REGIONAL UNIVERSITIES FORUM FOR CAPACITY BUILDING IN AGRICULTURE

THE RUFORUM COMPETITIVE GRANTS SYSTEM

Manual

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

RUFORUM COMPETITIVE GRANT SCHEME COMPREHENSIVE GUIDELINES

1.0   BACKGROUND

The Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM) recognizes the important and largely unfulfilled role that universities can play in contributing to the well-being of small-scale farmers and providing a platform for national development. RUFORUM supports the trainings of post-graduate students with strong empathy for rural communities - students who are in demand and effectively employed. RUFORUM has also provided training and support to enhancing university staff and operational effectiveness. It has promoted greater sharing and lesson learning among member universities as well as with other African and international institutions. It has also facilitated mobilization of high level support for greater investment in agricultural higher education.

RUFORUM's mission is to strengthen the capacities of universities to foster innovations responsive to the demands of small-holder farmers through the training of high quality researchers, the output of impact-oriented research, and the maintenance of collaborative working relations among researchers, farmers, national agricultural research institutions, and governments.

1.1   RUFORUM Pursues seven Strategic Goals

1. Support training of a critical mass of high quality Masters and PhD graduates, who are responsive to stakeholder needs and sustainable development goals;

2. Increase the participation and voice of women in agricultural research, production and marketing;

3. Improve the adaptive capacities of universities to produce high quality and innovative training, research and outreach activities that can contribute to policy and development practice;

4. Increase the use of technology to support effective, decentralized learning and the sharing of knowledge;

5. Develop collaborative research and training facilities that achieve economies of scope and scale;

6. Mainstream new approaches within university teaching and research that emphasizes quality, innovation and impact across the agriculture sector's full value chain; and,

7. Create a dynamic regional platform for policy advocacy, coordination, and resource mobilization by universities

Member universities are encouraged to establish a National Forum in each country to bring together various actors in the agricultural and higher education sectors and to provide an avenue to establish priorities for research and to provide feedback and links between universities, primary producers, agri-entrepreneurs, research, and development agencies. These National Forums are also used as a mechanism for articulating and conveying information from national stakeholders to the RUFORUM Secretariat and Board.

2.0   THE RUFORUM COMPETITIVE GRANT SYSTEM PROGRAMS

RUFORUM implements its mission through a range of activities but at its core is the Competitive Grants System.[1] The CGS is directed at the increased contribution of graduates and research products from RUFORUM member universities to smallholder livelihoods and rural development. The objective is to produce high-quality innovative and entrepreneurial graduates and dynamic universities that are strong actors in national innovation systems and that champion the production of quality graduates, research outputs and policy information that underpin poverty alleviation and economic growth.

The CGS incorporates a number of different competitively awarded grant programmes including:

1. Graduate Research Grants (GRG) for projects with 2 M.Sc students
2. Community Action Research Programme (CARP) to establish a platform for universities to link with communities and other stakeholders in action research with 1 PhD and 2 M.Sc students
3. Field Attachment Programme Awards (FAPA) to intern with prospective employers and work with the clients of their research on uptake, after handing in their theses.
4. Doctoral Grants that provide a range of scholarships and grants
5. Nurturing Grants

Through these grants, RUFORUM contributes to improving the quality and relevance of its research and students, to university outreach, and to its potential as an impartial national and regional platform for all stakeholders to engage in the value chain. Most of the awards also require working with undergraduate research assistants to expose them to the opportunities and issues to be addressed in further studies.

The CGS emphasizes participatory action research, linking faculty and students with rural communities, promoting inter-disciplinary research and encouraging multi-agency teams to create impact across the region. The CGS provides the opportunity for universities to encourage participatory research by faculty and students working in partnerships with the farmers and other agencies involved in research and development.

The CGS is premised on full ownership by the university through the relevant Faculty Dean, but normally gives authority to a Principal Investigator (a senior Faculty member) who is then individually responsible for outputs. These projects are required to include students working closely with rural communities and primary producers (farmers, foresters, fisherfolk, hunter/gatherers, agro-processors) and others along the value chain, in partnership with other NARS stakeholders. RUFORUM is dedicated to continuing to emphasise participatory action research and development and a pluralistic and interdisciplinary approach to research and experiential learning. All projects are required to indicate to what extent gender and environmental impact are relevant to their project and to show how they will address these issues.

2.1   The Graduate Research Grants (GRG)

The GRGs are the primary focus of the RUFORUM CGS and studies have shown a high completion rate of students, over 97% remaining in Africa, high employment rates, and significant impact of their research on rural livelihoods.

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[1] To view results from the CGS, please visit RUFORUM You tube Channel: https://www.youtube.com/user/RUFORUMNetwork/videos

The GRG currently provides two-year grants between $60,000-$80,000. The exact amount will depend on the specific requirements of the Call. Each of these is awarded to the Principal Investigator (an individual senior lecturer of a member university) to support agricultural action research and the training of 2 MSc students normally supporting 4 under-graduate students as research assistants. In response to a call, the Deans of Faculty send in project proposals developed by a senior faculty member. These proposals undergo a rigorous review and selection process. Each GRG is expected to include a small team to supervise the students implementing the project. These teams are encouraged to be inter-disciplinary and/or multi-agency with at least one member from a different Department or outside agency.

2.2   The Community Action Research Programme (CARP)

These grants have been designed to encourage universities to develop and invest in more comprehensive and sustained action research and to establish a "platform" for engagement with all the stakeholders. Each CARP is required to focus on a particular geographic area, or in a selected commodity, and to nest their research along the full value chain. The CARP was designed based on the successful scaling out of GRGs by some member universities and faculty members with GRG projects that have demonstrated potential are particularly encouraged to apply.

The process involves an open Call for the submission of comprehensive concept notes and thereafter the development of full proposals by short-listed applicants. As with the GRG, the CARPs undergo a rigorous review and selection process. The CARP grants are for between $350,000 and $500,000 over a four year period with the exact amount specified in the Call. Each proposal should include at least 1 doctoral, 2 M.Sc. students and 4 to 8 undergraduate research assistants in the long vacations. The Principal Investigators and supervisors usually involve senior faculty who have had previous experience in action research initiatives. As such there is a much greater emphasis on using these grants to enhance networking and close co-operation with partner agencies as well as to inform curriculum development and to encourage the use of undergraduate students in the field. As with the GRGs, the CARPS require working in the field with communities. There is even more emphasis on involving farmers in decisions as part of the action research RUFORUM is committed to supporting. Each CARP is required to establish a co-ordinating platform to involve stakeholders all along the value chain. These projects need to take an inter-disciplinary problem solving approach and be rooted within a value-chain, or innovative systems framework recognising the environment and gender issues.

2.3   The Field Attachment Programme Awards (FAPA)

The field attachment awards are designed to encourage students to follow through with the dissemination of their research and enable them to link more closely with the agencies working in the area where their research was carried out. It is established for those students who have developed a useful intervention, product or service as part of their Project. Grantees must have handed in their thesis, have no more stipend due from the GRG or CARP, and must demonstrate that they can make a meaningful impact if they stay on for up to six more months and provide advisory services related to their research. The award provides only for a living stipend and limited travel. It is designed to link the student closely with the farmers and to a service provider in the area, to give them work exposure.

2.4   The Doctoral Grants

A range of grants and scholarships were initiated in 2012 that are targeted to expanding the CGS to include more doctoral students. It was motivated by the need to support field activities during PhD studies and to ensure that there is an emphasis on participatory, action research. It is also a mechanism to provide opportunities for regional students to attend courses outside their home countries and give impetus to upgrading, and diversifying, the qualifications of faculty throughout the region.

The **DRS (Doctoral Regional Scholarship)** is a scholarship awarded competitively to candidates accepted for registration at a RUFORUM sponsored taught PhD program **outside their home country**. The conditions of these scholarships differ, depending on the sponsor, and applicants are referred to each specific call for details. Normally a DRS will cover a full 3-4 year doctoral scholarship to attend one of the RUFORUM Regional Programs and includes fees, stipend, research, travel and supervision and oversight costs. Women and faculty from RUFORUM member universities are particularly encouraged to apply.

