

# RSIF Research and Innovation Grants Manual and Procedures

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## Acronyms and Abbreviations

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<b>CAG</b>	<b>Consultative Advisory Group</b>
GITC	Grants Independent Technical Committee
Icipe	International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology
PASET	Partnership for skills in Applied Sciences, Engineering and Technology
PASET EB	PASET Executive Board
RSIF	Regional Scholarship and Innovations Fund
RSIF RA	RSIF Research Award
RSIF JIRA	RSIF Junior Investigator Research Award
RSIF ICPB	RSIF Institutional Innovation Capacity Building Program
RCU	Regional Coordinating Unit

## Introduction

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This manual is a reference document for the RCU and grantees of the RSIF Research and Innovation Grants on the requirements and implementation of the grants. The manual largely draws from the provisions of the RSIF Project Appraisal Document that governs the contractual relationship between *icipe* and the World Bank as well as the *icipe* institutional financial and grant management policies and procedures.

The Manual covers all aspects and procedures involved in the implementation and management of the competitive grants scheme of the RSIF project including but not limited to the award process, financial management, reporting and overall grants' project monitoring.

The Manual is a living document that may be updated from time to time as needed.

# 1 Overview of The PASET Regional Scholarship and Innovation Fund

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## 1.1 Background

The [Partnership for skills in Applied Sciences, Engineering and Technology](#) (PASET) is an African-led initiative with the objective of strengthening skills in the Applied Science, engineering and Technology to further socio-economic transformation in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). The [Regional Scholarship and Innovation Fund](#) (RSIF) is the flagship program of PASET. The primary objective of RSIF is to train high quality PhD and post-doctoral students to address the human resource gap of highly qualified specialists in the fields of applied sciences, engineering, and technology (ASET) and to contribute to improving research and innovation capacities in those fields in sub-Saharan Africa. RSIF supports PhD students, post-doctoral scientists and universities in SSA to establish a high-quality training, research and innovation environment and to develop their institutional capacity for the benefit of the whole region.

RSIF is currently funded by contributions from African governments, the World Bank and the Government of Korea; The [International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology](#) (*icipe*), Nairobi, Kenya, as the RSIF Regional Coordinating Unit (RCU) is responsible for project implementation.

The project is implemented through competitively selected African Host Universities in SSA, which will host PhD students in various PhD programs aligned to the PASET priority thematic areas. Competitive research and innovation grants will be issued that complement the PhD training offered to scholars by supporting knowledge generation, scientific excellence and use of knowledge for development impact.

## 1.2 Goal and Expected Outcomes

RSIF aims to strengthen the African Host University's capacity in research excellence and innovation development, with impact on PASET priority sectors, ultimately contributing to economic growth of SSA countries through;

- a. An increased number of high-quality post-doctoral researchers and more qualified and skilled scientific workforce;
- b. Better retention of PhD graduates within SSA countries;
- c. Increased opportunities to translate research outputs into commercial products/services and;
- d. Increased University-Industry partnerships and international network building opportunities;

## 1.3 Objectives

The key objectives of the grants are to:

- i. To strengthen research excellence of RSIF African Host Universities with special focus on advancement of research capacity of postdoctoral fellows, young faculty members and those scholars involved in the Ph.D. programs as mentors for Ph.D. students by partnering with prominent international partners to contribute towards better internationalization and research excellence.
- ii. To strengthen the innovation enabling environment and capacity of RSIF African Host Universities for stronger collaboration with private sector and to foster innovation development in PASET priority sectors important for economic development of SSA countries. Involvement of prominent international partners should ensure knowledge and the best practice exchange.

## 1.4 Key Principles on the management of the grants

RSIF will award the various types of grants informed by international best practices of grant management, which include;

- i. Ensuring an efficient and transparent Call process.
- ii. Selecting high quality proposals that will result in scientific excellence.
- iii. Setting up cost- effective financial and administration management processes.
- iv. Conducting professional independent, evaluation, implementation and impact evaluation.
- v. Promoting stakeholder engagement and collaborations with private sector and International partners.

## 1.5 RSIF Thematic Areas

The RSIF priority areas are identified by PASET Executive Board and those are;

- a. ICTs including big data and artificial intelligence;
- b. Food security and agribusiness;
- c. Minerals, mining and materials engineering;
- d. Energy including renewables; and
- e. Climate change

# 2 Program Management and Governance

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## 2.1 *icipe* and the World Bank

The World Bank and *icipe* signed an agreement in August 2018 for the latter to be the coordinating unit of the PASET RSIF Program. The RSIF is managed by *icipe* which has the overall administrative, legal and fiduciary responsibility for the Program. *icipe* also provides the necessary supportive working environment for the smooth implementation of the Project. More specifically, *icipe* is responsible for management of funds and accountability to the World Bank and other donors for the proper use of Project funds in accordance with the intent of the approved RSIF Project Appraisal Document and the terms and conditions of the Agreement between the Parties. *icipe* provides the necessary professional and administrative support, including human resources management, financial, legal and other services required for the successful implementation of the Project. Furthermore, *icipe* ensures that the Regional Coordinating Unit (RCU) operates efficiently, using the Centre's financial and administrative systems. The World Bank and *icipe* hold regular review meetings to discuss progress on Project implementation.

## 2.2 PASET Governance Bodies

The PASET governance bodies, comprising the PASET Governing Council and the PASET Executive Board (EB) provide strategic direction for implementation of the RSIF project by the RCU. The Governing Council is responsible for the overall strategic direction and vision of the RSIF while the EB interacts with the RCU more regularly, monitoring the regular progress of activities and providing overall guidance. The PASET Consultative Advisory Group (CAG) provides guidance to the Governing Council and EB on regional priorities, goals and technical aspects of the RSIF.

### 2.3 RSIF Regional Coordinating Unit

The RCU is the primary implementation body tasked with the overall coordination planning, monitoring and evaluation of project activities for the three windows of the project.

