

LEADING HOUSE AFRICA

Call for Proposals: Lectureships and Prolonged Research Stays

Call for Lectureships and Prolonged Research Stays at African Higher Education Institutions for Research Groups of Swiss Higher Education Institutions.

Grant per project:	Maximum CHF 50,000
Project duration:	Min. 2 months to max. 6 months
Eligible lead applicant:	Senior researcher of a Swiss Higher Education Institution leading the Swiss mobility group / team ideally consisting of at least 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 in eligible African countries (excluding the Maghreb region and Egypt).
Additional third-party funding:	Strongly encouraged.
Submission deadline:	30 November 2026
Review process:	1 December 2026 to 15 February 2027
Decision:	15 March 2027
Project start date:	Earliest start: 1 April 2027

Background

For the 2025–2028 funding period, the Swiss State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI), has commissioned Swiss TPH, in partnership with the University of Basel, as the Leading House for bilateral cooperation in education, research and innovation with African partner institutions. Under this framework, the funding cycle will introduce three research instruments: (i) Research Partnership Grants, (ii) Lectureship-Research Stays, and (iii) PhD Graduate Programme. The implementation of instruments (ii) and (iii) are entrusted by the Leading House Africa to the Centre for Development and Environment (CDE), University of Bern.

Goal

Leading House Africa, in conjunction with CDE, invites applications for **Lectureships and Prolonged Research Stays at African Higher Education Institutions for Swiss Research Groups**.

The goal of this instrument is to promote research collaboration between Swiss and African Higher Education Institutions, geared towards the implementation of the [UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) and the [African Union's Agenda 2063](#). To this end, the role of science is to provide knowledge and to engage in dialogue with policymakers and civil society to shape transformations towards sustainable development. This challenging task requires scientists to employ inter- and transdisciplinary research approaches. This 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 of a Swiss mobility group / team.

Eligibility

The call is open to all scientific disciplines and fields of research, and targets research groups and 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 of approximately three scientists 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 Swiss lead applicant must lead a research team or group or be a senior researcher or lecturer at a Swiss Higher Education Institution. In addition, the lead applicant must be employed by the Swiss host institution before, during, and after the project period.

The Swiss lead applicant will submit a joint proposal for the Swiss mobility group or team on behalf of the Swiss research group or team and the hosting African Higher Education

Institution. The African researcher must be employed as a scientist at the home institution for the duration of the project. Furthermore, the hosting African Higher Education Institution must provide a letter of acceptance confirming that access to appropriate office space and research infrastructure will be provided to the researcher and the research team.

Furthermore, applicants are encouraged to secure additional third-party funding to co-finance the project. Such funding may be provided by the applicants and/or their partners and may include university funding (e.g. from the host institution), or funding from the [Swiss National Science Foundation](#) (SNSF), the [Federal Commission for Scholarships for Foreign Students](#) (FCS), or other sources. Applicants may also contribute in-kind.

Funding and Budgeting

The maximum amount that can be applied for 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

Overheads

Overhead costs are not permissible. Neither the Swiss institute nor African institute may charge overhead to LH Africa.

Salaries

Salary costs are not permissible. Neither the Swiss institute nor the African institute may charge Salaries to LH Africa.

Work-related Institutional Cost (WRIC)

Not applicable to African institutions. For Swiss institutions, WRIC covers the personnel costs for existing staff but strictly for the time they devote to the LH Africa project. WRIC is strictly applicable to only University of Applied Sciences and University Teacher Education. WRIC may not be used to cover PI's time. WRIC may not be used to create new positions. WRIC may be charged at maximum rate of 20% of the total project.

Travel costs

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.

Subsistence costs

Applicants may include a single lump-sum budget line to cover their accommodation and daily subsistence allowances while working on the project. The lump sum must not exceed what one would typically spend at a mid-range hotel and restaurant—luxury rates won't be reimbursed. Accommodation costs are eligible for room and board costs and unavoidable sundry expenses. Additionally, a maximum of CHF 120.- per diem or a monthly rate of CHF 3,600.- per person can be requested.

Conferences and workshop costs

Conferences or workshops that are essential to the project are eligible for support when clearly justified in relation to the project's objectives. Covered costs include the organization of conferences or workshops, registration fees, travel, accommodation and daily allowances for events held in Switzerland, in the partner country, or in exceptional cases, in a third-party country.

Project consumables

Project consumables such as laboratory consumables for research, materials like stationary 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.

Material and equipment of enduring value

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.