The **DRRG (Doctoral Regional Research Grant)** is a competitive research grant made directly to students who have completed their first year of coursework at a RUFORUM supported Regional PhD program, normally only to candidates from **outside their home country**. These awards are between $10,000 - $20,000, and are awarded over the two years required to complete the research, produce their thesis and related publications. The value of the award and special conditions vary depending on the individual call and the sponsor. A sponsor may also designate these awards for students enrolled at specified universities or in particular disciplines. Women and faculty from RUFORUM member universities are particularly encouraged to apply.

The **DFS (Doctoral Finalization Support)** is a competitive grant awarded to students with no or limited funding who require support to finalize their doctoral research, publish their theses, papers and for the effective dissemination of their results. These awards are made on a competitive basis to students who have completed all coursework and fieldwork at a RUFORUM sponsored PhD program and who have the support of their supervisors and the university. The value and conditions of the DFS vary according to sponsor, but will normally be $10,000 to cover all completion costs, meetings, travel and publications. Preference is given to candidates studying outside their home country. Women and faculty from RUFORUM member universities are particularly encouraged to apply.

2.5. PhD Research Grant (PRG)

This is similar to the GRG but targets PhD rather than masters. It is for a research project awarded competitively to a Principle Investigator who is a RUFORUM member university lecturer with a PhD. The grant requires the inclusion of support, supervision and tuition for one PhD student (registered for a degree by either coursework or research) with fieldwork expenses for at least 4 undergraduate students as research assistants. Each grant will have one Principal Investigator working in collaboration with other faculty, partner institutions and the PhD and undergraduate students who will form the core focus of the research. The doctoral candidates can be enrolled in either a doctorate by research, or as part of a taught program. The PhD student will normally be studying at a university in their **home country** or in which they are **resident.**

2.6 Nurturing Grants

Nurturing Grants (NGs) are to be allocated to provide additional GRG proposal submission support to new member universities and to provide grants with greater mentoring input. The Nurturing Grants are intended as indicated in Section 4.3 to enhance broader participation in the CGS by all Member Universities. The support targets universities that are newer members to the network, women PIs, and those universities historically only accessing a few of the GRGs. This allows the quality and competitiveness of the GRGs to be maintained while also allowing for broader inclusion and greater equity. The nurturing grants will also be used to:

1. Address gaps identified during the CGS process;
2. Broaden participation in RUFORUM, especially strengthening weaker units (and in this way help address equity issues) and
3. Address emerging issues and opportunities.

3.0   RUFORUM CGS PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES

While all RUFORUM programs are designed to support its mission and objectives, the Competitive Grants constitute its core and they address the following objectives:

1) To provide students with opportunities for problem-solving and practical experience and the opportunity to be creative, improve teamwork and be responsive to deadlines and client demands. In particular the CGS is designed to help to build understanding of, and commitment to, solving the problems of rural communities.

2) To improve the quality and relevance of graduates by providing mentorship, close monitoring and incentives for effective supervision and timely graduation.

3) To raise the profile and encourage better university recognition of the grassroots demand, the environment and gender issues in both their research and curricula.

4) To produce innovative and useful research that is effectively communicated.

5) To provide a mechanism, by encouraging multi-agency research projects, that enables universities to act as a fulcrum in the farmer, research, extension and service provider nexus.

4.0   RUFORUM RESPONSIBILITIES

RUFORUM undertakes to raise funds, implement, manage, service and monitor the competitive grants process for member universities.

4.1   Overall Management of the Competitive Grants System Program

i.   Preparing and distributing the Calls for Proposals, ensuring that they reach as many member university faculty members as possible;

ii.   Log, acknowledge and carry out a Compliance and Administrative Review based on agreed criteria;

iii.   Provide each Proposal with a unique identifying number to provide anonymity on the files lodged in the system for access by reviewers;

iv.   Send the compliant proposals to a minimum of two reviewers each, with three the norm;

v.   Track and co-ordinate reviewer responses and resend to alternate reviewers if appropriate;

vi.   Assemble and analyse the responses and forward a link to the reviews to the Technical Committee Review Panel;

vii.   Facilitate meeting for selection of proposals by RUFORUM Technical Committee;

viii.   Communicate the results and feedback to winning and losing proposals;

ix.   Finalise the proposals and budgets with PIs and establish the Mentoring and Monitoring system;

x.   Allocate funds based on agreed budget to Universities and communicate with the PIs and copy the students (where email addresses are already available);

xi.   Track the required reporting of both financial distribution and project progress, despatching mentoring and monitoring teams, as appropriate; and follow up to ensure that all CGS projects provide all relevant dissemination materials and links to be uploaded to the RUFORUM website.

4.2   Networking, Peer Review and Dissemination

RUFORUM will arrange a biennial workshop at which all projects of one year or longer will have an opportunity to present a poster paper. Selected projects will also be called upon to give oral

presentations. RUFORUM encourages the presentations to be provided by the students. The workshop will provide opportunities for students, staff, RUFORUM alumni and development practitioners to share research approaches and findings, peer review, network and have more opportunity for face to face interaction. In addition to attendance and presentation at the biennial workshop, every project is required to ensure that each student publishes at least one (preferably two) academic paper/s (the Faculty and team members can be co-authors) in recognised peer reviewed journals. In addition there must be evidence of dissemination to relevant local stakeholders. These could be farmer or policy briefs, radio broadcasts, local newspaper articles, feedback meetings, or other means as appropriate.

RUFORUM will facilitate regional sharing of results by putting research outputs and links on the RUFORUM website and will share highlights of these through the RUFORUM Newsletter and social media. RUFORUM graduates will be encouraged to share their experiences and stories. RUFORUM will assist in keeping track of graduates and energising the RUFORUM Alumni Association. Over time a cadre will be developed of high quality graduates committed to both excellence and with the skills to address the issues facing the rural poor, sharing ideas and contributing to good governance, poverty reduction and agricultural success in Africa.
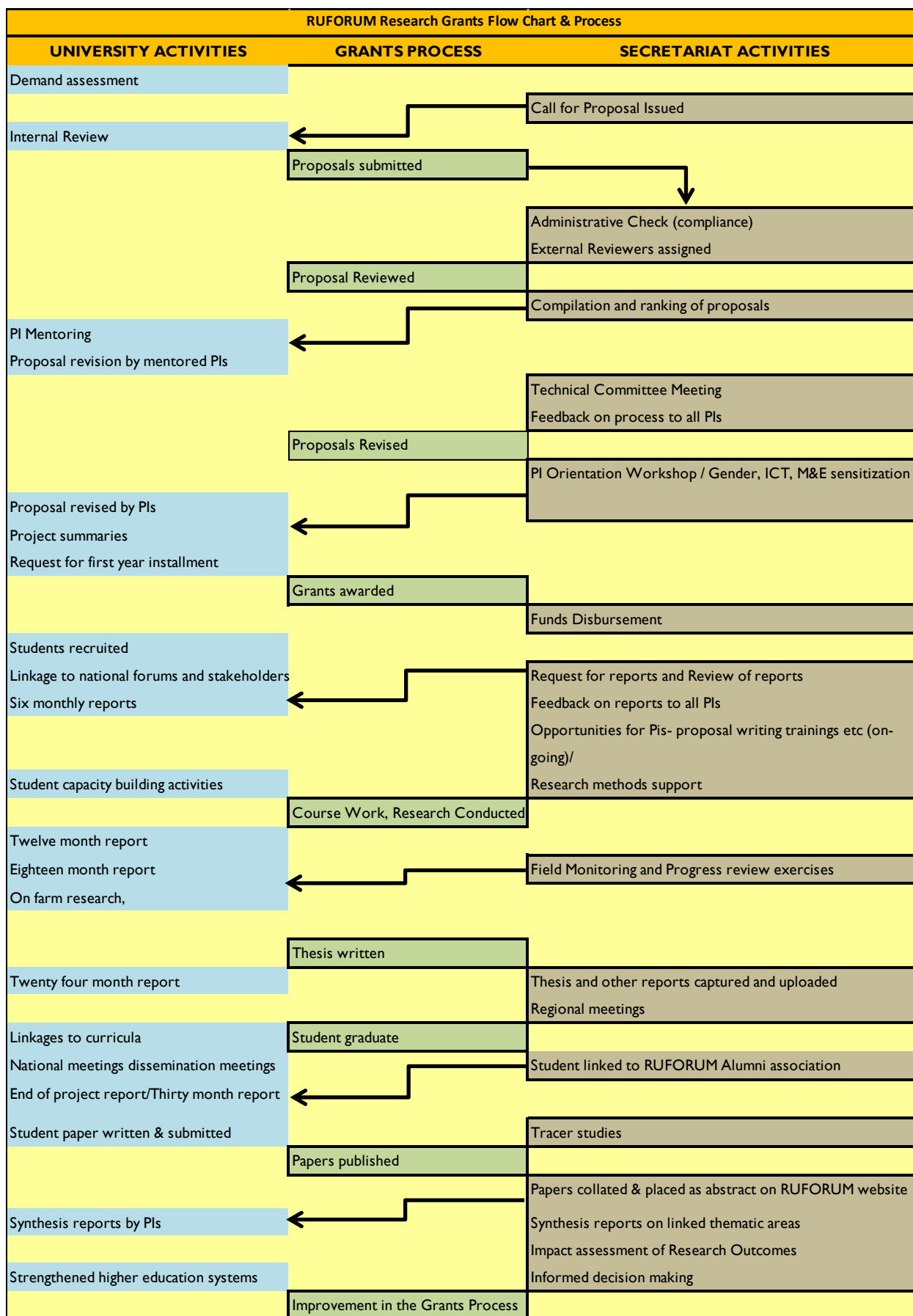
4.3   Enhancing Broader Participation in the CGS by all Member Universities