Some of the key responsibilities relating to management of the Research and Innovation Grants include:

- a. Managing and accounting for the fund contributions that are used to support RSIF activities from donors including, the African Governments, private sector and foundations that are part of PASET RSIF initiative.
- b. Managing the day-to-day administration of the research and innovation grants programs.
- c. Planning and executing the annual work plans for the research and innovation grants programs.
- d. Launching calls for proposals for research and innovation grants.
- e. Coordinating the selection of grantees based on transparent peer review by independent evaluators, quality of proposals and merits
- f. Monitoring the funds disbursements and usage for the grant awards as per terms of agreement.
- g. Organizing workshops for RSIF African Host Universities on different topics related to entrepreneurship and innovation programs including the application of transformational technologies.
- h. Assist in identifying networks of incubators and tech hubs as well as university-based incubators in SSA especially those geographically and content-wise aligned to RSIF host universities and facilitating the connection with the host universities.
- i. Developing networks of Host universities with industry partners

### 2.4 The Grants Independent Technical Committee (GITC)

A Grants Independent Technical Committee is appointed by *icipe* to provide technical support in the review, selection, award and evaluation of Research and Innovation Grants. The GITC will conduct the final evaluation and take decisions on proposals that have been reviewed by Independent expert/peer reviewers. The recommendations of the GITC on selected proposals will be presented to the PASET Executive Board for final approval. The GITC consists of seven independent experts who have not applied for or are not implementing any of the RSIF grant projects. The GITC meets physically at least once a year although more regular virtual meetings may be held to review progress with implementation of projects.

### 2.5 The Independent Expert/ Peer Reviewers

Independent expert/peer reviewers are identified from time to time to support the technical review and evaluation of full proposals. Expert/peer reviewers are internationally recognized individuals with experience in engineering sciences, agricultural and environmental science, ICT, social science, innovation and commercialization of knowledge. All expert/peer reviewers possess a high level of professional experience in the public or private sector in research and/or thematic expertise in the five priority thematic areas. They also have experience in one or more of the following areas:

- a. Competitive projects evaluation;
- b. Use of research funding for technological projects focused on solving development challenges in agriculture, engineering and the environmental sciences;
- c. Innovation capacity development and commercialization of knowledge;
- d. Science and innovation policy

## 2.6 Project Leaders

The Lead Applicant for each proposal will be the Project Leader (PL) responsible for implementation of the project.

The PLs are responsible for:

- a. Ensuring that the project delivers the proposed experiments/goals and generate the anticipated results, thereby contributing to the overall objectives and outcomes of the RSIF;
- b. Routine management of the project implementation;
- c. Providing support to project partners in managing operations;
- d. Ensuring effective communication and the necessary synergies between participating partners;
- e. Coordinating contractual arrangements between the RCU and the other project partners;
- f. Preparing project work plans, progress and financial reports, and ensuring timely submission to the RCU;
- g. Maintaining valid and accurate records of the projects;
- h. Preparing summary briefings on the project for use during monitoring and evaluation exercises;
- i. Working closely with the RCU on dissemination of project activities;
- j. Addressing challenges within the project;
- k. Facilitating the signing of memoranda of understanding and material transfer arrangements among project implementing organizations;
- l. Performing any other activity that ensures the smooth operation of the Project.

## 2.7 RSIF African Host Universities/ Institutions

RSIF will award grants through the RSIF Host Universities and Institutions as the implementing partners in charge of administrative management of the project. The responsibilities of administering institution are:

- a. Ensure that the Lead Applicant and Co-applicants (Investigators) are made aware of their responsibilities and that they observe the terms and conditions of the grant.
- b. Ensure that the Lead Applicant and Co-applicants are provided adequate conditions and support for the successful implementation of the Project
- c. Ensure that any part of the matching funding of the project not funded by RSIF grant is committed to the project before its start.
- d. Ensure that the research project supported by the grant complies with all relevant legislation and government regulations, including those introduced while work is in progress. This requirement includes approval or license from any regulatory body that may be required before the research can commence.
- e. Notify *icipe* of any change in project's status or that of the Lead applicant that might affect the eligibility to hold a grant.
- f. Expected to ensure the research team upholds high ethical standards, principles and good practices while implementing the research.
- g. Ensure proper financial management of grants and accountability for the use of public funds.
- h. Ensure that adequate business continuity plans are in place to ensure that operational interruptions to the research are minimized.

## 3 The Competitive Grants Mechanism

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### 3.1 The Grants Programs

#### Research Grants

Two types of grants will be awarded:

- a. *RSIF Research Awards (RSIF RA)*: These grants will be awarded competitively to faculty engaged in PhD training in African Host Universities in SSA. The primary objective of these grants is to help faculty to advance their research excellence and generate innovative ideas that could be commercialized.
- b. *RSIF Junior Investigator Research Awards (RSIF- JIRA)*: These grants will be awarded competitively to RSIF graduates who obtain a post-doctoral or permanent position in an academic institution or research centre in SSA. The primary objective of these grants is to support junior scientists who are establishing their research career after completing a PhD degree. Grant will provide funding to enhance research excellence and unlock the innovation potential by allowing junior investigators to conduct research projects autonomously.

#### Innovation Grants

Two types of grants will be awarded:

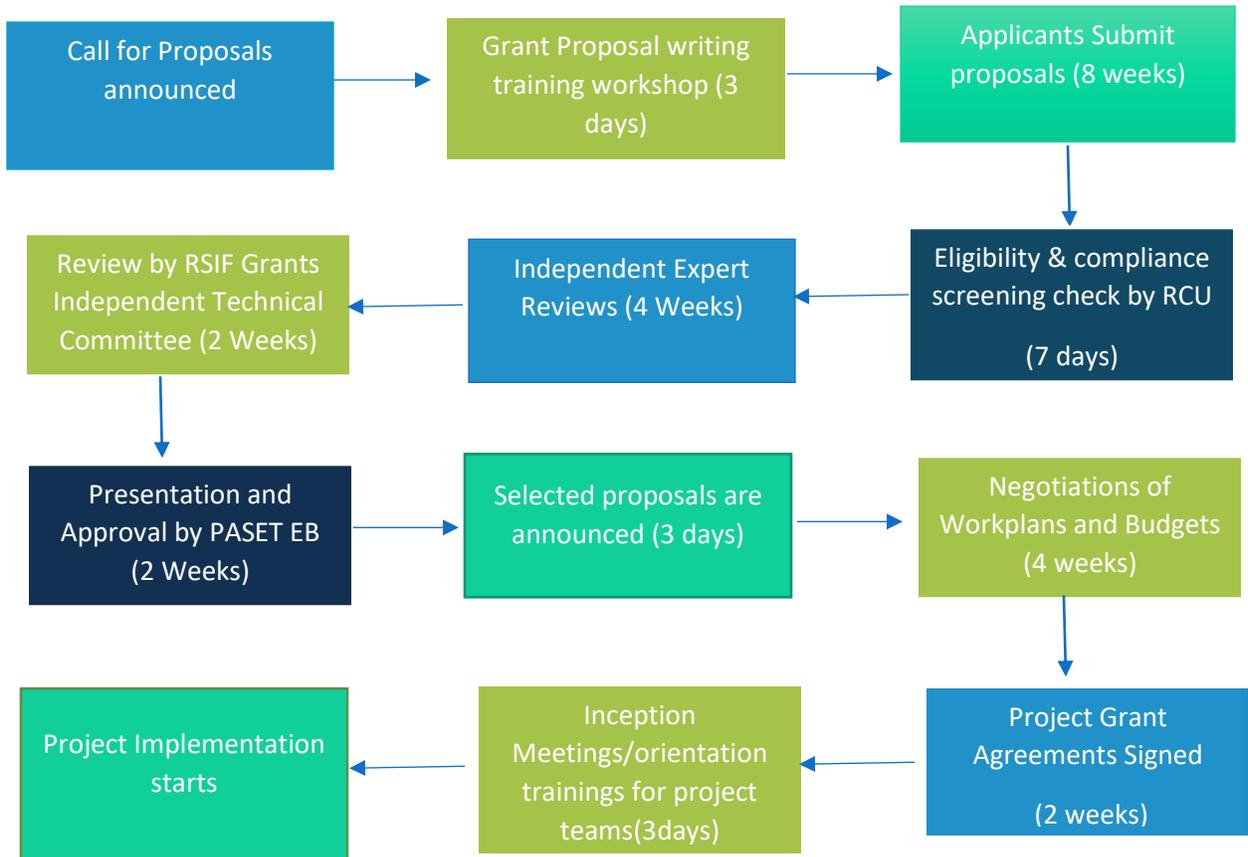
- a. *RSIF Institutional Innovation Capacity Building Program (RSIF ICPB)*: These grants will be awarded competitively to African Host Universities to support strengthening of the innovation environment. The primary objective is to help the University prepare an innovation enabling environment to support successful University- industry partnership and to foster innovation development
- b. *RSIF Cooperability Grants Program*: These grants will support University- Industry partnerships with goal to promote commercialization of research results. The aim of these grants is to encourage public-private partnerships through funding of cooperative research and development conducted jointly by researchers from RSIF African Host Universities, private companies and relevant international partners.

Details of the objectives and eligibility requirements for each of the grants are provided in the Call for proposal documents .

### 3.2 The Process and procedures for the selection of proposals

RSIF will follow a one-stage process for selecting successful projects for award. The steps and processes involved in the competitive grant scheme from the point of call for proposals through to final funding are schematically indicated in Figure 1:

Figure 1: The processes and procedures for the selection of the competitive grants for funding



### 3.3 Proposal Development

Applicants will be required to submit full proposals in response to the specific Call for proposals they would like to apply for. The proposals will be screened for eligibility and compliance before they are submitted to the independent expert reviewers for technical and scientific evaluation. During negotiations applicants of projects selected for funding might be asked to further adjust their proposals and the corresponding workplans and proposed budgets in line with the terms and conditions of the grant. The final negotiated workplans and budgets will be used as the part of the Contractual agreement.

### 3.4 Guidelines for selection of proposals

All proposals are reviewed and evaluated on a competitive basis against a set of evaluation criteria as provided in the Call for proposal document and include the following:

#### a. General Considerations

- i. **Alignment to PASET priority thematic areas and RSIF objectives:** Proposals should be in line with the priority areas. The proposal should clearly demonstrate how it would contribute to the strengthening of research excellence (research grants) and innovation development/commercialization (innovation grants).
- ii. **Strategic value:** The proposal should indicate how it will provide the value added towards the country's strategies and socio-economic impact to improve the quality of lives of the intended beneficiaries.

#### b. Essential Criteria

- i. **Demonstrate scientific and technological excellence:** The proposal should clearly define the unique research idea, product or technology and the scientific or technological challenge it is addressing. The Fund will preferably award proposals with focus on applied research.
- ii. **Innovation:** For innovation grants, the proposal should clearly define the quality and originality of the innovative idea and its potential for future commercialization.
- iii. **Partnerships and collaborations:** The proposal must demonstrate the capacity of the partner institutions to contribute towards the research excellence and innovation capacity of the research teams and Host Institutions.
- iv. **Composition, quality and qualification of project teams:** The proposal must clearly define the roles of each partner, how collaboration will be done with other faculty at the University for successful project implementation.
- v. **Gender responsiveness:** The proposal should demonstrate how men and women may be affected by the project and its results. It should ensure equitable participation of men and women and inclusiveness of persons with disability and minority groups if possible.

### 3.5 Research teams and partnerships

Lead applicants applying for the grants must be affiliated to a PhD program in one of the RSIF African Host Universities. Partnerships can be established with International partners (if possible scientists from African Scientific Diaspora working in research institutions globally) and or private companies, technology hubs, business incubators and accelerators for the successful implementation of the projects.

Collaborators play a key role in providing technical or other expertise. Their role of the collaborators should be clearly defined in the proposal and may be part of the collaborative project agreement. RSIF will not provide direct funding to collaborators, they may however, complement the resources provided by RSIF as cash or in-kind contributions.

