally be carried out in the candidate's home country.
- A willing and appropriate supervisor or supervising team needs to be identified in the home country.
- There should be support from the home institution for the application
- Research should be clearly linked to demand or need, and its niche in the value chain articulated. Research should also be in line with national and regional priorities of research.
- Priority will be given to participatory action research, to research that is able to inform policy and/or to research that will result in new entrepreneurial innovations that address issues of poverty reduction and resilience.
- Research proposals will be peer reviewed and the candidates for award will be selected by the RUFORUM Technical Committee based upon these reviews, recommendations, and proof of acceptance by the relevant PhD Program or Host as appropriate.
- Female candidates will be especially encouraged to apply and efforts will be made to enable them to participate more easily wherever possible.

Proposal preparation guidelines

Applicants are required to work with their supervisor(s) to submit their research proposal that clearly articulates the justification, objectives, hypotheses, activities and methodology, detailed budget and the final outputs (see Graduate Environment and Agriculture Research for help in developing thesis proposals

(<http://repository.ruforum.org/documents/graduate-environmental-and-agricultural-research-gear-guide-effective-and-relevant>). The proposal must indicate how the student would like to interact with ICARDA and ICRISAT and must also have a plan for disseminating findings from the research. The entire proposal should be a maximum of 12 pages (A4) with 1.5 line spacing.

To help ensure the highest quality of proposals and to ensure that they are accepted by the university, each one must be internally reviewed by the submitting Department or Faculty, normally through faculty peer review teams. The university will be held to account for the quality of proposals being submitted.





All applications must be channeled through their respective University Offices (usually the Deans). The Dean is required in a signed covering letter (scanned copy) to confirm that

- The applicant has passed all their coursework, or has passed the first semester and has demonstrated good progress towards passing coursework.
- The applicant's proposal has undergone internal review and is acceptable to the university.

NOTE: There is no university administrative support fee available but provision is to be made within the grant for mentorship.

Application / Proposal Review Process

All Grants will be awarded on a competitive basis by the RUFORUM Technical Committee. Proposals will go through compliance and external review and Technical Committee selection procedure.

The external reviewers will mainly use the following criteria to judge / rank proposals;

- i. Overall project design, content and articulation / write-up
- ii. Appropriateness/relevance and contribution to Dryland Cereals and RUFORUM objectives
- iii. The originality, innovativeness and contribution to science or development
- iv. Research activities clearly defined with pertinent and achievable objectives
- v. Good conceptual framework and clearly defined hypotheses
- vi. Evidence of a good understanding of the literature, rationale for the particular project and the theoretical basis for the research
- vii. Well articulated methodological approach with evidence of good understanding of applicable methods
- viii. Participatory action research for development is encouraged.
- ix. Contribution to scientific knowledge and methods
- x. Clearly articulated dissemination of results to communities, academia, the CGIAR and, if appropriate, to service agencies, partners and policy-makers
- xi. Feasibility: Can the PhD student achieve this in the time available and is it of the expected standard for a PhD?

Criteria for ranking and selection by Technical Committee

It is the responsibility of the RUFORUM technical Committee to make the final selection of awardees. The main criteria will be the following;

- i. Good external reviews.
- ii. Strong results from the course work and the references from the faculty of the MSc and PhD program they are enrolled in.





- iii. Evidence of support and good motivation from the institutions and supervisor they will work with in the home country. Links with ICARDA and ICRISAT scientists are encouraged
- iv. Contribution to development or science.
- v. Realistic timeline and budgets and achievable objectives (not over-ambitious)
- vi. Participatory, action oriented research for rural development will be prioritised and any pure science enquiry needs to be in close association with ICRISAT and/or ICARDA projects.
- vii. Alignment with RUFORUM goals and core values
 - o Proposals must be gender sensitive (aware of the differential impact of research on women, men and marginalised groups)
 - o Relevance; potential for subsequent internships, promoting sustainability and/or scaling up; quality, bringing new dimensions (value addition) etc will all be taken into consideration.
 - o Response to demand by farmers/rural communities/governments/civil society
 - o Partnership and the effective integration of partners in the process
- viii. Evidence of systems for internal monitoring and evaluation of the research.
- ix. Clearly outlined dissemination plan.

NOTE: Members of the RUFORUM Technical Committee are not eligible to apply and neither will they participate in deliberations while proposals from their institutions are being tabled.

Grant Award process

Grant Award letters are prepared for each approved proposal, and sent to the Dean or Principal of the Faculty / School of the respective University with a copy to the individual applicant. The Grant Award letter specifies the amount of the grant, purpose and responsibility of the university in monitoring the use of the grant funds and reporting requirements. Funds are only disbursed after full commitment, through signature by the respective University Senior Official. Grants awarded are published in the RUFORUM News and are posted in the RUFORUM website (www.ruforum.org).

Student mentorship

This is an important component of the RUFORUM grants and supervisors are encouraged to provide the support required to carry out effective research, good relations with partner communities and agencies and the publication and dissemination of results. Supervisors at both the host and home countries and those based with ICARDA or ICRISAT are expected to form consortia and to work closely together. The students will be expected to become actively involved in RUFORUM activities which include retreats, workshops, seminars, and conferences.

Reporting requirements

Applicants are required to submit half-yearly progress reports, through their supervisors, to allow for close monitoring by RUFORUM Secretariat. Final payment on the grant will be made on the receipt of the dissertation, evidence of two papers accepted for publication and the





dissemination findings. Reporting and accounting of funds must be timely.



Time Frame for this Call ([RU/2016/DRRG CGIAR](#))

- i. Applications on-line will close on 30th April 2016
- ii. Results of the Selection process will be advised by 15th May 2016 and by 30th June, 2016 all grants will be disbursed

Proposal Submission

Go to this online link on the RUFORUM Information Management System (RIMS):
<http://rims.ruforum.org> and create a new account or log in with your existing account

- Log in with your email address and chosen password
- You will be taken to a view where you will see a link called “**Apply for a Grant**” Click on this link and begin the application process for call ID [RU/2016/DRRG/ CGIAR](#)
- You can begin the application process, save and return to it at a later date / time.
- As you work online please remember to save your work. You will also be reminded to save if you take time without saving your work.

Queries

If you face problems with the online application system please email Brian Mukwaya on b.mukwaya@ruforum.org and ensure that you copy schindime@ruforum.org and s.uwituze@ruforum.org