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LEADING HOUSE AFRICA

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| **Call for Proposals:** | **PhD Graduate Programme:**  **Call for Seasonal Schools organised by Swiss Institutions of Higher Education in or outside of Switzerland to sponsor African participants (PhD students)** |

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| Total Budget Available: | CHF 224,000 |
| Grant per Seasonal School: | Maximum CHF 60,000 |
| Duration of the Seasonal School: | Minimum 1 week |
| Eligible Applicant: | Organizers of Seasonal Schools (e.g. Summer Schools) in or outside of Switzerland in 2023 or until April 2024 with affiliation to a Swiss Institution of Higher Education |
| Target participants of the Seasonal School to be funded: | Minimum 5, maximum 15 students enrolled in a PhD programme of an Institution of Higher Education in all African countries, except Maghreb region and Egypt |
| Additional Third-Party Funding: | In-kind contribution by the Seasonal School is strongly encouraged |
| Submission Deadline: | 28 February 2023 |
| Review Process: | 1 March 2023 to 31 March 2023 |
| Decision: | 28 April 2023 |
| Earliest Project Start Date: | 8 May 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**

Leading House (LH) Africa in conjunction with the Centre for Development and Environment (CDE), invites organizers of Seasonal Schools at Swiss Institutions of Higher Education to apply for the **PhD Graduate Programme.**

The goal of this instrument is to promote research collaboration between Swiss and African PhD students of Higher Education Institutions through a Seasonal School. The Seasonal School should include inter-and (if applicable) transdisciplinary sessions to bring Swiss and African PhD students together to develop solutions for sustainability challenges, 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). The idea is to acquaint a group of Swiss and African PhD students with different disciplinary backgrounds to collectively address issues of major global concern during the Seasonal School (e.g. decline of biodiversity and food security; climate change, flooding and deforestation; migration; natural resource depletion; epidemics and pandemics, etc.). 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.

**Eligibility**

The call is open to all Seasonal Schools organised by Swiss Institutions of Higher Education in or outside of Switzerland scheduled in 2023 or until April 2024. The selected Seasonal School should be flexible to incorporate 5 to 15 prospective sponsored PhD students from Africa within the planned activities of the school.

**Funding and Budgeting**

The maximum amount that each Seasonal School can apply for is CHF 60,000. The budget shall sponsor **a minimum** of 5 and a **maximum** of 15 students enrolled in a PhD programme of Institutions of Higher Education in Africa, to participate in the Seasonal School organised in or outside of Switzerland. Thus, up to CHF 4,000 can be budgeted for each prospective candidate (participant).

**Eligible Costs:**

1. **Travel costs** are eligible for international flights in economy class to the venue of the Seasonal School (in or outside of Switzerland) and for local travels at the venue. A budgeted maximum rate of CHF 2,000 per person is allowed.
2. **Accommodation costs** are eligible for room and board costs and unavoidable sundry expenses.
3. **In-kind contribution** from Seasonal Schools are highly encouraged. These could be in the form of conference and meeting costs, limited use of institutional facilities.
4. **VAT**

All costs budgeted for research visits (e.g. 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 **on individual capacity building of PhD students from African Higher Education Institution and future prospects of further research collaboration**.

Proposals will be selected based on:

* Set-up and track record of the organizing entity of the Seasonal School
* Programme of Seasonal School and potential to include inter-and (if applicable) transdisciplinary sessions to bring Swiss and African PhD students together to develop solutions for sustainability challenges
* Potential of Seasonal Schools to make link to UN 2030 Agenda and the African Union Agenda 2063 and related sustainability topics
* Detailed plan on the selection of the minimum 5 to maximum 15 prospective sponsored PhD students
* Originality and innovativeness of the Seasonal School
* Future prospects for further research collaboration with the African PhD students (e.g. Alumni programme of Seasonal Schools)
* Budget (including availability of third party funding and in-kind contribution)

**Proposal Submission**

**General documents**

* Cover letter of the applicant (Seasonal School)
* Letter of support from the Institution to which the Seasonal School is affiliated

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

**Part 1: General information**

* 1. Basic data
  2. Requested funding with budget justification
  3. Track record (history) of Seasonal Schools organized

**Part 2: Proposed programme of Seasonal School,** (max. 3 pages)

* 1. Information about the Seasonal School
  2. Sessions to bring Swiss and African PhD students together to develop solutions for sustainability challenges. Potential link to the UN 2030 Agenda and the African Union Agenda 2063.
  3. Number of African PhD students sponsored
  4. Follow up activities

All documents must be submitted **in English** **by 28 February 2023** 17:00 hrs CET 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 and the CDE, University of Bern team. Subsequently, LH Africa will communicate the final decision to the main applicant (organizer of the Seasonal School) 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.

**Timeline:** The review of the submitted applications will take place from **1 to 31 March 2023** and results will be announced on **28 April 2023.**The earliest possible commencement date for the Seasonal School is **8 May 2023.**

**Please note: Applications must meet all formal requirements (number of pages, budget limit, etc.). Applications that do not meet all of the requirements and / or are manifestly inadequate will not be considered for funding.**

**Disbursement of Funds**

After the notification of the selected applicant and prior to the commencement of the Seasonal School, 80% of the approved amount will be paid out. The remaining 20% will be transferred once the Seasonal School is over and LH Africa has received (and accepted) the final report thereof. All funds will be received in a project account (cost centre) of a Swiss Higher Education Institution dedicated to the Seasonal School.

**Reporting Requirements**

The selected Seasonal School shall submit a consolidated report to the LH Africa. The report should entail the background of the sponsored PhD candidates from Africa, highlights of the inter- and (if applicable) transdisciplinary sessions to bring Swiss and African PhD students together to develop solutions for sustainability challenges, highlights of their activities and projects at the Seasonal School along with a financial report. The report is to be submitted **latest** two months after the completion of the Seasonal School.

**Publications and Intellectual Property**

Applicants are strongly encouraged to publish findings of their projects in an open access (OA) publication or database, acknowledging the partner institutions and this funding programme. The Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) guidelines for Open Access publications must be adhered to. Applicants must consult both Swiss and African institutions concerning their internal intellectual property regulations.

**Questions?**Please check first with our FAQs:<https://www.swisstph.ch/en/research/leading-house-africa/>

**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)