

**TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR)**  
**INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANT TO CONDUCT AN INDEPENDENT TECHNICAL**  
**EVALUATION OF THE Rsif RESEARCH AND INNOVATION GRANTS**

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

**Reference No:** KE-ICIPE-004/2023-CS-INDV

**Grant No.:** D347-3A

**Expected duration:** 40 Days

**Expected start date:** 01/09/2023

**Application deadline:** 03/08/2023

## **A. Background**

The Regional Scholarship and Innovation Fund (Rsif)<sup>1</sup> is the flagship program of the Partnership for skills in Applied Sciences, Engineering and Technology (PASET) established by African governments to address systemic gaps in knowledge and skills necessary for long-term, sustained economic growth in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA).

The Rsif aims to (a) support competitively selected African host universities (AHUs) to establish high-quality PhD training, promote research excellence and improve innovation environments in the universities; (b) provide a model for inter-Africa student exchange and international collaboration in training and research; (c) develop transformative technologies to tackle the continent's most pressing challenges; and (d) build a critical mass of highly skilled leaders in science and engineering, and (e) support more women in science. The priority sectors for Rsif are ICTs including big data and artificial intelligence; food security and agribusiness; minerals, mining, and materials engineering; energy including renewables; and climate change.

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

## **B. About the research and innovation grants**

Rsif awards competitive grants to support knowledge generation, scientific excellence, and use of knowledge for development impact. The objectives of the research and innovation grants are: (1) strengthening university ecosystems for promoting innovation and entrepreneurship among faculty and students, (2) enhancing capacity and increasing awareness on aspects of innovation and entrepreneurship among faculty and students, (3) increasing University-Industry cooperation, networks and partnerships building, and (4) improving research

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

excellence and overall performance of departments/centres implementing Rsif grants and PhD programs.

Research Grants: Grants are awarded competitively to faculty engaged in PhD training in Rsif host universities in SSA; they are also referred to as *Rsif- Research Awards (Rsif-RA)*. The primary objective of these grants is to help faculty to advance their research excellence and generate innovative ideas that could be commercialized. The second sub-category of this type of grants is awarded to Rsif graduates who obtain a post-doctoral or permanent position in an academic institution or research centre in SSA. They are also referred to as *Rsif-Junior Investigator Research Awards (RSIF JIRA)*. The primary objective of the grants is to support junior scientists who are establishing their research career after completing a PhD degree. The grants provide funding to enhance research excellence and unlock the innovation potential of students by accessing seed funding to junior investigators to conduct research projects autonomously.

Innovation grants: Grants are awarded with the aim of strengthening the innovation environment at Rsif host universities. The category includes the *Rsif-Institutional Innovation Capacity Building Program (Rsif ICBP)* that are awarded competitively to African Host Universities to support strengthening of the innovation environment. Their primary objective is to help universities nurture innovation enabling environment to support university-industry partnerships and to foster innovation development. The second sub-category, also referred to as the *Rsif-Cooperability Grants Program (Rsif CGP)*, supports public-private partnerships that promote commercialization of research. Their primary aim is to encourage public-private partnerships through funding of cooperative research and development conducted jointly by researchers from Rsif African Host Universities, private companies, and international partners.

Rsif has to date awarded a total of 44 research and innovation grants through 3 calls for proposals; 28 of the grants have been Research Awards while 16 have been Innovation grants. Five of the Research grants are JIRA grants awarded to Rsif alumni. The research and innovations grants management unit, Rsif-RCU has in many ways, supported the grants to deliver their objectives, by initiating entrepreneurship courses and related support; strengthening their business incubation capability; enhancing their management of intellectual assets and intellectual property; and establishment of networks and partnerships.

*icipe* as the RCU is seeking services of an individual consultant to evaluate the contribution of Rsif research grants and innovation grants to research excellence and innovation capacity at the African host universities and other beneficiaries.

### **C. Specific objectives of assignment**

The specific objectives of the evaluation are:

1. Conduct an in-depth review/evaluation of the research and innovation projects implementation efficiency and progress towards achieving outcomes and impact, especially strengthening the overall university innovation ecosystem,
2. Evaluate Rsif's contribution to outcomes and impact, especially where different donors are funding different aspects of the same project.