Evaluation and Decision

The primary criterion for evaluating all proposals is their potential to contribute to **institutional capacity development at the African Higher Education Institution**. This may entail joint curriculum development, joint lectures and seminars, joint research activities, joint field courses and work, and joint project and funding acquisition.

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Set-up of the Swiss-African team: Strength of collaboration and complementary of the applicants' skills and expertise in relation to the proposed project.
- Relevance of the project with respect to the implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the African Union Agenda 2063, as well as its alignment with national priorities.
- Originality and, where applicable, innovativeness of the proposed project and joint activities.
- Feasibility of the project and appropriateness of the proposed approach and/or methodology.
- Experience and past performance of applicants.
- Potential for the project to establish or strengthen a long-term bilateral collaboration between the Swiss mobility group and the African host institution.
- Appropriateness of the proposed budget, including availability of third-party funding and in-kind contributions.

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

The outcomes of the peer review will be consolidated and jointly approved by the Swiss TPH Leading House Africa team and the CDE, University of Bern team. Leading House Africa will subsequently communicate the final decision to the lead applicant in a decision letter. In case of rejection, the reasons for the decision will be provided. In case of approval, the next steps and any proposed adjustments will be communicated to the Swiss lead applicant, who will

be responsible for sharing the decision with the other members of the applicant group and the African partner.

Reporting Requirements

The Swiss lead applicant together with the respective African project partners shall submit a consolidated report to the Leading House 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).

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 the lead applicants' Swiss Higher Education Institution.

Publications and Intellectual Property

The applicants are 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 lead applicant to make sure such an agreement is signed before the project start.

Timeline

Launch of call: 20 October 2026

Submission deadline: 30 November 2026; 17:00 CET

Notification of results: 15 March 2027

Project start date: Earliest start: 1 April 2027; latest start: 15 September 2027

Final report due: Two months after completion.

Application

Please include the following information in your application:

- Cover letter of the lead applicant.
- Letter of support from the Swiss applicant's supervisor or institution.
- Letter of support from the African host institution/department.
- General information: project title, applicant details, institutional affiliations, and proposed project duration.
- Requested funding, including budget justification and any cost-sharing/third-party funding.
- Partnership and collaboration history.
- Declaration on whether the project requires ethical approval, authorizations, or notifications.
- Proposed research project: summary, objectives, relevance, partnership, methods, work plan, and expected results.
- References.
- CV of each member of the Swiss group, max. 2 pages per person, including a list of relevant publications.
- CV of the African host, max. 2 pages, including a list of relevant publications.

It is the lead applicant's responsibility to ensure that the formal requirements are met and that the content is accurate and complete. Otherwise, the application will not be considered. All information provided must be written in English. You may use the application form available on the [Leading House Africa website](#).

Applications should be submitted as a single PDF document to callafrica.cde@unibe.ch by 17:00 CET on 30 November 2026.

Questions?

Please check first the FAQs below.

Contact information

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callafrica.cde@unibe.ch

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. Which African countries are eligible for collaborations under the Leading House Africa funding instruments?

Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, Congo Brazzaville, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Cote D'Ivoire, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Mauritania, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

2. I have a scientific partner in Africa whose country is not on the list of countries eligible for Leading House Africa collaboration. Are there other instruments targeting these countries?

Please refer to the [Leading House MENA](#) for instruments specific for North African countries.

3. I already have a running project funded by Leading House Africa. Am I still eligible to apply for this call?

Yes you can – as long as you meet the eligibility requirements of the current call.

4. As a Swiss (main) applicant, can I collaborate with multiple scientists from more than one institute in the same country?

Yes you can- provided all applicants meet the requirements of the call.

5. I have prepared a competitive proposal for the call. Can Leading House Africa assist me with finding a Swiss-based collaborator?

No. Leading House Africa does not match scientists and does not have a matching database now. Please refer to the Leading House Africa homepage for updates.

6. Currently, I am based outside of Switzerland for a project funded by a third-party mobility scholarship. Am I still eligible to apply for leading House Africa call?

Yes you can - provided you still have an active employment contract with a Swiss Higher Education Institution.

7. I just found out about the call, but it is past the submission deadline. May I still submit my application now for future consideration?

No you may not. Please check Leading House Africa homepage for more information on upcoming calls.

8. Where can I find guidance on conducting fair, efficient, transboundary research?

See the Guide for Global Research Partnerships. 2025. Swiss Alliance for Global Research Partnerships. grp-guide.ch.

9. Is there a Leading House Africa Newsletter I can subscribe to?

Should you be interested in staying abreast with Leading House Africa instruments, kindly contact Dr. Kobina Ampah (kobinaassan.ampah@swisstph.ch) with a request to be included in the distribution list.