Lessons from Calls for Proposals have shown a skewed distribution both of submissions from member universities but also subsequently of grants allocated by the Technical Committee to member universities. Approximately half in 2010 Call (13 of 25) of the universities submitted proposals to the RUFORUM CGS, of which over half (75 of 110 proposals) were from five universities. Member universities, especially those that are relatively new members, do not yet have a full understanding of the benefits of participation, are uncertain of the process and/or may have weak internal capacities in proposal writing and scientific communication that challenge response to the calls. Similar experience is highlighted by other competitive grant schemes in the region.

RUFORUM will undertake a number of actions targeted at improving the dissemination of information and enhancing the proposal development capacities at selected universities. This will be achieved through holding training workshops, visiting member universities to meet with staff and management and explore/ encourage the submission of joint proposals between universities with different capacities. In these cases, the proposals will be focused on ensuring that the 'new' universities capacities are built to manage future proposals. Other actions will include:

a. Use of Nurturing Grants: to improve capacities of new universities to participate more actively in the GRG and CGS in general. Some of these funds will be used to award to non-participating universities, provided that their proposals are recommended for funding by reviewers;

b. This is a competitive process and most of the grants are awarded strictly on merit, but 30% of the proposals selected will take into account gender, university, geographic and disciplinary balance, provided that all proposals selected have been recommended for award by the reviewers;

c. Make examples available a template of winning proposals and example budgets for Faculty who are not as familiar with the RUFORUM CGS;

d. Enhancing integration of new universities in RUFORUM activities: Special efforts will be made to enhance the participation of new member universities in general RUFORUM activities. This will improve engagement of universities staff in the network, importantly also ensuring that RUFORUM does not become a 'club' of sorts, but one that is open to new people, knowledge and ideas.

5.0 THE GRANT AWARD PROCESS

RUFORUM Research Grants Flow Chart & Process		
UNIVERSITY ACTIVITIES	**GRANTS PROCESS**	**SECRETARIAT ACTIVITIES**
Demand assessment		
		Call for Proposal Issued
Internal Review		
	Proposals submitted	
		Administrative Check (compliance) / External Reviewers assigned
	Proposal Reviewed	
		Compilation and ranking of proposals
PI Mentoring / Proposal revision by mentored PIs		
		Technical Committee Meeting / Feedback on process to all PIs
	Proposals Revised	
		PI Orientation Workshop / Gender, ICT, M&E sensitization
Proposal revised by PIs / Project summaries / Request for first year installment		
	Grants awarded	
		Funds Disbursement
Students recruited / Linkage to national forums and stakeholders / Six monthly reports		Request for reports and Review of reports / Feedback on reports to all PIs / Opportunities for PIs- proposal writing trainings etc (on-going)/
Student capacity building activities		Research methods support
	Course Work, Research Conducted	
Twelve month report / Eighteen month report / On farm research,		Field Monitoring and Progress review exercises
	Thesis written	
Twenty four month report		Thesis and other reports captured and uploaded / Regional meetings
Linkages to curricula	Student graduate	
National meetings dissemination meetings		Student linked to RUFORUM Alumni association
End of project report/Thirty month report		
Student paper written & submitted		Tracer studies
	Papers published	
		Papers collated & placed as abstract on RUFORUM website
Synthesis reports by PIs		Synthesis reports on linked thematic areas / Impact assessment of Research Outcomes
Strengthened higher education systems		Informed decision making
	Improvement in the Grants Process	

5.1   RUFORUM Calls for Proposals

Calls for proposals are posted on the RUFORUM website, Social Media Platforms, Newsletter, RUFORUM Weekly etc. They are also sent via email to all the member Universities through the Deans of relevant faculties and directly to all lecturers who are registered with RUFORUM CGS. The lecturers at all member institutions are encouraged to register with cgs@ruforum.org to ensure that they receive all Calls directly. There are normally two types of calls: open calls which invite applications addressing any topic, provided they include participatory, action research and specific calls which target specific themes and/or gap areas. Each call specifies the eligibility criteria, application format, the amount and number of grants, and any special requirements.

5.2   Funding Priorities

The Competitive Grants Program supports research that provides students and faculty with field experience that improves smallholder agriculture and addresses inclusive and sustainable rural community development. This is achieved by supporting closer producer, student and university interaction across the value chain, and inter-agency partnerships. The funding priorities are to meet RUFORUM's core mission of enhancing university effectiveness to service smallholder agriculture. To this extent all the grants have as their underlying priorities:

1. Applied, action or participative research linking students with small farmers;

2. Demand-driven research agenda;

3. Activities that enhance smallholder farming, equity and sustainable community resource use;

4. Monitoring and evaluation for learning;

5. Applying emphasis on the documentation and dissemination of best practices and how to support rural agricultural based innovations, smallholder agricultural growth and agribusiness; and,

6. Strengthening partnerships and encouraging better liaison between universities, research, extension and the private sector.

5.3   Priority Thematic Areas

The priority thematic research agenda for the Calls during the period 2014 – 2019 is "**Innovation for sustainable systems within value chains that improve smallholder incomes".** Although there may be specific thematic areas identified in a Call, all proposals will be considered in order to ensure space for creativity, innovation and different perspectives provided they relate to the general theme. The exception is where a Call has financial support for only one specific theme and/ or commodity of interest. Where this is the case it will be made explicit.

In addition to the priority research areas that may be listed in a Call, the CGS is responsive to emerging thematic priorities through national fora and CAADP. As such, particular areas of focus will take priority in different years and these will be communicated with each annual or bi-annual Call.

5.4   Monitoring, Mentoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation (M & E) are part of reflective practice and learning. Critical reflection in project implementation means interpreting experiences, activities and information to create new insights and agreement on future actions. Action research requires a very participative monitoring process. Principal Investigators (PIs) are encouraged to involve all the stakeholders in the research in monitoring progress as a way of achieving their objectives and ensuring greater opportunities for subsequent uptake and possible scaling out of appropriate interventions. It is a mechanism for developing platforms for networking with universities playing a central role in rural development.

The RUFORUM grants are established in a way that requires the PI and other members of the research team to work with and closely mentor colleagues (junior staff and students) as they carry out their projects. This advice and support includes emphasis on both the academic rigour and on the soft skills that junior and/ or young researchers need to develop in order to work in teams and with the farmers.

RUFORUM has a comprehensive Theory of Change and M&E Strategy and readers are referred to www.ruforum.org for details.

