



CORAF-WECARD/IITA RESEARCH GRANT FOR AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH FOR DEVELOPMENT

Funded by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC)



DEADLINE FOR APPLICATION: 30 JUNE 2015

The International Development Research Centre (IDRC) through the CORAF/WECARD and IITA is financing research grants program on agricultural research for development for African graduate students. The Programme's objective is to improve the institutional capacity of National Agricultural Research System in the targeted countries through the increased number and quality of qualified agricultural science graduates capable of identifying, generating and disseminating research outputs that meet the needs of smallholder farmers and other actors in the food chains. The Programme is targeting the following countries in West and Central Africa: Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Sierra Leone and Togo. Each country will receive five scholarships (3 Master and 2 PhD). **The grant program applications are particularly encouraged from women.**

Scholarship Description

This Program is mainly a coaching program. It aims to provide support to select awardees at the point that students have completed all course work and are preparing the dissertation proposal. In preparation for this critical task, IITA scientists and the national supervisors will coach the students to help them achieve their professional goals. The coaching and training will focus on developing research knowledge and skills that complement the material provided by their respective university's programs while supporting their research objectives. This will involve bringing students to IITA hubs to work on their research projects and developing their skills and competency and establishing them as scholars in their fields. Grants will be provided to a total of 20 individuals in 2015 (12 MSc and 8 PhD).

Eligibility

To be eligible under this program, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Must be a citizen of the eligible countries: Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Sierra Leone and Togo;
- Applicants must be currently registered in a PhD. or master program in recognized universities;
- Applicants must not be more than 40 years old at the time of application;
- Applicants must complete their course work at university in 2015.

Research Subject Areas

- Sustainable intensification including soil fertility;
- Crop protection; and
- Postharvest innovation systems.

Benefits offered

The benefits include:

- A lumpsum of \$CAD2,000/year will be paid to support in data collection during the first year to MSc students, and the first and second years to PhD students;
- Students will stay at IITA hubs depending on their research projects and the location of their supervisors. During their stay, they will be supervised by one IITA scientist in close collaboration with their national supervisor;
- During their research at IITA, grantees will receive a monthly stipend of \$CAD500 during a maximum duration of 6 months for MSc and 12 months for doctoral students. All other travel and housing and bench fees will be paid by the Program during their stay at IITA hubs;
- The following courses will be offered in to grantees: thesis preparation and AR4D methodologies, scientific writing and communication skills, data management and Pedagogy, mentoring and research supervision. Pedagogy, mentoring and research supervision will not be delivered to MSc students.

Terms and conditions for the submission of candidatures

To apply, eligible applicants should submit the following:

- A completed form available at <http://www.iita.org> and <http://www.coraf.org>;
- A certified copy of current passport showing evidence of citizenship;
- A certified copy of diplomas and academic transcript;
- Two referee letters; one of these must be from the NARS supervisor. The NARS supervisor should comment specifically on the proposed project, its quality and significance, and the student's qualifications for undertaking it; Proof
- of registration at an accredited university;
- A research proposal (part of the application materials) outlining their project's goals, questions and significance, and its relevance to his country NARS's central concerns;
- Submit an Institutional Support Form (part of the application materials) that confirms the national agricultural research's formal endorsement of the research project;
- The beneficiaries must commit to publish at least a scientific article or a report in under the Open Access framework and acknowledge that the *research has been supported* by a grant from IDRC and and send to the IITA a copy of their article published;
- The application must be sent before the deadline.

Selection criteria

- Technical soundness and feasibility of the research proposal: scientific merit and clear relevance to the thesis research objectives and potential to add value to the existing body of knowledge related to the proposal's targeted area of research within the broad field of agriculture and food security;
- The originality of the project;
- The quality of presentation of the application - the clarity of the scientific and technological objectives (ability or potential to communicate scientific concepts clearly and logically);
- The relevance of the methodology in relation to the objectives pursued ;
- Compatibility of the research proposal to development priorities of the applicant's home country;
- The potential benefits the candidate could bring to the national agricultural research system of his country, particularly in relation to research priorities).
- Leadership and innovation potential of the candidate in the research area - potential to work as a change agent in his/her home country to help transform the research culture and to promote innovation;
- Potential to complete his/her research project and move into a position of responsibility in the agriculture science in his/her home country.

Instructions to send your applications

All applications must be sent to and copied to the following depending on your nationalities:

- Chad nationals - dg.itrad@itrad-tchad.org and/or koye.djondang@itrad-tchad.org
- Democratic Republic of Congo nationals – at inera_dg@yahoo.fr and inera_dg@inera-drc.org
- Sierra Leone nationals - at c.jones@slari.gov.sl.
- Togo nationals - itra@cafe.tg