### 3.6 Student Involvement

RSIF PhD scholars should be provided opportunities to conduct their doctoral research projects within research grants. This will enable them to gain relevant skills for research excellence linking scientific ideas and technologies to business/ market. RSIF will NOT provide student stipends for the period of their research under the research Grants budgets.

### 3.7 Matching Funds

Matching funds may be required in varying proportions depending on the type of the RSIF grant. Support from RSIF will be conditional on the demonstration of strong organizational support as well as matching funds from either the African Host University, International partner or private company as indicated in the Call for proposal document for the respective grant.

### 3.8 Decision for Funding

Funding decision will be based on recommendations of the Grants Independent Technical Committee and subsequent approval by the PASET Executive Board. Selected project teams will then sign a project grant agreement with *icipe* for funding by the RSIF project upon negotiation of workplans and budgets. The Project Leader may not change the project partners during the life of the project. However, should one of the team members be unable to continue participating the project implementation, the Project Leader should inform the RCU immediately.

### 3.9 Research Ethics

The African Host University is responsible for addressing ethical issues relating to the research project including completing the necessary due diligence in regard to ethics approval from a relevant regulatory body and securing free, explicit, and informed consent from any individuals who participate in the research approval to undertake the research must be granted before any work requiring approval begins. Ethical issues should be interpreted broadly and may encompass, among other things, relevant codes of practice, the involvement of human participants and any other issues in the conduct of the research that may result in damage to the environment and the use of sensitive economic, social or personal data.

In the process of preparing the project application, the Applicant is obliged to observe ethical principles and rules and describe how ethical issues in the application will be addressed. The applicant should indicate plans to obtain ethical approval from relevant bodies, if the project application involves human or animal subjects.

### 3.10 Misconduct and Conflict of Interest

The African Host Universities are required to have in place procedures for governing good research practice, and for investigating and reporting unacceptable research conduct. The African Host University must upon request provide information on its management of research integrity and ethics and must ensure that potential conflicts of interest in research are declared and subsequently managed.

### 3.11 Transfer of Grant to another Research Institution

Transfer of the grant to another Institution is not allowed. The Implementing partner will be required to maintain the partnerships indicated in the research proposal during the life of the project. Collaborating partners may only be changed under exceptional circumstances that affect the ability of the collaborating partner to participate in the research; this includes but is not limited to:

- Loss of legal status
- Corruption allegations on the collaborating partners
- Acts of God, War (Declared and Undeclared)

- Illness and other objective circumstances which prevent the ability of partner to perform duties under project

Under these circumstances, the Implementing partner will notify *icipe* of the prevailing circumstances. In the case where the Project Leader intends to transfer project activities to another organization and or department or becomes unable to continue with the research for such reasons as retirement, resignation or any other cause, the African Host University must notify *icipe* and a substitute Project Leader will be appointed by the African Host University in consultation with *icipe*.

*Icipe* will require that the replacement meets the eligibility criteria and has the expertise and experience to lead the project to a successful conclusion, in accordance with outlined research project objectives.

## 4 Project Grant Agreements

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### 4.1 Conditions of Engagement

A project Grant Agreement

is signed between *icipe* and the implementing project partner organization. It states the roles and responsibilities of the project leader, project partners, and *icipe* with respect to the project being implemented. The implementing partner organization reviews the agreement and if acceptable, signs and returns it to *icipe* for signature on its part. The project agreement becomes effective with signatures by all parties

### 4.2 Signatories to the Project Grant Agreements

The signatories to the project agreement shall be the Director General of *icipe* and heads of the implementation partner organization or their designees.

### 4.3 Collaborative Project Agreements

Each implementing partner organization shall sign a collaborative project agreement (CPA)/ MoU that defines the relationship between partners. Such an agreement shall define the role of each partner, the amount and schedule of their contributions, reporting and monitoring requirements, as well as the intellectual property rights of each partner. It shall also define and govern any movement of genetic materials between and among the partners, as well as third parties. The implementing partner organization shall submit a signed collaborative project agreement to the RCU

## 5 Project Implementation

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### 5.1 Commencement of Project Implementation

A project commences after the signing of the project agreement with *icipe*. The Centre disburses the first instalment of funds to the implementing partners upon signing the project agreement, for starting up initial activities of the project, based on the approved yearly plan of activities (format for yearly plan of activities/annual work plan will be provided). *icipe* shall record the actual commencement of every project for management and monitoring/evaluation purposes.

## 5.2 Project Inception Meeting

The Project inception meeting should be held when the following are in place:

- a. The project Agreement has been signed.
- b. The RCU has received a yearly plan of activities or annual work plan for the first year (YPA 1).
- c. The Project has made adequate preparations in terms of project inputs (such as facilities, project sites, and related arrangements).

The Project Leader shall notify the RCU in writing about the date and venue, as well as list of participants of the project inception meeting. The Project shall submit an inception report to the RCU within 14 days after the inception meeting. Partners should discuss the working modalities and sign the Project collaborating agreement/MOU.

*Icipe* will hold an orientation meeting to all successful applicants to provide guidance on overall project implementation, compliance and reporting practice. This meeting will be done after project grant agreements have been signed.

## 5.3 Environmental Considerations including safe guards

All projects receiving funding from RSIF must adhere to the environmental and social safeguard policies of the World Bank. Project Leaders are expected to make an appropriate assessment of the environmental impact of the project activities as early as practicable in the planning stages of the research.

The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process ensures an appropriate assessment of the environmental impacts of all projects that could potentially have adverse impacts on the environment. The extent of the EIA largely depends on the nature of the project:

### **Category A: EIA is required**

The proposed project or related activities involves “construction, operation, modification, decommissioning, abandonment or other activity undertaken in relation to a physical work”, which is defined as “a structure in a fixed location”.

### **Category B: EIA is recommended**

The proposed project or related activities do not involve the construction, operation, modification, decommissioning, abandonment, or other activity undertaken in relation to a physical work, but still may have significant environmental impact.