RUFORUM will provide both monitoring and mentoring services to all projects through the National Fora, the Technical Committee, field visits by Secretariat staff and, when necessary will hire resource persons to provide occasional or regular input and feedback to grant holders. Particular attention will be focussed on mentoring Projects at the newer member universities and to women Principal Investigators.

The entire CGS Programme will undergo periodic independent evaluation. However, member Universities are also encouraged to undertake their own reviews of their research grant processes and to form an internal peer-review team to assess and share lessons across projects.

6.0 INFORMATION FOR THE SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS

Funding range, project duration and designated applicant:

CGS Grant type	Funding range and duration
GRG	up to $80,000 over 2 years held by a Principal Investigator (senior faculty member), depending of the specific call
CARP	up to $500,000 over 3 years held by a Principal Investigator (senior faculty member)
FAPA	up to $5,000 over 6 months held by student post thesis submission
DOCTORAL Grants: DRS DRRG DRF PRG	up to $65,000 over 3 years held by a student $10,000-$15,000 over 2 years held by a student up to $10,000 over 1 year held by a student up to $75,000 over 3 to 4 years held by a Principal Investigator (senior faculty member)

6.1 Timeline

Closing dates are specified in each particular Call. In general, however, the following pattern will be followed:

GRG: The Calls will normally be issued/ circulated in January and/or June. The deadline for submission of project proposals is normally either March or September each year with the selection announced within four months of submission. Handover of funds is specific to each university and will be within three months of announcing the awards, provided all requirements have been completed. Six monthly reporting (narrative and financial) is required, with Final report and accounting expected three months following end of the two year period for which the grant was eligible.

Unsolicited proposals can be sent in during the year and will be held over until the deadline for the next Call window, but candidates are not encouraged to do this.

CARP: Calls for Concept Notes will be sent out as and when funds are available. Concept Notes will be sent out for review. Short-listed candidates will be advised and a Proposal finalisation workshop will be held. Expanded final project proposals will be due one month after the finalisation workshop with

the final selection of short-listed proposals made to enable start-up by the start of a new academic year and final selection of the short-listed proposals will enable start-up. Six monthly reporting (narrative and financial) is required, with Final report and accounting expected within three months following the end of the three year period for which the grant was eligible. This Call is only sent out when funds are secured and candidates should not send in unsolicited proposals.

FAPA: There is an open Call for students to apply, depending on funding availability. Applications should be made once students can show progress and have attachment acceptance by a private company, NGO, CBO, or government agency. Realistic, expected thesis submission dates must also be provided in the application. Candidates that qualify and are selected will have funds transferred immediately after proof of submission of the thesis. These grants are for four-six months. Interim and final reports of achievements are required from the student together with contributions to social media. A completed questionnaire by the agency supervising the attachment is required on completion.

6.2   Eligibility

The Principal Investigator (PI) who submits the proposal through the Dean of Faculty, must be a PhD holder (or in exceptional cases Full Professors without doctorate), on full time employment in any one of the 55 RUFORUM participating universities. Other collaborators in the team do not require PhDs and need not necessarily be from member universities or academia. Collaboration with other agencies is encouraged. However, from time to time, specific funding windows might exclude specific countries/ universities from the Call depending on the preferences of the funder. A list of eligible institutions will be included on each Call Information Sheet.

Students supported by the Project must be enrolled for a graduate degree at one of the member universities.
Project proposals are encouraged to be inter disciplinary and the research teams to be multi-agency or at least inter-departmental and to work at the farmer/community level to be eligible. Inclusion of relevant actors/ stakeholders such as the private sector and farmers to participate in the research intervention is an advantage.

6.3   Grants Awarded

Grant memos are prepared for each approved proposal, and grant award letters are sent to the Vice Chancellor of the respective University. The grant award letter specifies the amount of the grant, purpose and responsibility of the university including monitoring the use of the grant funds and reporting requirements. The University is then expected to enter into a formal agreement with RUFORUM for disbursement and management of the grant. Grants awarded are published in the RUFORUM News and are posted in the RUFORUM website (www.ruforum.org).

6.4   Payment of Grant

Depending on the specific Call, grants are usually paid either in tranches in response to milestones specified in the contract or in limited cases, or in full at the commencement of the project after finalisation of the funding agreement. The funds are paid to the University, which is required to maintain a separate account[2] and to provide periodic financial reports as specified in the contract. See Appendix Two for details related to financial accountability.

6.5   Student Recruitment, Student Responsibilities and Expectations

The names of students recruited, their email addresses and their bio data should be submitted to the Secretariat as early as possible, but no later than three month of receipt of the funds.

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[2] In exceptional circumstances, universities with proven accounting capacities may be allowed to use separate book keeping from a joint university account in order to enable better tracking of funds

The students should constitute themselves into groups within respective universities and become actively involved in RUFORUM activities which include retreats, workshops, seminars and conferences. Students are encouraged to participate in the RUFORUM Blogs and other social networking opportunities. After graduation students are encouraged to join the Alumni association and to keep RUFORUM advised of their interests and activities.

The students are responsible for their studies and for ensuring that their thesis research proposals are in time and follow the university requirements. Students are also required to submit quarterly reports of their progress to their PI. The student is responsible to ensure that their research can proceed and are required to make immediate reports of any constraints that could delay progress. They are also responsible to share their work, findings, problems and achievements with their project research team through their quarterly reports.

In addition to submission and oral defence of their thesis, each student is required by RUFORUM, as part of the grant agreement, to publish at least one academic paper (PhD students are required to publish a minimum of two) and to show how, through the project, they have disseminated their findings to farmers, communities, agricultural service agencies or policy makers, as appropriate.

7.0   PREPARING PROJECT PROPOSALS

These guidelines on proposal development and submission include information covering expectations in relation to proposals. When preparing a project proposal you are urged to go to the RUFORUM guide to effective graduate research in African agriculture, environment and rural development - **GEAR Graduate Environmental and Agricultural Research** which can be found online at http://repository.ruforum.org/documents/graduate-environmental-and-agricultural-research-gear-guide-effective-and-relevant. The book is also available on CD and can be sent, free of charge, to any individual member university faculty or students who apply for it from the RUFORUM secretariat by email.

7.1   The Principles

The RUFORUM ethos is framed in terms of the following values and principles:
1. Inclusiveness – by promoting both a balance in the gender of researchers (faculty, student and partner agencies) and in the inclusion of a gender perspective in the project proposals;
2. Social responsibility – by promoting links with, and understanding of, conditions in rural areas and to expose students and faculty to the rewards of service through the projects supported;
3. Long term change – through a focus on systemic change and capacity building;
4. Sustainability - through awareness of the environmental impact of the proposed research
5. Diversity – by recognising and valuing differences and similarities in perspectives, by ensuring an appropriate balance between generic and disciplinary approaches to problem solving;
6. Creativity – by providing faculty and students with opportunities to develop innovative solutions both in addressing the problems faced by smallholder farmers, and in managing research projects in remote areas;
7. Collaboration – through the multi-agency teams encouraged through the CARP and to a lesser extent the GRG. Through these teams RUFORUM is dedicated to the emergence of pro-active networks and better communication which is further consolidated through the establishment of a National Forum;
8. Excellence – through an independent selection of the best proposals and a mentoring and monitoring system to ensure quality in its programs and awards, through encouraging such

systems in all member faculties, and through building the reputation of the research and networking that emerges from the CGS;

9. Equity – by investing in the member institutions which are under-represented in grant awards so that they may compete effectively in the future;

10. Enhanced human capital - by encouraging timely graduation and commitment to serving African development

The Competitive Grants System is designed to conform specifically to the following principles:

i.   Compliance with RUFORUM's mission, objectives and values;

ii. Transparency;

iii. Value for money;

iv. High impact; and,

v.   Future looking.

7.2 Application Process

As indicated above, applications to the program are by proposal only. Calls for proposals will be posted on the RUFORUM website, sent to the Deans of all member Faculties and will be sent out by email to all lecturers from member universities who have their details registered with RUFORUM. **We strongly recommend that all faculty at member universities register to receive calls by sending an email to: cgs@ruforum.org.** The Call Information Sheets will include closing dates and other relevant details.