#### **D. Scope of assignment**

The evaluation will cover 16 Research Award Projects, 5 Cooperability Projects, the 6 ICBP Projects and the 5 JIRA grants. The evaluations will underline the different lessons across the heterogeneity of the grants' portfolio in terms of call number, location, target beneficiaries, and type of grant. The evaluation will focus on assessing progress and achievement made by the projects. This will entail understanding the progress made on outcomes, on whether the changes attained so far are sustainable and an understanding the cost-effectiveness of delivering the various projects. Lessons drawn from the evaluation will form a basis for further improvement of grants implementation. The evaluation will also help Rsif to work more strategically with research and innovation systems in African Host Universities. The evaluation will be guided by the five key evaluations concepts:

- a) **Relevance**-to what extent do the projects conform to already ongoing efforts in the institutions and community they are implemented?
- b) **Effectiveness**-are the projects achieving their original goals and objectives?
- c) **Efficiency**-understanding how outputs are relating with the inputs and whether the expenditures are consistent with the activities so far achieved.
- d) **Impact**-understanding the likelihood of achieving impact. The evaluator should note that this evaluation will focus on evaluating likelihood of impact since most projects have not been concluded.
- e) **Sustainability**-understanding the systems or mechanisms being put in place to ensure that the changes so far delivered will be last beyond the lifespan of the projects.

#### **E. Approach to the Assignment**

The Consultant will use a mixture of approaches for collecting data including a desk study, review of earlier assessments, interviews with key persons in the project, selected visits to project sites, and where possible use electronic surveys.

#### **F. Roles of the Consultant**

- Undertake a desk study.
- Conduct interviews with project leaders, and other key stakeholders or project beneficiaries.
- Organize and analyse data collected.
- Write the final evaluation report.
- Present the findings and recommendations to an audience of Rsif staff and other stakeholders.

#### **G. Responsibilities of the RCU**

- Guide the consultant on sampling and reaching out to the grantees.
- Provide financial facilitation for data collection and field visits.
- Provide background reports to facilitate the desk study by the Consultant.
- Organize project site visits, where necessary.
- Organize a platform for the consultant to present the findings.

## H. Deliverables and Timelines

The assignment will be spread over a 40-days period as follows:

| <b>Deliverable</b>  | <b>Person days</b> | <b>Payment %</b> |
|---|--------------------|------------------|
| 1. Inception report clearly highlighting the methodology and plan for the assignment. | 10 days            | 20               |
| 2. Draft evaluation report  | 20 days            | 35               |
| 3. Final evaluation report  | 10 days            | 45               |

## I. Qualification and experience

A PhD in social science, chemical and engineering sciences, agriculture, environment and natural resources, business management, monitoring and evaluation or other relevant disciplines, with at least 5 years' proven experience in programme evaluation in Sub Sahara Africa (SSA); or MSc degree with at least 10 years' proven experience in programme evaluation in SSA.

### Other desirable experience

- Knowledge of the development issues in SSA, national and regional science, technology, and innovation policies.
- A good understanding of innovation and the role universities and public research institutes play in the process of transferring knowledge to end users.
- Practical experience in commercializing technology, business incubation, and technology start up is an added advantage.
- Previous experience with evaluation of large and similar regional science and innovation programmes or projects.
- Excellent skills in data collection, analysis, and report writing.
- Excellent writing and communication skills.

## 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 estimated effort to undertake the assignment is **40 days** spread over 3 months from the date of contract signing.

## L. Application guidelines

Interested applicants should submit the following documents to [rsiftenders@icipe.org](mailto:rsiftenders@icipe.org) by Monday, 7th August 2023 at 1100 hrs East Africa Time.

## M. Technical proposal

- Detailed cover letter expressing interest in this assignment, including full contact details (name, tel. e-mail), and physical address.
- Consultant's detailed CV including the following:

- Evidence of undertaking similar consultancy work during the last 5 years, attach at least three (3) for reference.
- Clear understanding of the assignment/interpretation of the TORs and methodology to be used for the assignment.
- Work plan clearly indicating the maximum time and duration required for the assignment.
- Email and telephone contacts of at least three relevant references.
- Should be in English language.

#### **N. Criteria for selection of the best offer**

The Consultant will be selected in accordance with the criteria laid down in "Selection Based on qualification and experience as stated above in paragraph I, as set out in the World Bank's Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers November 2020, which can be found at the following website: [www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org)