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LEADING HOUSE AFRICA

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| **Call for Proposals:** | **Lectureships and Prolonged Research Stays at African Higher Education Institutions for Research Groups of Swiss Higher Education Institutions** |

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| Total Budget Available: | CHF 200,000 |
| **Grant per Project:** | **Maximum CHF 50,000** |
| Project Duration: | Min 2 months to max 6 months |
| Eligible Applicant (Lead): | Senior researcher of a Swiss Higher Education Institution leading the Swiss mobility group / team ideally consisting of one senior researcher, one postdoctoral fellow and one PhD student (other combinations are also possible) |
| Eligible Applicant in Partner Country (Co-Lead / Host): | Researcher of an African Higher Education Institution from all African countries, except Maghreb region and Egypt |
| Additional Third-Party Funding: | Strongly encouraged |
| **Submission Deadline:** | **30 June 2023** |
| Review Process: | 01 July 2023- 15 September 2023 |
| Decision: | 29 of September 2023 |
| Earliest Project Start Date: | 01 November 2023 |

**Background**

The Swiss State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) has commissioned Swiss TPH with support from the University of Basel as the Leading House for its bilateral collaboration with partner institutions in Africa[[1]](#footnote-1) for the funding period 2021–2024. Switzerland and a number of African countries have been working together on bilateral programmes for science and technology since 2007. Within this framework, the funding cycle will involve the launch of a set of instruments (i.e. research partnership grants I & II, consolidation grants, PhD graduate programme and lectureship schemes) throughout the aforementioned funding period.

**Goal**

The Leading House (LH) Africa in conjunction with University of Bern’s Centre for Development and Environment (CDE), are calling for applications for the instrument   
**Lectureships and Prolonged Research Stays at African Higher Education Institutions for Swiss Research Groups of Swiss Higher Education Institutions.**

The goal of this instrument is to promote research cooperation between Swiss and AfricanHigher Education Institutions, geared towards the implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development[[2]](#footnote-2) and the African Union’s Agenda 2063[[3]](#footnote-3). To this end, the role of science is to provide knowledge and to engage in negotiations with policy and civil society for shaping transformations towards more sustainable development. This challenging task requires scientists to employ innovative inter- and transdisciplinary research approaches. This new instrument is designed to promote research cooperation with an important institutional capacity development component (e.g. joint curriculum development, joint research activities and joint project/funding acquisition) with African research institutions by funding a Swiss mobility group / team.

**Eligibility**

The call is open to all scientific disciplines and fields of research, and targets research groups / teams with affiliations to Swiss Higher Education Institutions. The research should contribute towards the implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda for sustainable development, the African Union’s Agenda 2063, and the national priorities of the respective countries. An ideal Swiss mobility research group / team is a mixed group up to three people consisting, for example, of one senior researcher, one postdoctoral fellow and one PhD student (other combinations are also possible). The research group / team will stay for a minimum of 2 months to a maximum of 6 months in the partner institution in Africa. Online participation of some of the research group / team members is allowed. However, at least one team member should be able to travel to the African country.

**Application Requirements**

The main Swiss applicant (Lead) should lead a research team / group or be a senior researcher / lecturer at a Swiss Higher Education Institution. In addition, he/she must be employed by the home institution based in Switzerland before, during and after the project duration.

The main Swiss applicant (Lead) will submit a joint proposal for the Swiss mobility group / team on behalf of his/her research group / team and the hosting Higher Education African partner institution (Co-lead / host). The African researcher must be employed as a scientist at his/her home institution for the period of the project. Furthermore, the hosting African institution must provide a letter of acceptance confirming that the fellow and his/her team will be given access to appropriate office and research infrastructure facilities.

Furthermore, applicants are encouraged to seek for additional sources of third-party funding that they and/or their partners could contribute to the project, be it national funding (of the host institution), Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) or Eidgenössische Stipendienkommission für ausländische Studierende (ESKAS) funding, or others. Additionally, applicants can also make in-kind contributions.

**Funding and Budgeting**

The maximum amount that can be applied for each project is **CHF 50,000**. The budget can be used for activities of the Swiss mobility group / team, including activities of the African partner. A detailed budget must be submitted with the project proposal. Budgeted expenses must be justified and be related to the proposed research activities.