### **Category C EIA is not required**

The proposed project is neither related to “physical work” nor has a significant environmental impact. While an EIA is not required, it is recommended that the implementing partner incorporate environmental considerations into the scope of their project

To meet the requirements of the World Bank Environmental Safeguard policies, the Lead Applicants are required to complete the Environmental Screening forms that inform the potential environmental impact of the proposed projects during proposal submission. *Icipe* will review the forms and the environmental assessment process in detail during the project inception, and at any time during project implementation.

The World Bank can request to review and audit all EIAs for a project at any time. Therefore, it is required that Projects establish a process for implementing the EIA mitigation plan process as soon as possible after research

inception. A review/audit may take place in the form of a document review or a field visit observation. The project will provide regular updates on the progress on managing the EI of the project in the biannual

technical progress reports. Further guidance on completing the environmental assessment will be provided by the RCU.

#### 5.4 Communication and Publications

RSIF attaches great importance to the dissemination of results and all award holders are expected to publish the results of their research in the appropriate scientific journals. All published papers should acknowledge support received from RSIF and should cite the award using the following form of words: This is essential in helping to publicize the work of RSIF and providing an indicator of the success of the investment. Please help us to ensure continued funding for scientific research remains a priority by acknowledging RSIF when you publicize your research project.

RSIF reserves the right of access to all unpublished papers, records, or collections resulting from the work carried out under an award, some of which may be required to be deposited with RSIF. Similarly, RSIF reserves the right to use information on the outcome of the grants in annual reports, strategic plans, and for scientific and financial audit, and may from time to time require current and former award holders to provide detailed information on the results of work funded.

#### 5.5 Intellectual Property Rights

It is the responsibility of the African Host University, and all parties engaged in the research project, to make every reasonable effort to ensure that the intellectual assets obtained in the course of the research, whether protected by intellectual property rights or not, are used to the benefit of society and the economy. Research outcomes should be disseminated to both research and more widespread audiences to inform potential users and beneficiaries of the research.

Ownership of any intellectual property developed or created by RSIF PhD Scholars and University faculty which has been innovated or invented as a result of participating in RSIF funded activities at the University shall be determined by the University's Intellectual Property Policy.

However, ownership of any intellectual property developed or created by RSIF PhD Scholars and faculty as a result of joint research activity during the course of any partnership that is supported by RSIF funds, shall be vested in both partners. Partners shall have the joint right to determine the commercial exploitation and disposition of such intellectual property, and partners shall enter in good faith discussions in order to make joint applications for the registration of the same. Before any registration or commercialization of any intellectual property takes place, the partners agree to reach a separate agreement covering issues such as exploitation rights and revenue sharing. Any publication regarding such intellectual property shall only be possible with the prior written consent of all partners, with the understanding that such consent should not be unreasonably withheld.

Arrangements for collaboration and/or exploitation must not prevent the future progression of research and the dissemination of research results in accordance with academic custom and practice.

## 6 GRANTS FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

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### 6.1 Financial Management

Sound financial management is essential for the effective and efficient implementation of projects. RSIF's financial management activities will be carried out within the financial and administrative framework of *icipe* and contractual provisions between the Fund's donors and *icipe*. These provisions will, by extension, apply to implementing partners. It is incumbent upon *icipe* and partners to ensure that the Fund's financial resources are correctly and effectively used for the Project.

### 6.2 Project Budget

The proposed costs represent the best estimate of the necessary costs to achieve Project results, and therefore must be well-developed and realistic. Budget notes are included in the approved budget to further clarify what eligible costs or activities are being included under each line item in the budget.

#### 6.2.1 Project Budget Adjustments

During project implementation, it may come to pass that planned activities may have to change or be rescheduled, cancelled, or altered, based on needs on the ground. Programmatic and activity changes may have corresponding budgetary implications, thereby necessitating revisions. In all such cases, any change to the project budget must be reviewed and approved by *icipe*. The RSIF RCU project representative must be notified in advance of any proposed changes and will advise on whether changes are allowable and the procedure by which they must be submitted for approval.

The reallocation of expenditures between expenditure categories in the project budget that are below 10% of the affected expenditure line items are permitted without any requirement for pre-approval by RSIF-RCU. Such allocations affecting any line item by 10% or more must be approved in advance by RSIF-RCU.

#### 6.2.2 Eligible Project Costs and Budgeting

##### **Eligible Project Costs**

Eligible costs are those that are budgeted, approved and incurred as expenses in implementing the Project. It is essential to ensure that the costs are:

- a. Budgeted for and approved by the relevant authority;
- b. Incurred for the purposes of the project; and
- c. Reasonable when compared to the prevailing market prices.

### 6.2.3 Budget line categories

To enhance an effective and efficient project implementation, output-based budgeting shall be used as the more preferred option to the natural cost classification budgeting

In the preparation of project budgets, common cost categories include:

	<b>Cost Category</b>	<b>Covers</b>
a)	Personnel	Coordination allowance to key research team members. Due to budget constraints the project may not provide an allowance to all research team members. Refer to the budget notes provided in the budget template for the maximum allowance to be provided to research teams based on the type of grant.
b)	Capital Assets	Minor research equipment necessary for project implementation up to \$3,000
c)	Renovations and minor civil works	Minor construction and remodeling of laboratories up to a max of 10% of total budget.
c)	Research Supplies and services	Research consumables, casual labour (wages) and consulting and expertise for special outsourced services
d)	Travel and subsistence	Travel tickets, ground transfers, accommodation, subsistence allowance (per diem) for project related activities...etc
e)	Operation costs	Workshop Printing, copy, scanning, internet connectivity, bank charges and other direct expenses related to the project
f)	Overhead costs (Indirect costs)	Support to Administering organization responsible for the implementation of a project to cover costs such as non-scientific staff, other non-specific utilities, office services such as photocopy, printing, office stationery etc) calculated as a percentage of total direct costs. Max allowable overhead is 10%. Host Institutions are encouraged to provide overheads as part of their in-kind contribution to the project.

