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LEADING HOUSE AFRICA

**Call for Proposals: Research Partnership Grant I**

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| Total Budget Available: | CHF 250,000 |
| Grant per Project: | Maximum CHF 15,000 |
| Project Duration: | Minimum: 3 months; maximum: 10 months |
| Eligible Applicants (Lead): | Advanced PhD students and early postdoctoral researchers affiliated with a Swiss research institution |
| Eligible Partner Countries: | All African countries, except Maghreb region and Egypt |
| Additional Third-Party Funding: | Strongly encouraged |
| Submission Deadline: | 15 September 2021 |
| Review Process: | 16 September 2021 – 29 October 2021 |
| Decision: | 30 October 2021 |
| Earliest Project Start Date: | 1 November 2021 |

**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 upcoming funding period.

Leading House (LH) Africa is calling for applications from advanced PhD students and early postdoctoral researchers affiliated with a Swiss research institution for **Research Partnership Grant I**. The goal of this instrument is to further develop, consolidate and expand relations and foster new collaborations between Swiss researchers and partners in Africa1.

Applications should demonstrate collaborative work with an African1 University or research institution in desk work, field research or laboratory spanning between a minimum of 3 months up to a maximum of 10 months. Projects may or may not include mobility component (contingent on travel restrictions due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic).

**Scientific Domains to be Funded**

Proposals are expected from the following two areas:

* Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences, and
* STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics), including Biological Sciences and Medicine.

The call aims at awarding an equal balance of proposals from both areas.

**Application Requirements**

Main applicants are required to hold a PhD degree or to be in the final year of their doctoral thesis (to be confirmed by the principal supervisor). In addition, applicants must be employed by the home institution based in Switzerland before, during and after the project duration.

The main applicant will submit a joint proposal on behalf of the research team that includes one or more African co-applicants for their planned research work. The co-applicants must be employed as a scientists at their home institution for the period of the project.

For applicants pursuing the mobility option, the host institution must provide a letter of acceptance confirming that the fellow will be given access to appropriate laboratory and infrastructure facilities.

A period of 3 months to a maximum of 10 months can be applied for. 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 they national (of the host institution), SNSF or ESKAS, or others.

**Eligible Costs**

The **Research Partnership Grants 2021** cover the following costs:

* **Research funds**

Funds needed to carry out the project, such as travel costs, room and board costs and unavoidable sundry expenses. Field expenses, expendable items and consumables up to 20% of the award are eligible

* **Costs of material of enduring value (indicate manufacturer, type and distributor)**

Equipment not exceeding 10% of the total award

* **For visits to Africa, max. CHF 120 per diem is paid or a monthly rate of CHF 3,600**

Total travel costs are refunded at a maximum of CHF 1,500. Grant recipients in this case are required to obtain a health insurance policy for their period of stay

* **Costs associated with the attendance at specific workshops, conferences, seminars, summer schools or presentations during the planned visit may also be covered by the current funds**
* **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.

**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.

**Proposal Submission**

The application consists of two parts:

**Administrative part**

* Basic data on the project (e.g. title, research field, starting date, duration, summary)
* Personal data of the applicant and his/her supervisor
* Personal data of the host (for mobility options)
* Amount of funding requested with budget narrative

**Research related part**

* Cover letter of the applicant
* Research activity plan (max. 3 pages)
* CV (max. 1 page)
* Complete list of publications from theapplicant
* Letter of support from the applicant’s supervisor
* Letter of support from the host institution/department (for the mobility option)

All documents must be submitted **in English language** **by 15 September 2021** 00:00 CEST as a single pdf document via e-mail to LH Africa / Dr Kobina Assan Ampah <kobinaassan.ampah@swisstph.ch>

**Evaluation Procedure and Timeline**

The criteria used to evaluate the scientific quality of the proposals:

* Scientific relevance and excellence
* Mutual interest of the project at national and international level
* Originality of the aims and objectives
* Appropriateness of the methodology
* Feasibility of the project
* Capacity building
* Experience and past performance of applicants
* Strength of collaboration and complementary skills of research partners with respect to the project
* Budget (Cost sharing)

**Peer-review:** Proposals will be evaluated according to international peer-review standard procedures, organized by LH Africa. External peer-review experts will be designated.

**Decision:** Outcomes of the peer-review will be consolidated and approved by the Swiss TPH LH Africa 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 conditions and possible budget adjustments will be shared with the main applicant who will be responsible for transmitting the decision to the co-applicant.

The review of the submitted applications will take place between 16 September and 29 October 2021 and results will be announced on **30 October 2021**.

The earliest possible commencement date for the project is **1 November 2021.**

**Reporting**

Swiss lead applicants together with their respective African project partners shall submit a consolidated report to LH Africa. Scientific and financial reports are to be submitted by the last day of the month following the end of the 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 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 be reached in advance. It is the responsibility of both applicants (main and co-applicant) to make sure such an agreement is signed before the project start.

**Further Information Can Be Obtained from:**

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1. All African countries except the Maghreb region and Egypt [↑](#footnote-ref-1)