

TERMS OF REFERENCE (TORS)

INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANT TO FACILITATE THE CREATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF RSIF RESEARCH NETWORKS

Project Name: Regional Scholarship and Innovation Fund for Applied Sciences, Engineering and Technology (RSIF)

Reference No: KE-ICIPE-246085-CS-INDV

Grant No.: D347-3A

Expected duration: 12 Days over 6 months

Expected start date: 3rd May 2022

Application deadline: 25th March 2022 at 11:00 hrs East Africa Time

A. Background

The Regional Scholarship and Innovation Fund (RSIF)¹, the flagship program of the Partnership for skills in Applied Sciences, Engineering and Technology (PASET), is an initiative by African governments to address systemic gaps in skills and knowledge necessary for long-term, sustained economic growth in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). PASET was launched in 2013 by the governments of Senegal, Ethiopia and Rwanda. At present, 11 African governments, viz. Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d' Ivoire, Ethiopia, Ghana, Nigeria, Mozambique, Kenya, Rwanda, Senegal and Tanzania have since joined the initiative. Several others have expressed commitment to enter the partnership.

The RSIF aims to (a) support competitively selected host universities in sub-Saharan Africa to establish high-quality PhD training, research and innovation environments in priority sectors, and to develop their institutional capacity for the benefit of the whole region; (b) provide a model for inter-Africa study, pan-African and international collaboration and knowledge exchange; (c) support the use of transformative technologies to tackle the continent's most pressing challenges; and (d) build a critical mass of highly skilled science and engineering leaders, innovators and entrepreneurs, including more women. The program responds to the need for skills to drive growth in key sectors, particularly ICTs including big data and artificial intelligence; food

¹ For more information on PASET and the RSIF please visit <https://www.rsif-paset.org/>

security and agribusiness; minerals, mining and materials engineering; energy including the renewables; and climate change. RSIF will implement PASET's vision to train 10,000 PhDs at African Host Universities in the next 10 years.

The program is funded by African governments. Other key partners and contributors are the World Bank and the Government of South Korea, and with other contributing partners expected to join. RSIF Regional Coordination Unit (RCU) is the International Center of Insect Physiology and Ecology (*icipe*) located in Nairobi, Kenya.

B. Networking for research excellence

RSIF recognizes the importance of research and academic networks to contribute to the realization of RSIF objectives. Networks provide opportunity to leverage world class expertise and knowledge within specific thematic areas for both students and faculty. It also provides mechanism to enhance access to research and training resources/ facilities from across the globe. RSIF wishes to create at least 10 research-led training networks that will promote the capacity of AHUs to develop and implement innovative research and training strategies for improving research and training. The networks will plan and implement a range of academic activities for improving PhD programs including jointly applying for research and innovation grants; enhancing collaboration and linkages with the private sector, accreditation activities, curricular reform, development of courses for strengthening soft and technical skills, among others. The networks will promote interactions with other researchers in similar fields and based in other institutions within and outside the SSA region who may be part of other prestigious programs. RSIF is now seeking to engage a consultant to facilitate the creation and establishment of research networks.

C. Objectives of assignment

The primary objective of this assignment is to establish active research-led training networks among and beyond participating African Host Institutions and International Partners, that will promote the capacity of African Host Universities (AHUs) to develop and implement innovative research and training strategies for improving research and training. Specifically, the objectives of the assignment are to:

- a) Establish at least 10 research-led training networks, in the five PASET priority areas, that will promote the capacity of AHUs to develop and implement innovative research and training strategies for improving research and training, including the signing of MoUs by network members.
- b) Support the operationalisation and strengthening of the research networks.

- c) Identify and implement mechanism to enhance the participation of RSIF PhD students in the research networks.

D. Scope of assignment

RSIF intends to engage a consultant to undertake networking activities to strengthen links between AHUs and IPIs, and other activities geared towards improving quality of the targeted PhD programs including supporting AHUs to initiate international accreditation of the relevant targeted PhD programs. This includes creation of active networks of organizations between AHUs, international partners, including industry partners, and regional universities and research and development organizations. The networks will be made up of at least 4 institutions comprised of an RSIF host institution, one African institution (could be another RSIF host institution) and two international partners, at least one from outside of Africa.