### 6.3 Disbursement of Funds

Subject to the continued availability of grants funds from the donor for the support of the research and innovation activities, *icipe* will disburse funds to the African Host University subject to continued compliance with the terms of all the grant documents and the continued satisfaction of all conditions precedent to disbursing the Grant fund under the Grant Agreement.

### 6.3.1 Initial Disbursement

Initial disbursement of funds by *icipe* to implementing partners will be contingent upon:

- a. Disbursement to *icipe* from the World Bank (or other donors) and upon approval of RSIF yearly activity plans and the budget thereof;
- b. The implementing partner's fulfilment of requisite requirements, including:
  - i. Signed project grant agreement,
  - ii. Signed collaborative project agreement (s),
  - iii. Approved activity plan and budget,
  - iv. Separate bank account or the equivalent thereof, and
  - v. Satisfactory completion of a partner's institutional/ financial and administrative assessment form.

### 6.3.2 Subsequent Disbursement

Subsequent fund disbursements will be contingent upon:

- a. Approved activity plan and budget for the implementation period, in line with the agreed project milestones;
- b. A satisfactory technical and financial report to account for the previous advance;
- c. Approved cash request by the project leader and *icipe* thematic budget holder

### 6.3.3 Final Disbursement

*icipe* will make the final disbursement of funds upon receipt of the last biannual progress report and a justified request for payment, considering the costs foreseen in the last Yearly Planned Activities necessary to complete the project. An amount equivalent to 10% of the last half-year budget will be retained by *icipe* until satisfactory final technical and financial reports are submitted. The implementing partner shall return to *icipe* any unused funds within one month of submission of the final reports

### 6.3.4 Withholding Fund Disbursements

*icipe* may withhold the disbursement, wholly or in part in the following circumstances:

- a. Loss of focus on the main objective(s).
- b. Occurrence of substantial deviations from the project plan and budget.
- c. Failure to deliver reports and to meet reporting schedules as agreed.

*icipe* shall, however, initiate discussions with the concerned project partners, before taking such a decision. In case of substantial deviation from project plans and budgets presented in the partner agreement, *icipe* may recover the disbursed amount, wholly or in part, from the affected project(s)

## 6.4 Interest earned on project funds

Any interest earned while Project Funds are in deposit at the Host University's bank, whether in a separate Project account or in a general account, shall be fully credited to the Project and reported as earnings in Project financial reports. Such Project earnings shall be applied to the Project with *icipe's* approval

## 6.5 Transfer of funds between African Host Universities and its Collaborating Partners

As part of enhancing research capacity development among African Host Universities, Lead Applicants are expected to have formed partnerships at the point of submission of the proposals. These collaborating partners will not receive funding directly from the award but will have a key role in the successful implementation of the projects. *icipe* will therefore disburse funds to the Host University as per the Grant Agreement who will in turn support their collaborating partners.

The Collaborating Agreement(s) drawn by the African Host University with their collaborating partners should clearly outline the funding mechanisms or arrangements including matching funding as agreed by the parties.

## 6.6 Financial Reporting

The project's financial information on fund utilization shall be frequently reviewed, to ensure that it can generate reports that will satisfy the project's reporting requirements and facilitate managing of project operations.

This includes suitable arrangements for: (i) communicating financial information to the Project leader, project teams, and *icipe*; and (ii) setting clear procedures for preparing, signing and submitting the financial report required by the Project. There shall be periodic comparison of project activities against plan, and actual expenses against budget, to enable *icipe* and project teams to assess the quality and performance of the projects.

## 6.7 Use of funds

- a. Management of grant funds and authorization of expenditure are the responsibility of the Lead Applicant. Expenditure of funds must comply with the terms of the grant agreement, and the RSIF African Host University's financial management policies and procedures. In respect of the management of grant funds where collaborative or multi-institutional grants are approved, the Lead Applicant is to advise the Finance team of action to be taken in respect of income and expenditure to/ from other partners if not clearly defined in the collaborating agreements and project budget.
- b. All funds for this grant received by the recipient must be accounted for in a separate bookkeeping process as part the Project financial records.
- c. The funds shall be used solely for the Project, and in accordance with the approved budget. *icipe* may suspend any payments of funds if this Agreement is not complied with.
- d. Funds allocated to one budget category shall not be transferred to another budget category without the express prior approval of *icipe* Budget reallocations of not more than 10% on each budget item are allowed without prior approval of *icipe* without exceeding the total budget allocation.
- e. The Implementing partner shall take every precaution against any unauthorized use of the funds and shall always keep up-to-date and full accounts of the expenditures incurred by the Project. *icipe* may at any time request a financial statement from the Grantee accompanied by certified balances
- f. Funds remaining unutilized after the completion of the Project shall be remitted to *icipe* in the contract currency within one month of the specified Project completion date, and without separate request unless their use is otherwise approved by *icipe*.

## 6.8 Financial Reporting Requirements

Financial reporting will be carried out biannually based on the budget and activity plans for the reporting period and comply with all applicable accounting standards.

The following will constitute a biannual or annual financial report:

- a. A summary financial report duly signed and as per the official standard reporting template clearly indicating the matching fund component;
- b. An expense listing of the amounts reported in the financial reports;
- c. Certified copies of supporting documents relating to all figures reported including matching funds;
- d. An updated inventory list of assets procured under the project;
- e. A copy of the bank statement reconciled showing funds received;
- f. Variance explanations for a specific budget line that are over **or under 10%** require explanations. They should represent the most accurate and transparent explanation for under- or over-spending in a particular budget line item during the reporting period and an explanation of remedial action to be taken.
- g. Any other relevant documentation as may be requested from time to time.
- h. Financial reports **MUST** be signed by the authorized officers of the African Host University.

All the implementing partner organizations will prepare and send a signed hard copy, as well as a soft copy, of their financial reports to *icipe*. Upon receipt of a financial report, *icipe* shall notify the implementing partner, in writing, of any errors, omissions or clarification required in the report, in which case any outstanding payment will be withheld until the report is deemed acceptable. Templates for financial reporting will be provided upon signing of grant agreement.