**Eligible Costs:**

1. **Personnel costs**: Salary costs are eligible for the Swiss mobility group. The combined cost of salaries however **must not exceed 20%** of the total budget. For local (African) personnel recruited to support research or joint activities in Africa local daily rates commensurate with the personnel’s professional qualification.
2. **Travel costs** are eligible for international flights in economy class and for local travels in the respective countries (e.g. for field work). Total travel costs are refunded at a maximum of CHF 2,000 per person. Grant recipients in this case are required to obtain a health insurance policy for their period of stay.
3. **Accommodation costs** are eligible for room and board costs and unavoidable sundry expenses. A maximum of CHF 120 per diem or a monthly rate of CHF 3,600 per person can be requested per project.
4. **Conference and meeting costs** are eligible associated with the organisation or attendance of conferences, workshops, seminars and meetings. These include registration costs, travel and sustenance. However, these costs must be directly linked to the proposed objectives and duly justified.
5. **Project consumables** such as laboratory consumables for research, materials like stationery used for curriculum development and other joint activities are eligible for funding. All project consumable costs must be directly linked to the proposed objectives and duly justified.
6. **Material/equipment of enduring value (indicate manufacturer, type and distributor)**

are eligible for equipment for direct use on the project and not exceeding 10% of the total award.

1. **Cost of Open access Publications** is eligible.
2. **VAT**

All costs budgeted for research visits (e.g. equipment, consumables, etc.) can be charged to the project budget, VAT included, unless the research institution (e.g. university, public research organization, etc.) is able to recover the VAT

**Please note that overhead costs are not admissible**.

**Evaluation Criteria**

The major criterion on which all proposal evaluations will be based on is **institutional capacity development at the African Higher Education Institution**. This could entail joint curriculum development, joint lectures/seminars, joint research activities, joint field courses/work and joint project/funding acquisition.

Proposals will be selected based on:

* Set-up of the Swiss / African team: Strength of collaboration and complementary skills of the applicants with respect to the project
* Relevance of the project with respect to the implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the African Union Agenda 2063 and the alignment with national priorities
* Originality and (if applicable) innovativeness of the proposed project / joint activities
* Feasibility of the project and appropriateness of methodology
* Experience and past performance of applicants
* Potential for the project to lead to a long-term bilateral collaboration between the two groups (the Swiss mobility group and the African host)
* Budget (including availability of third party funding and in-kind contribution)

**Proposal Submission**

**General documents**

* Cover letter of the applicant
* Letter of support from the Swiss applicant’s supervisor
* Letter of support from the African host institution/department

The application consists of three parts (refer to application template):

**Part 1: General information**

1. Basic data
2. Requested funding
3. Partnership and collaboration history
4. Projects requiring ethical approval, authorizations or notifications

**Part 2: Proposed research project**

* Proposed activity plan (max. 3 pages)

**PART 3: Annex**

* CVs of each member of the Swiss group (max. 2 pages per person, including list of relevant publications)
* CV of the African host (max. 2 pages, including list of relevant publications)

All documents must be submitted **in English** **by Friday, 30 June 2023** 17:00 hrs CEST as a single pdf document via e-mail [callafrica.cde@unibe.ch](mailto:callafrica.cde@unibe.ch) .

**Evaluation Procedure and Timeline**

**Peer-review:** Proposals will be evaluated according to standard international peer-review procedures, organized by the LH Africa in partnership with CDE, University of Bern.

**Decision:** Outcomes of the peer-review will be consolidated and approved by the Swiss TPH LH Africa team and CDE, University of Bern team. Subsequently, LH Africa will communicate the final decision to the main applicant by means of a decision letter. In case of rejection, the reasons leading to the decision will be given. In case of approval, the next steps and any proposed adjustments, will be shared with the main applicant (Swiss group leader) who will be responsible for transmitting the decision to other members of the applicant group and the African collaborator (host).

**Timeline:** The review of the submitted applications will take place from 01 July to 15 September 2023 and results will be announced on **Friday, 29 September 2023.**The earliest possible commencement date for the project is **01 November 2023.**

**Please note: Applications must meet all formal requirements (number of pages, budget limit, etc.). LH Africa does not consider applications that do not meet all of the requirements and / or are manifestly inadequate.**

**Disbursement of Funds**

At the beginning of the project period, 80% of the approved amount will be paid out. The remaining 20% will be transferred after acceptance of the final report. All funds will be received in a project account of a Swiss Higher Education Institution.

**Reporting Requirements**

Swiss lead applicants together with their respective African project partners shall submit a consolidated report to the LH Africa. The scientific and financial report is to be submitted two months after the completion of the research project. Grant recipients will have a common template available for the scientific report. Scientific reports include a qualitative and a quantitative part (output data).

**Publications and Intellectual Property**

The main applicant is strongly encouraged to publish research results stemming from their joint research work in appropriate form, acknowledging the partner institutions and this funding programme. The SNSF requirements for Open Access publication must be fulfilled. Applicants must consult both Swiss and African institutions concerning their internal intellectual property regulations. For market-oriented projects, it is important that an agreement is reached in advance. It is the responsibility of the main applicant to make sure such an agreement is signed before the project start.

**For Further Information, Please Contact:**

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1. All African countries except the Maghreb region and Egypt [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <https://au.int/agenda2063/overview> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)