7.3 General Guidelines for Proposal Format

The following are guidelines for writing a proposal to the RUFORUM Competitive Grants Scheme.[3] The requirements for FAPA differ and are outlined in Appendix One.

The complete proposals must be a maximum of 10 typed A4 pages, 1.5 spacing, Times New Roman, font size 12 unless otherwise specified in the Call.

Cover page:
- Title of the proposal
- Call ID (RU/CGC/…/….)
- Names of Principal Investigator and institutional affiliation with full addresses including email and telephone.
- Names of participating researchers and their institutions with full addresses including email.
- Project start date and duration;
- Total Budget requested in US$.
- Short specific abstract of no more than 100 words

Abstract: Indicate exactly what you will do in the project and why (do not provide general problem statements or over-ambitious expected outcomes)

The Problem: Provide background information that leads you to identify the problem your research will address. What is the problem that this research specifically addresses and why is it important? (Hint: do **not** provide very general background – ensure that what you cover directly links to what will be researched). Include the focus, rationale and expected contribution of your proposed research to resolving the problem identified. Demonstrate the demand for, or importance of, the issue to a

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[3] You are urged to consult GEAR which can be obtained on a CD by applying to the Secretariat, or accessed on http://repository.ruforum.org/documents/graduate-environmental-and-agricultural-research-gear-guide-effective-and-relevant

specific group of farmers or poor or vulnerable communities/ households and indicate how they will be involved in the research. What is the relevance to RUFORUM strategic thrusts? How do the issues and concerns you have targeted relate to the African, sub-regional and local development context? The projects proposed are **not** expected to address the full value chain but they are expected to be framed within the value chain: e.g. a project addressing soil fertility will be shown at the beginning of the chain, but the researchers reflect that they are aware of those other factors down the line which will affect the decisions of the farmers they are working with and the implications of the research. The rest of the proposal would then focus only on the soil fertility aspects. See http://repository.ruforum.org/documents/graduate-environmental-and-agricultural-research-gear-guide-effective-and-relevant

Associated Project: Where relevant, provide details of any project this research will be closely associated with, that it complements, or that it develops from. Indicate very clearly how your student research project fits into the broader research programme, showing the value added by this project. RUFORUM competitive grants process is in favour of complementing related projects and research. Ensure that you describe the programme or project you are working with, or that your research follows from. Be sure to show how your project will complement the existing research.

The Literature Review: Show, using relevant literature, how your research relates to existing knowledge, research and development needs to address the problem highlighted. In particular outline earlier research that underpins what your project will be doing; and why it should be done. The literature review needs to be focussed to the **specific** research addressed in this proposal and provide evidence of understanding of the main issues to be researched, and of the current literature on the topic.   http://repository.ruforum.org/documents/graduate-environmental-and-agricultural-research-gear-guide-effective-and-relevant

Research Approach and Conceptual Framework: Outline how you will approach the problem, where the students, the farmers and partner agencies are involved and in particular identify the main concepts that underpin your approach to carrying out the research, relating this to the literature review. http://repository.ruforum.org/documents/graduate-environmental-and-agricultural-research-gear-guide-effective-and-relevant.

Be sure to address both gender and the environment by identifying if, where, and how these are impacted by your proposed research - and where necessary how you will address this in your research approach and methodology.

You need to specifically outline which part of the research problem framework each student will address. This is especially important for the GRG. In the following sections, you can specify the hypotheses, objectives and methods separately for each student – or you can specify them all for the project and then indicate which student will carry out which aspect, leaving the students to develop their own hypotheses. In most cases all team members are involved in support of the two students, but in some instances, team members may also intend to directly undertake some of the research or dissemination. Indicate where this is applicable.

Objectives: What are the overall and specific objectives of your proposed research against which success or failure can be assessed? Each specific objective should be described in one sentence.

Hypotheses to be tested: It is important, where applicable, to include an underlying hypothesis that drives the research and then to provide some general hypotheses to be tested, even if the students and other researchers will later refine these and make them more specific. http://repository.ruforum.org/documents/graduate-environmental-and-agricultural-research-gear-guide-effective-and-relevant

Methodology: This section should focus on how the research of each student will be carried out to test the hypotheses and achieve the research objectives. You need to indicate to reviewers and selectors a good grasp of available methodologies but do not necessarily need to select the exact methods to be used. In addition if not clearly articulated above indicate how will you engage and involve stakeholders in the research. What multi-disciplinary approaches will be adopted? Where in the value chain does this project add value? It is important to state how gender and other cross cutting issues will be addressed?

Dissemination and communication: Indicate how the results of your research will be disseminated to the various stakeholders. Where you are involved in action research with communities, any ongoing workshops or After Action Reviews to discuss research management and results from on-farm trials need to be included in the budget. You need to indicate here the expected academic publications as well as meetings, policy briefs, pamphlets, radio broadcasts etc. **Be realistic** and not overambitious and show that the dissemination strategy is linked in with the available budget or other support sources. A succinct achievable description of what you will do is favoured by reviewers. http://repository.ruforum.org/documents/graduate-environmental-and-agricultural-research-gear-guide-effective-and-relevant

The proposal must indicate to the reviewers how gender issues are to be addressed, reflecting an understanding of when gender sensitive research methodology may be appropriate. It must also show that any environmental implications have been taken into account.

Project Management:
Monitoring and evaluation: How will the project's achievements be monitored and evaluated to ensure proper management and enable early corrective action where necessary? Indicate clear milestones that will demonstrate progress. It is important that you provide a **simple but clear** outline of the feedback loops. Again you need to be realistic. The reviewers are concerned to see that there are steps you will take to assess and where necessary revise; that the supervisors and implementing partners will be required to review and visit student projects and that the students will regularly report on their progress. It needs to be clear how problems or delays will be reported and dealt with. Please refer to the RUFORUM M&E Strategy (visit www.ruforum.org) for further information.

Results Framework: A results or monitoring framework, usually but not necessarily structured as a logframe matrix must be included. However it is done, the results framework needs to have the actions you will take, the outputs produced and the outcomes expected, clearly delineated with the indicators you will use to measure your progress. The GRG and CARP Concept notes do not need to include evaluation or impact indicators. You should only refer to the direct outputs and possibly outcomes. The final CARP proposals will require a more comprehensive logframe and will require a budget for an evaluation at the end. The results framework is to enable effective monitoring and evaluation for both internal and external use. **Do not make it complicated**. Keep it simple but clear and achievable.

Team organization and qualification: How do you propose to organize your team in order to achieve your project objectives? The role of each team member must be clearly demonstrated. In particular show what each student is doing and how the other team members relate to them.

References: Include only references that you have quoted in the proposal and this should be within the ten page limit. Any referencing system can be employed provided it is consistent with the requirements of your own university. RUFORUM would prefer that you use the standard slightly adapted version of the Harvard system which is the one used in GEAR and that follows the style of the

African Crop Science Society Journal. http://repository.ruforum.org/documents/graduate-environmental-and-agricultural-research-gear-guide-effective-and-relevant

Budget: Give the anticipated cost of your project, with explanatory notes where necessary. The budget, broken down on an annual basis, must be submitted on an Excel spread sheet, as a separate attachment. Applicants must observe their institution's procurement procedures. Indicate co-funding, if any. All budgets must be in United States Dollars. Contact RUFORUM if you would like further guidance on the suggested fee payments, student stipends, supervision allowances etc.

Applicants should carefully consider the expected costs of the project when submitting an application. Information on the human resources and infrastructure required for the project completion, including, where appropriate, the resources or support the institution/s will contribute should be provided.

The format for the budget and instructions about what can be included in the budget will be provided on request. The cost of printing and distribution of any deliverables should be included in the project costs.