### 6.8.1 Reporting Schedule

Biannual technical and financial reports shall be sent to the *icipe* as per the schedule below:

Report Type	Reporting Period	Reporting Due date
Financial and Technical	Nov 1 <sup>st</sup> to April 30 <sup>th</sup>	May 31 <sup>st</sup>
Financial and Technical	May 1 <sup>st</sup> to October 31 <sup>st</sup>	Nov 30 <sup>th</sup>

## 6.9 Auditing

The Implementing Partner should ensure the proper preservation of supporting documentation relating to expenses incurred to implement the project, including those of its Subcontractors, ultimate recipients, or collaborating partners. *icipe* can conduct audits at their own expense as may be considered necessary using audit staff selected by the donor. A risk-based approach and assessment of the project will determine the scope, timeline, nature and extent of the audit activities.

The Implementing partner shall allow and facilitate access by auditors appointed by either the Donor or *icipe* to project sites and to relevant records for the purposes of monitoring, evaluating and audit of the project. *icipe* will endeavor to provide reasonable advance notice to the Implementing partner.

*icipe* may request the Implementing partner's authorized representatives to confirm the total income and expenditure in respect to the Grant for a period as maybe requested by the *icipe* external auditors.

Following an audit, all costs classified as disallowable or questionable by internal or external auditors appointed and instructed by *icipe* or the Donor must be returned to *icipe* within 30 calendars of receipt of the repayment notice in the either of the following forms:

- Deposit of equivalent amount of funds to *icipe*'s bank accounts
- Adjustment of previously reported expenses by the project for an equivalent amount

The following is a general guiding audit checklist:

- a. Reporting is in accordance with agreed conditions;
- b. Activities for which funds were awarded have been implemented;
- c. Costs stated in accounts agree with actual supporting documentation and/or examined reports from recipient party;
- d. Reported expenses are adequately supported including adequate procurement procedures;
- e. The matching funding component has been accounted for correctly;
- f. The organization has signed an agreement(s) with the collaborating partners;
- g. The partner organization has a separate bank account or equivalent arrangement for managing funds and that transactions with it are signed by a minimum of two individuals in the implementing organization;
- h. Received and accrued interest on funds is accounted for correctly.

#### 6.10 Financial Records Management

The creation and maintenance of records is integral to the implementation of project activities, and there is an implicit assumption that records of all actions are kept by *icipe* and by extension, implementing partners. The records must be filed and made available to support each stage of the project cycle.

All records created for each financial transaction must form part of that transaction. Those records must be preserved and classified for ease of access, reference, and to facilitate a paper trail (supporting documentation) and production of financial reports.

These documents include, for example:

- a. Payment vouchers
- b. Supplier's/provider's invoices
- c. Delivery note/receipts
- d. Quotations
- e. Purchase order
- f. Goods received notes
- g. Service delivery reports
- h. Field trip reports
- i. Training reports
- j. Confirmation of payment from the paying institution
- k. Acknowledgement receipt of payment from the receiving institution.

NB: It is important to ensure the following in the above documents:

- a. Legible narration of what the expense relates to;
- b. Relevant dates
- c. Relevant requesting, approving, and authorizing signatures
- d. Clearly stated amount
- e. Relevant stampings, for example "PAID".

The chart below provides a breakdown of the **minimum** required supporting documentation for the various categories of eligible project costs.

Expense Category	Required Supporting Documentation
<b>Project Personnel</b> and Consultancy Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signed letter of offer or contract, indicating salary, employment period, and paid and time off benefits</li> <li>• Timesheets supporting time claimed</li> <li>• Invoices for services provided, with proof of payment</li> <li>• Evidence of salary payments</li> <li>• Consultancy report</li> </ul>
<b>Travel Costs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Travel request form</li> <li>• Tickets, boarding passes, airport tax receipts and other proof of travel</li> <li>• Signed vehicle rental agreements and log books for vehicle usage</li> <li>• Disclosure of exchange rate used for currency conversion</li> </ul>
<b>Meals and Accommodation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Travel request form or stay arrangement form</li> <li>• Accommodation invoices and receipts</li> <li>• Receipts/ per-diem as per Host Institutions travel policy</li> </ul>
<b>Procurement of Goods and Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Procurement of goods and services request form</li> <li>• Documentation supporting an adequate procurement process, as applicable e.g quotations, procurement committee minutes, LPOs etc</li> <li>• Invoices for goods or services, as applicable, with proof of payment</li> </ul>
<b>Training Expenses/ Conference and Workshop Costs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Documentation supporting the objective of the activity</li> <li>• A copy of the training/ workshop/ conference report</li> <li>• A list of participants</li> <li>• A record of attendance</li> <li>• Signed terms of employment of the trainer, if applicable</li> <li>• Original invoices for services provided, as applicable, with proof of payment</li> </ul>
<b>Other Common Operational Costs/ Overhead costs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Documentation supporting the cost calculated</li> <li>• Invoices for amount charged, as applicable, with proof of payment</li> </ul>

## 6.11 Foreign Transactions and Exchanges in Local Currency

There will be situations where a transaction is recorded in the accounts in local currency and for various reasons, payment or settlement of this transaction is made in a different currency, such as U.S. dollars. All currency regulations in the project country must be observed for every payment.

Expenses paid in local currency should be translated at spot exchange rate to the reporting currency for reporting purposes. Exchange losses realised as a result of foreign exchange transactions are not allowable expenditure.

Implementing partners should closely monitor exchange gains/ losses during implementation, exchange gains can be used to scale up project activities. Cases of adverse losses which may significantly affect delivery of project outputs and deliverables should be brought to the attention of *icipe*.

# 7 Project Monitoring and Reporting

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## 7.1 Introduction

*icipe* aims to ensure that funding provided under the RSIF grants are used as efficiently as possible, to achieve the desired impact. Thus, it is necessary for all actors to implement a continuous and rigorous system of monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL). Each project is required to have a results-based management (RBM) framework that has clear outputs and outcomes, as well as indicators. *icipe* shall ensure that project outputs and outcome indicators are well structured and project performance monitored annually. The results from the annual monitoring exercise will inform *icipe* and the PASET governance bodies on the project's continuity.

