



**The Partnership for skills in Applied Sciences, Engineering and
Technology (PASET)**

Request for Applications

**To Host PhD Programs Financed By
The Regional Scholarship and Innovation Fund**

Administered by the Association of African Universities

June 27, 2016

Outline

I. Overview	2
II. Regional Scholarship Innovation Fund [RSIF]	3
III. Expected Responsibilities of Host Institution's PASET-RSIF Point of Contact	5
IV. Guidance for Application Submission	6
V. Evaluation Process and Timeline	6
VI. Notification of Selected Host Universities	6
VII. Student Selection Priority and Eligibility	7
VIII. Financing	7
IX. Contact Information and Support	7
X. Submission Information	7
XI. Annex	8

I. OVERVIEW

[The Partnership for skills in Applied Sciences, Engineering and Technology](#) is an Africa-led initiative with the objective of strengthening the science, technology and engineering capability in sub-Saharan Africa to further its socio-economic transformation. The PASET Regional Scholarship and Innovation Fund (RSIF)¹ will contribute towards training 10,000 PhD students in the fields of Applied Sciences, Engineering and Technology (ASET) for priority sectors in 10 years, and building the capacity of PhD programs in a core of African universities. The first round RSIF will be implemented through competitively selected Africa Centers of Excellence (ACE)^{2,3}, which have the capacity to offer PhD programs in the selected thematic areas. PASET is aligned with the ACE project objective of supporting higher education institutions to deliver quality post-graduate education programs and build research capacity in priority areas. The scholarship will be open to all but priority will be given to faculty members and students will be selected by PASET host institutions. The RSIF is being seeded by contributions from the Governments of Senegal, Rwanda and Ethiopia who have taken the lead in establishing the RSIF.

Beyond training PhDs, another key objective is to build the capacity of selected African universities to provide high quality PhD programs in these fields possibility through collaboration and international partnerships with universities outside the region to improve curricula, teaching and research methods. In its subsequent phases, RSIF is expected to build the region's capacity to sustainably support the PhD graduates beyond their training as they go into academia, industry, or become entrepreneurs. Apart from

¹ RSIF is solely a PASET PhD scholarship program. A separate scholarship program will be launched (currently under formulation) under the Eastern and Southern Africa Higher Education Centers of Excellence project which will target master level degrees.

² For the first year, PASET host institutions will be limited to ACEs because these centers were selected through a competitive, transparent, internationally-benchmarkable selection process. Future calls will expand to include other institutions.

³ Information related to Africa Centers of Excellence I project can be accessed here: <http://www.aau.org/content/africa-centres-excellence-project-ace> and the Africa Centers of Excellence II project can be accessed here: <http://ace2.iucea.org>

government contributions, resources for the Fund are being mobilized from the private sector in the region.

PASET is governed by African education ministers, scientists, development experts, business leaders, and African academics, and facilitated by the World Bank. The program has been designed according to the highest standards of scholarship administration and good governance. The Association of African Universities (AAU) has been selected to administer the RSIF. There will also be a third party verification of the RSIF implementation.

II. REGIONAL SCHOLARSHIP INNOVATION FUND [RSIF]

RSIF will eventually operate with three-grant windows: PhD training, research, and innovation. This application is related to PhD training only with the first batch of scholars expected to enroll in January 2017. The program will start on a limited scale in the first year and expand in the coming years as more countries join and start contributing to PASET. Eighty percent of the first round of scholarships will be reserved for students from the current funding countries, Ethiopia, Rwanda and Senegal, with twenty percent of scholarships open to students from other sub-Saharan African countries. Due to lack of qualified faculty in many SSA universities, preference in scholarship awards will be given to current faculty members who do not hold PhD. Female candidates will be encouraged to apply and will receive preference if they meet other eligibility criteria.