E. Description of the Assignment

The Consultant is expected to support creation and implementation of at least 10 research led networks that brings together African host universities and international partners participating in RSIF that address the development of innovative training strategies and methodologies at the PhD level. The networks should;

- Promote the capacity of host universities to plan and implement academic and non-academic activities cooperatively to improve PhD programs (such as curricular reform, sharing of infrastructure, research, link to industry and development of soft skills, among others).
- Promote the capacity of host universities to plan and implement research, innovation, and value chains challenges for priority sectors of the economy.
- Develop networks with industry and facilitate partnerships with universities and initiate proposal writing workshops, thematic research conference participation, among other activities to strengthen the partnerships.
- Support the AHUs with their selected partners to identify key priority topical areas that would enable them to apply cutting edge scientific research to solving high priority development challenges within the five thematic areas.
- Initiate formal network agreements among host universities and international partners describing the activities to be conducted as a network under the theme where synergies exist.

F. Roles of the Consultant

- a) Engage with AHUs, international partners, including industry partners, and regional universities and research and development organizations.

- b) Develop a collaborative program for the network formation process. Organize relevant meetings both online and offline to support engagement of AHUs and IPIs in the process.
- c) Prepare and deliver workshop materials – including presentations.
- d) Prepare a final report on outcomes of the creation and implementation of academic/research networks.

G. Responsibilities of the RCU

- a. Organize and make logistical arrangements for the virtual meetings/workshops/seminars with AHUs, international partners, including identified industry partners, and regional universities and research and development organizations
- b. Provision of interpretation and translation services
- c. Selection and invitation of participants
- d. Signing of formal network agreements

H. Deliverables and Timelines

The assignment will be spread over a **6 months** period as follows:

Deliverable	Timelines	Payment %
An inception report including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. An activity workplan including timelines, in line with the TORs b. Detailed approach/implementation plan for the consultancy assignment 	1- days	20%
Meeting and consultation with Regional Coordination Unit (RCU) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Documented methodology and specifications of the research networks 	1 day	10%
Meeting and seminars with AHUs, IPIs and related stakeholders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Documented specifications of research led networks agreed upon by AHUs and IPIs b) Established system for the network formation process c) Workshop/seminar outcomes and recommendations reports; and consolidation of the research led network formation with AHUs and IPIs 	5 days	50%
Partnership agreements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Drafted partnership agreements with host institutions and international partners b) At least 10 signed network partnership agreements 	3 days	
A final report including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Outcomes of the creation and implementation of academic/research networks and lessons learnt b) Detailed operational/implementation plan with clear tasks/timelines for RCU c) Recommendations and resource materials 	2 days	20%

I. Qualification and experience

Academic Qualification

- PhD in International Relations, Education, Development Planning, Law, or related fields. Or a Master's degree with an experience of 15 years in a relevant field to the specific area of interest can be considered.

Experience

- The consultant must have sufficient (over 5 years) experience in establishing similar network programs among academic institutions including international and national research centers, universities and international partners in scientific research and development.
- The consultant should have good working knowledge of RSIF objectives and goals including nature and type of postgraduate scholars/early career scientists
- Demonstrated ability for teamwork as well as the ability to work independently.
- Ability to deliver high quality outputs within tight deadlines.
- Fluency in English with working knowledge of French will be an added advantage.

J. Reporting and supervision:

The consultant will report to the Manager, Regional Coordinating Unit (RCU) of the RSIF and his designate RCU-*icipe* staff.

K. Time Frame

The individual consultant will be contracted for a period of **12 days**. He/she will develop a work plan covering the project scope. The consultant will be expected to work virtually.

L. Application guidelines

Interested applicants should submit the following documents to rsiftenders@icipe.org by Friday, 25th March 2022 at 11.00 hrs East Africa Time.

- i. Detailed cover letter expressing interest in this assignment, including full contact details (name, tel. e-mail), and physical address.
- ii. Consultant's detailed CV including the following:
 - Experience of undertaking similar consultancy work during the last 5 years explain at least three (3) for reference.
 - Methodology have been used in the past assignments.



- Contacts of at least three professional references.
- iii. Should be in English language

M. Criteria for selection of the best offer

The Consultant will be selected in accordance with the criteria laid down in “qualification and experience as stated above paragraph I above”.