## 7.2 Project Monitoring and Review

### 7.2.1 Monitoring by the Project Teams

All project teams shall have an in-built monitoring system, to assess progress towards achieving their objectives. This may involve setting up a project steering committee comprising at least three members including the Project Leader. Implementing the monitoring system shall be part of the annual workplans and in accordance with the results-based management framework of the project. Results of the monitoring shall be incorporated in the progress reports submitted to *icipe*.

### 7.2.2 Monitoring by *icipe*

*icipe* shall monitor the outcome indicators and performance targets annually, to help track progress towards realising the Programme's objectives. *icipe* uses information in the consolidated projects' technical and financial reports in the monitoring exercise. Additionally, *icipe* shall make field visits (where necessary), to collect relevant indicator data.

### 7.2.3 Review Missions

*icipe* shall conduct periodic project review missions to project sites. These will include visits to, and interaction with, Project teams and heads of their organisations, as well as other stakeholders. The aim of the review mission is to assess progress with implementation of project activities, as per the approved project annual workplans and budgets. The review missions cover technical and financial aspects of project implementation. Photographs and videos may be taken during the review missions, and may be used in RSIF publications, to document success stories and for archiving in a photo library.

### 7.3 Project Technical Reports

Drafting and submitting accurate, timely, informative, and results-based reports is a critical component of the management of the project. All narrative reports are to be prepared jointly by the Implementing partner and all collaborating partners in the Project. The reports may contain visual materials, e.g. graphs, diagrams, pictures, and audio-visual clips.

The main reports include

- a. inception report;
- b. technical progress reports;
- c. financial reports, and
- d. completion report.

#### 7.3.1 Inception report

Within one month of signing the project agreement, the Project Leader shall convene an inception meeting involving the project team members and relevant stakeholders. The Project Leader shall share the agenda, venue, and list of participants of the meeting with *icipe* prior to the meeting. The inception meeting aims to bring all partners on board, involve stakeholders, kick-start project activities, and address any outstanding implementation issues.

The project team shall prepare and submit an inception report to *icipe* within two weeks of the meeting.

The report shall contain the following information:

- a. Title, date and venue of the meeting
- b. Project summary
- c. Issues discussed including key activities for the next 6 months
- d. Recommendations
- e. Actions to address recommendations and timelines for those actions
- f. Annexes: One group photo, list of participants, and any other relevant information.

If, within three months after signing the project agreement, the project has not embarked on any of the planned activities, the implementing partner will report to *icipe*, stating:

- a. Reasons for the delay in start-up;
- b. Any preparatory activities that are nevertheless underway;
- c. Measures that are being taken, or could be taken, to commence activities;
- d. Any revision of the detailed workplan that appears necessary because of the delay.

If within a further three months there is still no progress, *icipe* will bring the matter to the attention of the RSIF Grants Independent Technical Committee at the next meeting.

### 7.3.2 Technical progress Reports

Technical Progress reports shall be prepared by the Project Leader biannually (every 6 months) and submitted alongside the financial reports to *icipe* by **15<sup>th</sup> of June and 15<sup>th</sup> of Dec.** A format for preparing progress reports is will be provided by the RCU. The technical progress report shall contain appendices such as manuscripts, publications, images or other technical information that explains the scientific results, findings, products, and so on, of a project.

### 7.3.3 End of Project Report

The purpose of the end of project report is to record all the relevant information regarding the project. The completion report summarizes the main outputs of the project and the extent to which the objectives have been achieved. It also includes a summary of the resources used. The format for the end of project reports will be provided. The project team may hold a final Project Results and Experience-sharing Meeting.

The Project Leader shall submit the end of project report within **three months** after the end date of the project as per the project grant agreement.

A project is officially closed when *icipe* have accepted and approved the completion report. The financial closure is marked by the acceptance of the final external audit report, and by the reimbursement of any unused funds and disposal/transfer of capital goods by the implementing organization.

Subsequently, if it is decided by the donor to arrange an ex-post evaluation or such an evaluation has already been specifically provided for in the project agreement, the completion report will be one of the inputs provided to such an evaluation.

### 7.3.4 Special Reports

If at any time the implementing organization discerns that achievement of the project's objectives is significantly endangered by unexpected external events, or by failures in any part of the detailed work plan that the project team is not able to rectify, it shall immediately report the situation to *icipe* with an analysis of the issues and recommendations.

*icipe* shall commence a special review to assess the situation together with the Project Leader; and, if necessary, with the representatives of the PASET CAG/Executive Board. If funds are committed, it will also promptly report the situation to the World Bank. Such special reports shall be in the same format as the project progress report.

*icipe* may also request on a regular basis project updates as may be required before the biannual reporting time. to inform management decisions.

## 8 Project Suspension and Close Out

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### 8.1 Project Suspension and Termination

In cases where there is clear violation of the project agreement (fraud, waste, neglect, or mismanagement), or where it appears that the conditions surrounding the project have changed and the successful completion of the specific project is unlikely, *icipe*, in consultation with the PASET Governance Bodies, may suspend project activities and disbursement of funds pending review. There shall be no further disbursement and/or use of funds during suspension. Furthermore, the project team shall compile a list of outstanding obligations as at the time of suspension and submit to *icipe*. The implementing partner shall keep all assets acquired under the project in safe custody. The outcome of the review shall determine whether the suspension is lifted, or the project is terminated. The project may also be terminated and wound up in accordance with the relevant article in the project grant agreement.

### 8.2 Project Close Out

*Icipe* will initiate closure of the project after:

- a. Approval of the completion report;
- b. Receipt of satisfactory final audited financial statements;
- c. Receipt of the unused funds, if any, from the implementing partner;
- d. Refund of outstanding balances, if any, to the implementing partner; and
- e. Transfer of ownership of assets acquired under the project to the implementing organization