The budget should contain provision for:

1) Student fees, stipend, research and travel expenses

2) Supervision fees and team expenses (note: these expenses will be paid against specific deliverables and not on a monthly basis)

3) Facilitating expenses for the action research

4) Dissemination activities

5) Travel associated with the project's conduct and/or dissemination

6) Technical and expert support, evaluation and resources essential to the conduct of the project

7) A maximum of up to 5% is allowable for the University administration costs and overheads

8) The budget should include an allocation for attendance of students and team members at RUFORUM events (normally US$4000 per GRG but more for the CARP)

9) The budget should include an allocation for incentives for quality and timeliness

Timeline

The timeline should incorporate deliverable milestones and assume that the project will begin in the year in which funding is approved. The timeline should be developed with discrete staged outcomes and deliverables for each year of the project.

Timelines need to recognise the lead-up time required for rural field projects and those with a number of partners to develop a shared language and local commitment. Careful consideration should be given to the number and type of partners and their contribution to ensure the project is manageable.

7.4   Proposal Submission

In most cases all applications are to be made on line. For exceptions, the full proposal together with supporting documents should be sent electronically. It should include the Proposal, the budget, a letter of support for the proposal from your University, abbreviated CVs of team members and where available supporting letters from partner institutions. The support letters from partner institutions will be required if your proposal is selected and before grants are disbursed but they are not essential at the time of proposal submission.

Faculty support: Upon first submission for review, each proposal must include a signed supporting letter from the Dean indicating that the proposal has been through an internal review process and has been approved by the Faculty for submission.

The PI must provide only a two page summary CV that includes the following information:
- o   Academic qualifications (starting with the most current, list all degrees and diplomas).

- o   Work experience (list positions held, starting with the current).

- o   Funded projects.

- o   Publications (list key relevant publications and reports)

- o   If selected but prior to receiving the grant, the PI must provide a full, detailed up to date CV

Key members of the research team: For each team member, provide a 1 page CV clearly indicating names, institutions, job title, and experience.
- o   Upon **selection**, prior to the release of funds, each member of the research team must submit a signed supporting letter expressing their interest and willingness to participate in the project. It is essential that the research is carried out by a multi-agency team and so if the only partner withdraws, it will be necessary to ensure that the team retains its multi-agency membership and the full required skill set. Grant approval will be withdrawn if there is not a suitable team to support the research.

- o   Upon **selection**, and prior to the release of funds, each partner agency must provide a signed supporting letter indicating their willingness to participate and what, if anything, they will contribute.

Indicate the Call number at the top of the Proposal

Save the file/s with SURNAME of the Principal Investigator, the University and the month and year of submission e.g. Moyo JKUAT Nov 2010 proposal; Moyo JKUAT Nov 2010 budget.

Applications are submitted through the online system. Where application is allowed by email, complete application package must be submitted (all supporting documents, including from collaborators must be sent in the same email from the PI. They can be zipped for space). Where an applicant submits more than one proposal, each must be sent separately. Applications should be addressed to:
The Grants Manager, RUFORUM Secretariat cgs@ruforum.org

8.0   REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

Proposals should be developed by the PI in consultation with the proposed research team and then submitted to an internal review within the University. Once it is accepted by the home institution, the PI should submit the proposal to the RUFORUM Secretariat who will acknowledge receipt, carry out a Compliance Review and then categorise and number the proposals and send them to the appropriate reviewers. There will normally be three reviewers for each proposal, at least one and usually two, with development experience, will provide feedback on all the proposals, plus at least one reviewer with the relevant disciplinary expertise particular to each project. The Secretariat will ensure that all reviews are received in time; sort them in accordance with the results of the reviewers and submit them together with reviews to the RUFORUM Technical Review Committee which will make final selection of the proposals to be awarded grants.
RUFORUM relies on the professional expertise, experience and judgment of the reviewers. Reviewers are expected to be objectively critical while at the same time offering suggestions for improving the proposals, even for those being recommended for rejection. The Review process and feedback is an important part of RUFORUM contribution to improving quality.

8.1 Criteria for Evaluating Proposals

Criteria for Compliance Review

1) The PI must be directly responsible for the preparation and management of the proposed project with their partners, and not merely acting as a broker.

2) The grants must support research and training of MSc. and/ or PhD student(s)

3) There must be multi-disciplinary partnerships with other institutions, faculties or departments, whether local, regional or international.

4) It must conform to the budget limit and duration of project and be achievable within that framework.

5) The proposal must be within the 10 page limit excluding the budget, results framework and CVs

6) All applications must be channelled through the respective University offices (usually the Deans or Principals), who should specify in a cover letter that the proposals have undergone internal review within their respective institutions, amount being requested from RUFORUM and the purpose of the project. Relevant banking details should be provided.

7) A uniform institutional support / university administrative fee of 5% is the maximum allowable on all grants (unless otherwise specified in a particular Call for proposals).

8.2 Criteria for External Reviewers Evaluating Proposals

1) Overall project design, including specification of the problem showing the value added by the project and the feasibility and quality of the write-up

2) Is it appropriate, innovative and relevant for smallholder agriculture?

3) Does it contribute to RUFORUM objectives?

4) Graduate students research activities clearly defined; does research qualify student to obtain relevant graduate degree.

5) Good conceptual framework and clearly defined hypotheses

6) Clear identification of achievable research issues, objectives and research methods

7) Evidence of a good understanding of the literature and the theoretical basis for the research

8) Well articulated methodological approach with evidence of good understanding of applicable methods (the exact methods to be used need not necessarily be specified but relevant methodologies must then be clearly articulated and linked to the available resources)

9) Is it participatory action research for development?

10) Evidence that gender issues and the environment are addressed in the research approach, and where applicable in the methodology

11) Contribution to scientific knowledge and methods

12) Monitoring and evaluation realistically incorporated in the project

13) Well articulated communication strategy, but realistic within project budget and timeframe, show dissemination of results to farmers and communities, academia and, where appropriate, to service agencies, partners and policy-makers

14) Feasibility: can the M.Sc students achieve this in the time available and is it of the expected standard for the level?

8.3   Criteria for Selection by Technical Committee

1) Good external reviews and, where appropriate, effective revision of the proposal

2) Clear articulation of problem, objectives, hypotheses and evidence of quality approach to research and evidence of the value-added by this research to existing knowledge or practice.

3) Realistic timeline, with clearly defined milestones and budgets and achievable objectives (not over-ambitious)

4) Clearly defined role of the graduate students and relationship with client groups, supervisors and partners

5) Participatory, action oriented research for rural development will be prioritised and any pure science enquiry will require very strong motivation

6) Alignment with RUFORUM goals and core values

7) Proposals with recognition and steps to promote women and/or marginalised groups will receive some preference as will proposals that enhance sustainability

8) Proposals that are inter-disciplinary will receive some preference

9) Relevance, quality, potential for subsequent internships, promoting sustainability and/or scaling up, bringing new dimensions (value addition) etc will all be taken into consideration.

10) Responsiveness to expressed demand of farmers/rural communities/governments/civil society

11) Partnership and the effective integration of partners in the process

12) Evidence of systems for internal monitoring and evaluation of the ongoing research.

13) A clear Results Framework reflecting outputs and outcomes,

14) Clearly outlined and achievable dissemination plan

Value for Money, High Impact and Future Looking

Project proposals will be assessed in terms of value for money. The processes associated with decision making, compliance requirements and monitoring is designed to ensure the best value for money while being consistent with appropriate stewardship of funding and of fairness and transparency. Priority will be given to projects that show how they build on existing knowledge, are likely to have a high impact and to those that are innovative and address emerging issues. Proposals submitted by women PIs and under-represented universities, disciplines or commodities may be accorded priority - after the selection of the best 70% have been awarded strictly on merit.

Transparency

These guidelines are provided to ensure that the process of applying for a grant to conduct a project is transparent. Within the limitations of privacy and commercial "in confidence" protections, the selection process associated with approving a grant and the management of the project should be transparent. Minutes of the Technical Committee selection meetings are available and information on successful grant recipients will be published on the RUFORUM website and in the annual report.

9.0   GRANT AWARD

9.1   Formal Agreement and Payment of Grants

Universities will be required to enter into an agreement with RUFORUM. If there is any inconsistency between an agreement and these guidelines, the terms of the agreement will prevail. The conditions of the grant will be specified in the agreement. The agreement will specify the outcomes of the project to be achieved, the payment arrangements, conditions of the grant including financial and performance reporting requirements, requirements regarding variation to agreements, acquittal of grants and other related issues.