In RSIF's first phase, the Africa Centers of Excellence (ACEs) that were selected for funding under the World Bank Africa Centers of Excellence I & II projects are invited to submit applications to host PhD programs. Approximately 4-6 ACEs will be selected to be host institutions for the RSIF. These Centers will invite PhD applications according to the admission criteria and eligibility criteria laid down by RSIF. In the first phase, PhD programs in four thematic areas listed below will be considered. Approximately 60 PhD students will be funded in the first cohort (about 15 students per selected host ACE).

The host institutions will gain access to collaboration opportunities with other world-class institutions that have partnered with PASET to improve the quality of PhD programs through areas such as curriculum design, faculty training and exchange visits. In the long term, there is also a potential for the host institutions to participate in joint research and development and innovation networks through the research grant and innovation grant windows of the RSIF once they are set up. The program will help host institutions gain recognition in the continent as premier institutions for PhD programs in the thematic areas, as a result of having been selected through a highly competitive process.

The Association of African Universities

The Association of African Universities, with a network of over 350 higher education institutions across Africa, has been selected to handle the administration, financial management and accounting for the Regional Scholarship Innovation Fund. The organization is a continental not-for-profit organization with proven capacity to handle International Development Association (IDA) and other donor funds, and has well-established financial management systems. The organization has established working

relationships in 46 African countries and has bilingual capacity. The AAU will also be responsible for the selection of host universities in accordance with the guidance of the PASET Steering Committee, and will enter into an Agreement with each of the host universities selected to implement the PhD program. An RSIF Implementing Unit will be established at the AAU to ensure a well-managed, efficient and results-oriented program.

Eligibility

The World Bank financed Africa Centers of Excellence (both under Phase I in West and Central Africa and under Phase II in Eastern and Southern Africa) are eligible to submit Applications to host PhD students in the thematic areas noted below. Every ACE applicant must have at least one PhD degree program in one of the thematic areas described below and which is offered by the World Bank financed ACE directly. PhD programs offered at a partner or affiliated institution, or even within the same university/ institution but outside of the ACE, will not be eligible. Non-ACE institutions, even if they work in the thematic areas below will not be considered for the first round of host institutions. In future calls, the eligibility is expected to be expanded to non-ACE hosting institutions.

Thematic Areas

The following **four** thematic areas have been identified for 2016:

- **Energy** - needs in development of power generation and distribution, renewable energy and addressing climate change
- **Information and Communications Technology (ICT)** - needs in telecommunications and other ICT-driven development
- **Food security** -needs in agriculture, food processing industries, etc.
- **Mining, Mineral and Materials Engineering** - needs in mining, materials/mineral processing and manufacturing, etc.

Selected Thematic Areas and Sub-Disciplines

Thematic Areas	PhD Degree Program	Development Impact
Food Security	Food science, agriculture, mechanical engineering, agricultural engineering, agri-business	Food Security
Energy	Electrical engineering, mechanical engineering, civil engineering, materials	Power generation & distribution

	science and engineering, chemical engineering, petroleum engineering, petrochemical engineering, energy economics/business, and Environmental engineering	
Mining, Mineral and Materials Engineering	Mining engineering, materials science and engineering, ceramic engineering, metallurgy, industrial engineering, physics, geosciences, chemistry, and chemical engineering	Mining-driven development
Information and Computer Technology (ICT)	Electrical engineering, computer science, computer engineering, telecommunication, and ICT business	ICT-driven development

III. EXPECTED RESPONSIBILITIES OF HOST INSTITUTION’S PASET-RSIF POINT OF CONTACT

Host institutions will be required to have an RSIF point of contact. If selected, the point of contact will have the following role:

- Serve as the main point of contact for PASET between AAU and host university (admissions, international student affairs, academic affairs, PhD department involved etc.) for all logistical matters pertaining to RSIF Scholarships;
- Be responsible for coordinating with AAU, collecting evaluations, monitoring student progress;
- Manage communications related to PASET and RSIF scholars and events for internal and external audiences;
- Facilitate RSIF admissions review and RSIF Scholarship promotion/recruiting activities;
- Work with relevant PhD department faculty members to monitor student performance, helping answer questions related to academic requirements/classes/schedules/programming;
- Work with the relevant PhD department(s) and international student’s office to ensure PASET scholars receive the proper visas and documentation, and providing support to them once they arrive to help navigate host university administrative systems, enroll in classes, conduct research, and maximize their time at the host university;
- Oversee tuition payments, reimbursements and other accounting functions as needed;
- Work with the office of international students (if necessary) to help facilitate booking of flights/transportation and accommodations, ground transportation and other logistics as needed; and

