

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR CONSULTANCY SERVICES

Planning and facilitation of the first Regional Scholarship and Innovation Fund (RSIF) Annual Conference

26 January, 2021

KENYA

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

Reference No:

Grant No.: __D347-3A__

Application deadline: 10 February 2021

Expected start date: 1 March 2021 for up to a maximum of 40 consultancy days

A. Background

The Regional Scholarship and Innovation Fund (RSIF), the flagship programme of the Partnership for Applied Skills in Sciences, Engineering and Technology (PASET) was launched in 2015 by the governments of Senegal, Rwanda and Ethiopia to bridge the skills gap that would enable Africa to benefit from a science led agenda, including from the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR). RSIF is unique as the first fully African owned and implemented Pan-African Science Fund whose purpose is to support the emergence of several African universities as high-quality centers of excellence in research and innovation and PhD training, within areas of strategic importance to Africa's economic growth and development. To achieve this purpose, RSIF supports the nurturing of senior faculty, with a focus on women, and innovators in an approach that will impact the current dynamics. With excellence at its core, RSIF will contribute capacity to enable countries respond to important global issues such as the COVID-19 pandemic, and other priority challenges facing the continent. It prioritizes food security and agribusiness; climate change; digital technologies, including data science and artificial intelligence; energy; and minerals, mining, and materials engineering. RSIF also aims to strengthen the national innovation systems of participating countries by strengthening innovation capacity of key actors, including the university linkages with private sector and government actors. To achieve this, PASET-RSIF is building a unique network to enable transformation of the continent, while learning from the emerging economies including Brazil, India, China, Japan, and others. More partners are being sought to facilitate the work of the network.

In 2018, PASET selected the International Center for Insect Physiology and Ecology (*icipe*) as the Regional Coordination Unit (RCU) for RSIF. Since then, the RCU has, among others, i) Facilitated the selection of seven additional African Host Universities (AHUs) (bringing the total number of AHUs to 11) to host RSIF Scholars; ii) Supported the quality training of the 15 first cohort scholars inherited from the Association of African Universities; iii) Facilitated the selection of 67 second cohort PhD Students for RSIF and their transition into the AHUs; iv) A third cohort selection has also been initiated and a further 116 students are expected to join in early 2021; v) Designed and implemented the first call for research and innovation grants, that resulted in the award of 14 grants by the PASET EB to RSIF AHUs that are currently being rolled out; , vi) Strengthened operational procedures and processes for management of the program ; and vii) Commissioned a feasibility study on the establishment of an RSIF endowment fund.

Rationale for the assignment

There is a need to consolidate the growth of the network over the last few years, and to reflect on the way forward for the network that should include improving the effectiveness of the program in achieving its objectives, but also to bring new partners on board. RSIF plans to organize a Conference annually, to provide a platform for lessons learning, and realising technical input and guidance to its objectives and to inform its implementation. It is proposed that this year's Conference will be held under the theme "*The digital revolution, science, technology and innovation for solving current and future development challenges: Implications for universities, governments and the private sector*". The RSIF conference 2021 promises to be a unique convening, looking practically at the digital revolution in science and innovation and what it means for Africa's private sector and governments including how to respond to current and future epidemics/pandemics such as COVID-19. This first conference will be organized in partnership with the Mohammed VI Polytechnic University in Morocco. The specific venues and date for the Conference will be confirmed in due course.

To guide the discussions in the conference, it is proposed to better understand the implications of the pandemic on the networks' key operations related to PhD research and training. The COVID-19 situation has impacted negatively on the RSIF program in many ways, including through the closure of African Host Universities, delays in reporting to universities by PhD students, changes in travel timings and modalities (i.e., COVID-19 testing). An expected result is delays in PhD student completion, and significant financial implications to overall students' costs. It is also not clear when the Pandemic will be brought under control. There is therefore a need for RSIF stakeholders to explore the implications of the pandemic on the RSIF program, including the university closures and other COVID-19 related impacts, and its financial implications.

icipe is seeking for a suitably qualified consultant to provide support towards the planning and implementation of the RSIF Annual Conference and to provide an analysis of the financial and other implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on the RSIF program.