On signing of the grant award letters the PIs are expected to submit a request for funds, on faculty headed paper and endorsed by the faculty dean or delegated authority. This request for funds must specify the faculty account details. RUFORUM makes annual disbursements on the presentation of all the necessary documents by the PI. The subsequent year project instalment is disbursed on the presentation/submission of a satisfactory technical and financial project report as well as an audited report from the University accounts unit/section.

9.2   Reporting Requirements which should form Part of the M&E

Students are expected to produce brief quarterly progress reports to be submitted to the Principal Investigator. The PIs are in turn required to submit half-yearly progress reports (narrative and financial) to allow for close monitoring by the RUFORUM Grants and M&E units. Principal Investigators are expected to submit all their reports (from the 6 months – 30 months) via the new online reporting system. Thirty months from the stipulated project start date, the PIs must submit a comprehensive Final Technical Report, detailing outputs and outcomes of the project. Supervision, mentoring and facilitator fees will be released on the fulfilment of requirements as outlined in the milestones (see section on Financial Management and Reporting). These reports must be signed by Principal Investigator, the Principal/ Dean of relevant faculty and reports copied to the Vice Chancellor. Each Research Grant will be monitored by the Secretariat together with the Technical Committee at least once in the 24 months implementation period. A set of monitoring templates are available and will be shared in preparation for any monitoring exercise.

Accounting of funds must be timely. If accounting of funds is not received within the authorized period, then RUFORUM suspends consideration of proposals from that university and any other remittance of funds to that university, until satisfactory account statements and reports have been received and approved by the Secretariat. The PIs are required to submit a copy (including electronic copy) of student theses as well as a copy of all publications to the Secretariat as soon as these become available.

On-going monitoring must be included as part of the project in its various stages and where possible be the role of a reference group of RUFORUM Principal Investigators established at each university or as part of the National Forum. Recipients of grants in excess of $200,000 are required to commission a formal independent evaluation of the project. This may be funded from the grant and should be included in the project proposal's budget. When a project team is not able to meet the milestones or the date for completion of the project, the project leader must seek a no-cost extension in writing at least two weeks before the due date from the RUFORUM Secretariat. Non-cost project extensions may be requested by the PI, but must be submitted at least two months before deadline and will require application to the funder. To be eligible for consideration they must be accompanied by satisfactory progress and financial reports. The project may not spend beyond the ceiling stated in the grant agreement. Any expenditure beyond the amount granted will be met by the grant recipient.

9.3 Financial Management and Reporting

Funding must be used for the purposes specified in the funding agreement. Any funds spent outside approved expenditure must be refunded. Financial reporting and acquittal processes provide assurance of this to the Secretariat. The Secretariat in addition to retaining the biennial conference funds; the national forum funds; the incentive for early graduation, now retains 4% of the project budget and releases the latter when the PI fulfils the requirements of the grants (submitting two final student theses at 30 months from the stipulated project start date). An audited financial statement must be provided with the specified deliverables at specific stages of project reporting (that is at 12, 24 and 30 months). On completion of the project a full audited financial statement complying with the conditions in the funding agreement must be provided by the agreed completion date (the date when all reporting and acquittal of funding should have been finalised).

The financial acquittal should itemise how funds were used in the course of the project and be signed as true and accurate by the authorised person within the Member University as specified in the funding agreement. Any funds not expended at the end of the project must be returned to RUFORUM. RUFORUM retains the right to reclaim funds if the conditions of these guidelines or the funding agreement are not fulfilled or where an overpayment has occurred. Universities are expected to undertake external audit of all concluded RUFORUM projects and submit reports to RUFORUM. RUFORUM will from time to time commission specific audits of supported projects.

10.0 INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

RUFORUM does not claim ownership of any intellectual property in a project proposal which is submitted under the RUFORUM CGS. Nor does it make such claims on any project supported by RUFORUM. However, all outputs become the property of RUFORUM to copy, modify or otherwise deal with information for the purposes of:

• Assessment and decision making

• Verifying the accuracy, consistency and adequacy of the information contained in the application

• The preparation and management of any funding agreement

• The administration of the Grants Scheme.

• Reports, theses and materials can be used to publicise RUFORUM activities provided always that due reference to the source is made.

The grant recipient will be required at all times to indemnify and hold harmless RUFORUM, its officers, employees and agents from and against any loss or liability incurred or suffered by any of those indemnified arising from any claim, suit, demand, action or proceeding by any person in respect of any infringement, or alleged infringement, of Intellectual Property Rights by the grant recipient, its employees, agents or subcontractors in the course of, or incidental to, carrying out the project or the use by RUFORUM of the material produced in the project. It is the responsibility of the applicant institution to ensure that it does not infringe upon any copyright or patent laws in the use of materials or inputs required for the research.

One responsibility of RUFORUM is the dissemination of good practice in research, learning and teaching which is best achieved by ensuring that quality project products and findings are available for use and further development. Thus the importance of IPR accruing to the initiated does need to be balanced with the need for sharing ideas. To help achieve this aim RUFORUM has an Intellectual Property Rights Policy (Visit www.ruforum.org).

11.0   PUBLICATIONS

All publications should be open access with no restrictions on publication of findings and in fact all involved are encouraged to disseminate their findings as widely as possible. Both the GRG and CARP require projects to publish their findings both in academic journals and in policy briefs and farmer/community handouts and workshops.

All the grants require that each project produces a specified number of theses, articles published in academic journals as well as information briefs, radio broadcasts and other forms of dissemination to farmers, rural communities, service providers and policy makers as appropriate. Copies of all the publications, together with the web-link if they are lodged on the university website, should be forwarded to secretariat@ruforum.org with a copy to cgs@ruforum.org. All of the links and some of the materials will be made available on the RUFORUM site to help fertilise the network and make the results of all the research generated widely available.

12.0   COMMERCIALISATION

There are no RUFORUM restrictions on commercialisation of any material, technique, products, systems or policies developed but PIs are advised to ensure that they follow the requirements of their own institutions with respect to commercialisation. RUFORUM encourages entrepreneurship and the wide dissemination of outputs. It does reserve the right to publicise any activities that arise out of research projects and students nurtured through the CGS.

13.0   PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

RUFORUM will make information on the institutions which receive funding, a summary of the project, the project leaders, amount of funding received and authors of reports public on its website. RUFORUM has the right to use any and all reports, publications and briefs from the research in its fund-raising and publicity activities as well as posting them on their website, with due credit given to the authors. Such publications, reports etc must acknowledge funding support from RUFORUM. RUFORUM may also choose to release reports and evaluations arising from the project.

Grantees will be required to comply with information privacy principles and comply with any policy guidelines related to the protection of personal information issued by RUFORUM or as legislated in the project host country.

RUFORUM will not disclose a grantee's confidential information without written agreement and in turn, the grantee must not disclose RUFORUM's confidential information without written approval.

14.0   ETHICS AND PLAGIARISM

RUFORUM places high emphasis on ethics. It is important that the grants encourage ethical behaviour and the development of a good value system. The participatory research process encouraged is to help build understanding, trust and empathy between faculty, students and rural communities. The engagement needs to ensure that all parties are respected and their voices heard. At the same time RUFORUM is committed to encouraging commitment to excellence in science and to ensuring the highest ethical standards. Plagiarism is a common problem which RUFORUM will take steps to guard against. Modern technology provides effective means to guard against plagiarism. If a project is found guilty of plagiarism[4], the PI for the project will not be eligible for RUFORUM funding for a period not less than two years. When frequency of such habit is detected from a specific university, the issue will be brought to the attention of the Vice Chancellor of the relevant university for remediation.

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[4] Plagiarism is defined as wrongful appropriate or close imitation. Plagiarism is classified by RUFORUM as 'fraud'

RUFORUM encourages researchers to build on existing work and to create partnerships and share the research space. However all work, ideas and words taken from elsewhere must be given due acknowledgement. Credit must be given to originators of borrowed ideas and words. Plagiarism relates to using the words and ideas of another without acknowledging the originator. Provided the work is acknowledged and referenced, the use of the work of others is encouraged. This differs significantly from Copyright infringement, which is covered under RUFORUM's IPR policy and refers to the unauthorised use of work which has been copyrighted.