- In coordination with AAU, develop programming for RSIF scholars that helps provide professional development and networking opportunities with other RSIF scholars throughout the year.

IV. GUIDANCE FOR APPLICATION SUBMISSION

- The application length should not exceed 10 pages (*excluding annexes and application form*)
- Use a minimum of 0.5 inch margins and 12 point Times New Roman font in text and font 10 in tables
- Use single-space in the text
- Include page numbers
- Include citations for any assertions or references
- Submit the completed application to paset@aau.org, with a copy to pasetafrica@worldbankgroup.org Applications submitted to any other mailbox will not be reviewed. Applications will receive a response confirming AAU's receipt of the application by August 3rd 2016.

V. EVALUATION PROCESS AND TIMELINE

Evaluation Process

The selection process will be done through a call for applications, followed by an independent evaluation of the submitted Applications from participating ACEs. AAU will conduct the peer-review process using best practices to ensure that the most meritorious applicants are identified through a transparent and competitive process. The evaluation criteria are recommended by the PASET's Consultative Advisory Group (CAG) representing geographically diverse African eminent scientists, academics, business leaders; reviewed by PASET's Technical Executive Committee (TEXCO); and, endorsed by the PASET's Steering Committee, which comprises of Ministers of Education/Higher Education from Senegal, Ethiopia, and Rwanda and the World Bank.

Expected Timeline

Activity	Timeline
Request for Application Launch	June 27, 2016
Informational Webinar for Potential Applicants	Mid-July, 2016
Deadline for Application Submission to AAU <i>Note: Application can be submitted via email with an option to mail in advance of the deadline</i>	August 1, 2016 5:00pm (Accra Time; GMT +0)
Site Visit to Shortlisted Africa Centers of Excellence (ACEs)	August-September 2016
RSIF Host Institution Announcement	September 2016
Student Selection	September – December 2016
Enrollment of Scholars in the PhD Program	January 2017

VI. NOTIFICATION OF SELECTED HOST UNIVERSITIES

AAU will notify finalists by email or any other contact information provided in the application. AAU reserves the right to reject applications that don't meet the requirements. All decisions made by AAU are final. If your application is not successful, you cannot appeal against the decision of the AAU. Applicants that are not selected in this round are encouraged to apply for upcoming calls.

VII. STUDENT SELECTION PRIORITY AND ELIGIBILITY

- Students will be selected by PASET host institutions following the institution's admission criteria and additional criteria from PASET;
- Priority will be given to African faculty members who lack PhD training and are currently teaching in the concerned or related discipline and to female applicants;
- Students must be citizens of SSA country and meet the criteria for admission of the concerned institution for the stated discipline; and
- Selected students must be willing to enroll full-time in the PhD program, ensuring on-time graduation.

VIII. FINANCING

Scholarship disbursement

PASET funds will cover full tuition costs and a stipend for room, board, textbooks and research materials. Following standard practice, the cost of tuition fees and monitoring expenses will be disbursed to the selected PASET scholar's host institutions; the cost of living expenses, academic expenses and travel etc. will be disbursed directly to PASET scholars.

IX. CONTACT INFORMATION AND SUPPORT

Attention: Ms. Nodumo Dhlamini
Director - ICT Services & Knowledge Management
Association of African Universities
African Universities House
11 Aviation Road Extension
Airport Residential Area
P. O. Box AN 5744, Accra-North, Ghana
Email: paset@aau.org

Informational Webinar and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) Document

An informational webinar is planned for mid-July to address questions and assist potential applicants. The date of this webinar and log-in information will be sent to all applicants in advance. A document with frequently asked questions and the audio/video of the webinar will be posted at AAU website after the webinar for those who will not be able to join the webinar and for future reference.

X. SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Submit your Application to paset@aau.org with a copy to pasetafrica@worldbankgroup.org by 5:00pm (GMT +0, Ghana local time) on **August 1st, 2016**.

XI. ANNEX

Application Evaluation Criteria

Composition of the Independent Evaluation Committee

An objective, well balanced, and educationally recognized composition of the Independent Evaluation Committee (IEC) is of the utmost importance. The members of the IEC are independent of the ACE proposing institutions, well acquainted with the current education and research practice of the discipline(s) and have experience in leading universities. The members would primarily come from the African educational and scientific community, including from the diaspora, joined by global technical experts.

The Association of African Universities, in consultation with PASET's Technical Executive Committee and Steering Committee, is responsible for the selection of the chair and further configuration of the Independent Evaluation Committee. The Committee members are collectively responsible for each evaluation.

Evaluation Criteria

CRITERIA		PERCENTAGE
EDUCATION AND RESEARCH CAPACITY		
1	Experience and qualification of proposed PhD program faculty and staff	10
2	Prior work, research groups in the proposed PhD program as well as support systems in place for hosting PhD students	10
3	Identification of critical factors for achieving learning excellence and credible policies and plans to address those, including likelihood of reaching international quality benchmarks	10
4	Publication and research track record (scientific publication record of the center director and principal investigators, research productivity, and other qualifications and expertise of the proposed research team)	5
5	Other resources available to the researchers, including access to research facilities; modern research methodologies and team-based research approaches; financial resources, library and journals (including e-journals), research collaborators, research assistants and post-graduate students, incentives and attractiveness of doing research in the institution and use of ICT	5
<i>Education and research Capacity TOTAL</i>		40
INSTITUTIONAL AND CENTER CAPACITY		
6	Strong ownership to serve as a host institution for PASET Scholars as demonstrated by the willingness to designate an experienced member of the university administration or faculty to lead and be the university point of contact for the initiative	5
7	Strong institutional financial management system and reporting system, to report on the progress of the RSIF scholars	5
8	Willingness to follow RSIF's criteria (in addition to the institution's admission criteria) to select students (selection criteria will be shared by AAU as part of the agreement with the host institutions)	5
9	Institutional collaboration, and track record of the institution as well as the center's faculty, investigators and leadership	5
<i>Institutional and Center Capacity TOTAL</i>		20
PROPOSED PHD PROGRAM'S DEVELOPMENT IMPACT		
10	Capacity to form partnership with international institutions	10
11	The importance of skills and knowledge in overcoming the development challenge, and the relevance of the proposed education and research programs for overcoming the development challenge	5
12	Inclusion of the relevant educational and sciences departments/disciplines contribution to a development challenge	5
<i>Proposed PhD program's Development impact TOTAL</i>		20
NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIP		
13	Existing partnerships that will benefit the proposed PhD program	10
<i>National, Regional and International Partnership TOTAL</i>		10
POTENTIAL FOR RAISING THE QUALITY AND RELEVANCE OF THE PROPOSED PHD PROGRAM AT NATIONAL AND REGIONAL ACADEMIC PARTNER INSTITUTIONS		
14	Are the proposed commitments and collaborations from academic partners substantial, for example are there joint faculty development programs and joint conferences, research, sharing access to specialized research, learning equipment, student and faculty exchange, etc.?	5

15	Does the Application build upon existing partnerships and how robust are these, for example are the academic partnerships regional in scope?	5
<i>Potential for Raising the Quality and Relevance TOTAL</i>		10
OVERALL TOTAL		100

Sharing the Independent Evaluation results

AAU will make the selected institutional application and the evaluation results of those selected institutions public on its website. Institutions with non-selected applications will receive information regarding the evaluation report and score, but this information and the application will not be made public.