B. Scope of Work

The primary objective of this assignment is to support the planning, coordination and meeting facilitation for RSIF's First Annual Conference to ensure implementation of the Conference in Morocco, in partnership with the host, University Mohammed VI Polytechnic. To inform the conference deliberations, the consultant will analyse the potential financial and other implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on the RSIF program, prior to the conference.

Specific tasks of assignment

The consultant will undertake the following specific tasks:

1.) RSIF Annual Conference:

- a) Review the RSIF Annual Conference meeting concept note developed by the RCU and make recommendations to the workshop focus and tentative agenda.
- b) In line with objectives of the Conference make recommendations on the focus, structure, approach and panellists in the proposed panel discussions.
- c) Provide a detailed plan for delivering the task.
- d) Participate in relevant organising committee meetings for the RSIF annual conference and support preparation of agenda for meetings.
- e) Provide professional expertise with regard to meeting programming (group works, presentations) & venue arrangements (sitting, presentation, discussions).
- f) Guide discussion and presentations throughout the course of the workshop to enable attainment of workshop objectives.
- g) In collaboration with others, prepare the substantive sessions of the conference by guiding written input/issue papers, questions, and format for exchanges.
- h) Make recommendations to the RCU on enhancing the visibility of the conference and where needed prepare selected visibility materials.
- i) Prepare, in consultation with others, a joint conference outcome document, highlighting best-practice, sessions learned, recommendations and conclusions.

2.) Analysis of COVID-19 impacts

- j) Review RSIF documentation including reports etc. to understand RSIF operations.
- k) Organise meeting with key stakeholders to understand the impact of COVID-19 on RSIF.
- l) Consultant will analyse the potential financial and other implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on the RSIF program.

Expected Outputs

The facilitator shall deliver the following:

- a) Updated conference concept note, including conference approach and recommendations on panellists, speakers, and potential development partners.
- b) Clear workplan for meeting the RSIF Annual Conference objectives.
- c) A satisfactory final Conference report detailing key lessons and recommendations to *icipe*.
- d) A final report including an analysis of the impact of COVID-19 on the RSIF program with recommendations for minimising impact.

C. Qualifications

- a) A postgraduate degree in a relevant field
- b) Proven track record of having worked with International Institutions in the higher Education sector. Knowledge of PASET and its RSIF's program will be an added advantage.
- c) Demonstrated high level of skill and experience in facilitating and coordinating international conferences with audiences of diverse backgrounds
- d) Proven coordination and networking skills for engaging diverse audiences bringing together academia, industry and policy
- e) Experience in resource mobilisation
- f) Excellent communication skills
- g) Fluent in written and spoken English and French.

D. Application Guidelines

Interested applicants should submit the following documents to rsiftenders@icipe.org or *icipe* Tender Box, located at icipe Duduville campus, Kasarani, Nairobi (Caroll Wilson Building, Ground Floor) by **10th February 2021 at 11.00 am East African time.**

a. Technical proposal

- 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.
- iii. Demonstrate capacity and at least 5 years' experience in resource mobilization, coordination and networking skills for engaging diverse audiences bringing together academia, industry and policy.
- iv. Attach at least three (3) relevant assignments undertaken in the last five (5) years.
- v. Provide contacts of at least three references.
- vi. Clear understanding of the assignment/interpretation of the TORs and methodology to be used during the assignment.
- vii. Work plan clearly indicating the maximum time/duration required for the assignment.
- viii. Should be in English language.

b. Financial proposal

- i. Provide a competitive and detailed cost breakdown (fee quote in US\$) to perform the assignment, including all the chargeable taxes.
- ii. Terms of payment

E. Duration of the assignment

It is anticipated that the assignment will be completed within a maximum of 40 consultancy days from the date of signing of the contract between *icipe* and the consultant and including up to the conclusion of the conference expected to be held within the last quarter of 2021.

F. Criteria for selection of the best offer

The Consultant will be selected in accordance with the criteria laid down in “Selection Based on Consultants Qualification” (CQS) method set out in the World Bank’s Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers July 2016, Revised November 2017 and August 2018 which can be found at the following website: www.worldbank.org