15.0   REFERENCE GROUP

It is suggest that all Universities appoint a reference group to provide input to the project teams. If possible, the reference group should include some external participants who have appropriate expertise to ensure there is constructive advice on the design, development and ongoing evaluation of the project and to ensure the project has maximum impact. The reference group could also be drawn from and report to the National Forum.

16.0   DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Should a dispute between project partners/implementers arise during the conduct of the project, the project partner claiming that there is a dispute will send to the other partners a written notice setting out the nature of the dispute. In the first instance the project partners will try to resolve the dispute though direct negotiation by persons who have been given the authority to resolve the dispute by their university or organisations. If after 10 business days from the receipt of the notice the partners have failed to reach a resolution, the dispute is to be submitted for mediation to RUFORUM through the Principal Investigator. Despite the existence of a dispute, all partners must (unless requested in writing by the other project members not to do so) continue to perform their obligations.

17.0   APPENDICES

APPENDIX ONE: FIELD ATTACHMENT PROGRAM AWARD (FAPA)

Purpose
- To provide an opportunity for a student to continue the work of the Project with communities in finalising implemention or communicating results and opportunities arising from some of the accepted findings from the research;

- To provide a local implementing agency (local government, farmers group, NGO, government department, research agency, private company etc) with the specialised knowledge of the student for better institutionalization or scaling out of new research/approaches and to enable them to assess the employability of the student/s; and,

- To provide the student with an opportunity to obtain working experience within an organisation and to make contacts for employment in the future.

Description:
1) Students will make contact with an organisation and arrange for an attachment for the six months after they have completed their thesis;

2) Students will use this period for additional dissemination of their work, or to carry out some brief, closely related research to assist in uptake and should describe what they will do clearly in their application;

3) Winning applicants may be expected to provide a short presentation or poster paper at the Biennial Meeting on what they will be doing, or what they have done, during the field attachment – this could be linked to the presentation of the project;

4) Grantees will normally be paid a stipend as an advance at the beginning with the balance to be paid at the end of the attachment when all reports have been received;

5) The agency the student works with will be required to provide a brief verbal or written confirmation to the Supervisor at the end of each month that the student attachment is progressing as expected. They are then requested to fill out a questionnaire or submit a written report on the work carried out (by the middle of the last month of attachment) to the student's supervisor. At the end of the attachment they should provide the student with a reference (unless the work was not satisfactory). RUFORUM may request to receive a copy of the reference;

6) The student will be expected to provide the editor of the RUFORUM Newsletter with a short insert (1/4 page) on their work with the community at the end of months one and two;

7) The student will be expected to provide a brief half page write-up of their experience for the RUFORUM alumni association newsletter at the end of month three and one page at the end of month five;

8) A report by the student on their experiences and on potential areas for further research and action should be submitted to the RUFORUM Secretariat through the supervisor, at the end of the attachment;

9) The University will submit a brief financial report showing confirmation of receipt of the advance and final grant payment by the student, together with the report from the host agency and the student's final report.

Qualification

- The attachment must be for work directly related to implementing or scaling out what was carried out during RUFORUM sponsored graduate studies;
- The University, through the Dean, must provide a letter of support for the application
- There must be proof of acceptance of the attachment by the host organisation;
- Evidence of demand for this work from the local community will be an added advantage

Application Process

1) Students make contact with the communities and organisations and establish the feasibility of such an arrangement;

2) The Student must prepare a brief 1 to 2 page proposal on what they hope to achieve, identifying the host institution and what will be involved;

3) No financial breakdown is required as it will be based on a stipend. Any field additional expenses will need to be covered by the hosting agency. An advance of approximately $2500 will be provided to the student to cover transport, living, and incidental expenses to achieve their objective, including all dissemination costs that are not covered by their host agency. The balance will be paid after reports and evidence of achievement have been submitted. Project proposals should not be developed in a way that requires significant co-funding in order for the work to be successful unless there is commitment in writing of the co-funding by the host agency;

4) Applications should be forwarded, together with a letter indicating agreement/ support from the host institution and forward this to their PI, with a copy to the RUFORUM Secretariat;

5) The PI should then formally forward this to RUFORUM with a letter from the Dean agreeing to the University disbursing the funds

6) The applications will be reviewed by the Secretariat for compliance and the winning grants will be selected by the Technical Committee. *APPENDIX TWO:* EXAMPLE OF BUDGET/BUDGET TEMPLATE

ITEM/ ACTIVITY	Year 1	Year 2	Total
A) Graduate Students			
1) Tuition and registration fees			
2) Stipend ($200 per student per month)			
3) Supervision (paid in tranches on deliverables)			
4) Thesis writing and publication of leaflets and academic paper			
5) Book allowance			
6) Medical allowance			
SUB-TOTAL			
B) Research costs (include travel, surveys, field trials, laboratory work and any other related research costs)			
1)			
2)			
3)			
4) 4 Undergraduate student research assistants in the long vacation between year 1 and year 2			
SUB-TOTAL			
C) Equipment and supplies			

1) Student laptops			
SUB-TOTAL			
D) Travel and Conferences			
1) Travel (Local and International costs for RUFORUM conferences)			
SUB-TOTAL			
E) Coordination			
1) Collaborators (paid in tranches on deliverables)			
2) Coordination costs (paid in tranches on deliverables)			
3) Contribution to national forums			
SUB-TOTAL			
F) Other costs (specify clearly)			
SUB-TOTAL			
Total Without equipment			
ADMINSTRATIVE COSTS 3% (Maximum 5% allowable)			
Sub-Total			
GRAND TOTAL with equipment and administrative costs			

Budget Notes:

1. Administrative Costs are derived from computing 3% - 5% of the total costs in a given year less the cost of equipment

APPENDIX FOUR: DEFINITIONS AND DESCRIPTIONS

Deliverable – in the context of the Grants Scheme a deliverable is a product or activity arising from the proposed project. Deliverables include theses, workshops, reports, learning objects etc.

Dissemination – is understood to be more than distribution of information or making it available in some way. While embracing this aspect, dissemination also implies that some action has been taken to embed the innovation within its own context (discipline, community or institution) and to ensure sustainability and to potential for scaling up by involving all relevant stakeholders.

Innovation – In the context of the Grants Scheme the term 'innovation' refers to an idea, product, process or service that adds value, is useful or transforms current practice in the context to which it is applied. 'First-generation innovators' are those who do or create something new or different. 'Second-generation innovators' are those who take an innovation from one context and replicate, adapt or transform it for use within a new context"

Intellectual Property Rights – includes all copyright (including rights in relation to phonograms and broadcasts), all rights in relation to inventions (including patent rights), plant varieties, registered and unregistered trademarks (including service marks), registered designs, circuit layouts, and all other rights resulting from intellectual activity in the industrial, scientific, literary or artistic fields.

Outcome – in the context of applications under the Grants Scheme an outcome is an achievement which the project is designed to accomplish, preferably described in a form that is measurable or for which evidence can be provided. To prepare an outcome statement as part of a project proposal, the question that should be posed is: what is the project designed to achieve and how will the project team know they have been successful? A number of unplanned outcomes are likely from any project. These should be included in the final report along with the success in achieving the nominated project outcomes.

Output – refers to the deliverables and includes the theses the students will produce, the reports that form part of the M & E, workshops that have been planned etc

Partner Institution – partner institutions are those institutions that are actively engaged with the project through project team members. These can include other Faculties or Departments within the same university and/or to other research, extension, or private sector operative. It also includes the farmers and any farmer or community organisations specifically identified to work with the research project.

Principal Investigator – the project leader who is responsible to both their University and to RUFORUM.

Project Material – includes documents, equipment, software, goods, information and data stored by any means.

Project Team Member – team members are actively engaged in the ongoing project work. They contribute directly to the success of the project through the contribution of time and intellectual resources to the project.