

POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIP FACT FILE

ABOUT RUFORUM

The Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM) is a consortium of 175 universities across 40 African countries, established in 2004. Its mission is to foster the development of high-level human capital and innovation-led solutions to enhance agricultural productivity, food systems resilience, and economic development in Africa. RUFORUM supports postgraduate training, research, and knowledge sharing in agriculture and related sciences, with an emphasis on addressing local challenges through regional collaboration.

OBJECTIVES OF THE FELLOWSHIP

The Post-Doctoral Fellowship Program is tailored to contribute to RUFORUM's broader goals of enhancing science, technology, and innovation in Africa through the following objectives:

1. Strengthen research capacity and mentorship:

- o Provide early-career scientists with an opportunity to deepen their research competencies and develop leadership skills.
- o Promote mentorship between senior faculty and postdoctoral fellows to ensure knowledge transfer and institutional capacity development.

2. Foster use-inspired research:

- o Support research that addresses real-world challenges in agriculture, food systems, climate change, and rural development.
- o Engage with stakeholders, including farmers, private sector actors, and policymakers to enhance the relevance and uptake of research.



ABOUT THE POST-DOC FELLOWSHIP

The RUFORUM Post-Doctoral Fellowship is a strategic initiative designed to bridge the gap between doctoral training and academic leadership. It seeks to strengthen the research and innovation capacities of early-career African researchers and higher education institutions by providing opportunities for recent PhD graduates to engage in postdoctoral training and research within the continent. The Fellowship emphasizes practical engagement with research users, multidisciplinary collaboration, and alignment with national development priorities, particularly in the transformation of agri-food systems.

3. Promote regional collaboration:

- o Facilitate mobility and collaborative research among African universities and research institutions.
- o Enhance networking among young researchers and build a critical mass of scholars within priority disciplines

4. Support innovation and entrepreneurship

- o Link research to innovation and entrepreneurship initiatives, including agri-business incubation and technology development.
- o Encourage commercialization and scaling of research products that improve livelihoods.



Eligibility and Selection Criteria

Who can Apply?



- Must have completed a PhD within the last 3 years in a field related to agriculture, natural resource management, food systems, rural development, or climate science.
- Should be affiliated with a RUFORUM member university or a recognized African research institution.
- Must demonstrate a strong research track record and potential for academic leadership.
- Must submit a proposal aligned with RUFORUM thematic priorities and national development goals.
- Female candidates and applicants from underrepresented regions are strongly encouraged to apply.

Selection Process:

Fellowships are awarded through a competitive, merit-based process involving:

- **Call for Applications:** Publicised widely through RUFORUM's network and online platforms. All applications must be submitted through the RUFORUM Information Management System at <https://rims2.ruforum.org/>
- **Proposal Review:** Proposals are evaluated for scientific merit, feasibility, stakeholder relevance, and alignment with RUFORUM objectives.
- **Institutional Endorsement:** Shortlisted candidates must obtain support from their host institution.
- **Final Award:** Successful applicants receive fellowships that typically span 22–24 months, depending of the funding available.

Structure and Components of the Fellowship

The RUFORUM Post-Doctoral Fellowship is structured to promote the holistic development of early-career researchers. Key components include:

1. Research Implementation

- Fellows undertake a research project under the mentorship of senior faculty.
- Research must have clear objectives, outputs, and pathways for impact.

2. Mentorship and Supervision

- Each fellow is assigned at least one mentor from the host institution and another from a collaborating institution.
- Mentors support technical guidance, professional development, and integration into academic networks.

3. Stakeholder Engagement

- Fellows are expected to engage with policy-makers, community groups, or private sector actors to co-design or co-implement research.

- This promotes co-creation of knowledge and enhances research uptake.

4. Capacity Building and Dissemination

- Fellows are required to organize or participate in training workshops, publish research findings, and present at conferences.
- RUFORUM supports dissemination through policy briefs, open access journals, and regional symposia.

5. Innovation and Incubation

- Projects with commercialization potential are linked to RUFORUM-supported innovation hubs.
- Fellows receive coaching in entrepreneurship and support to refine business models and prototypes.

What does the funding cover?

RUFORUM provides support for the recruited researcher in the form of

- A living allowance, a mobility allowance, if applicable, family, long-term leave and special needs allowances

In addition, funding is provided for

- Research, training and networking activities and management and indirect costs

Contact Information

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