



## Call for research proposals

### 1. Background

Rwanda has an ambitious long term objective of becoming a middle income country by 2035 and a high income country by 2050. Gaining a positive trade balance is a prerequisite to realize this objective. Towards this, Rwanda has to prepare well and venture into the modern state of international business through well-configured global trade deals. The latter result into favourable trading activities to drive the nation from trade deficit to trade surplus economy.

Therefore, it is necessary to build the suitable and best talents to serve the trading sector, besides having a right trading policy with administrative support and well-designed outreach activities to involve the stakeholders. The World Trade Organization's Chair Programme (WCP) offers the opportunities to build talents, get policy oriented research results and outreach activities to engage the stakeholders' groups. In particular, the WCP at University of Rwanda looks forward to conducting research that is relevant to inform about how to boost Rwanda's regional trade integration with additional focus on trade policy and multilateral trade-related issues.

It is against this background that the University of Rwanda (UR) in partnership with the World Trade Organisation (WTO) is implementing the World Trade Organisation Chairs Programme (WCP) Phase III in Rwanda. The WCP's objective is to strengthen knowledge and understanding of the trading system among academics, citizens and policy makers in Rwanda by stimulating not only teaching and outreach activities but also research in relation to international trade.

Research activities are undertaken to suggest solutions to existing problems in the trading sector.

### 2. Themes:

The WTO Chairs Programme at UR invites research grant proposals in the area of international trade. The grant of a maximum of Rwf 7,000,000 aims to support research activities in the following areas:

- Regional trade and trade policy
- International trade agreements and policies

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- Africa's benefits and challenges to regional and international trade
- Digital trade
- The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)
- Trade financing
- Global value chains and trade
- Trade and environment
- Trade and gender
- Artificial intelligence and trade ecosystem

### 3. Eligibility:

- The PI should be a UR academic staff; and
- A PI must be a holder of a PhD degree, and where the PI does not have a PhD degree but has a Master's degree, the Co-Investigator (Co-I) must have a PhD degree; and
- A PI or Co-PI should have a proven research experience in trade related areas

### 4. Selection criteria:

- The quality of the proposed research based on title, abstract (max. 300 words), background of the study, research aim, research problem, literature review, methodology and contribution to knowledge or practice
- Relevance to Rwanda and international trade and reflects one or more research themes
- Research team composition: inclusion of at least one of the WTO Chairs programme team, one of the stakeholders (refer to the attached lists) and a Postgraduate student, preferably a doctoral student who is a UR Staff. Gender balance must be taken into account in terms of composition of research teams.
- Research plan and a detailed budget (ability to complete the research by end of August 2025)
- Output: A publishable research manuscript submitted to a peer-reviewed journal for review and a policy brief based on the manuscript (by end of August 2025).
- The research team must have a proven evidence of research activeness based on research publications in the UR approved journal databases

Submissions in word document should be forwarded through e-mail to the WTO Chair ([jbarayandema@ur.ac.rw](mailto:jbarayandema@ur.ac.rw)) with a copy to the WTO Co-Chair ([fniragire@ur.ac.rw](mailto:fniragire@ur.ac.rw)).

### 5. Important dates:

#### Important Dates and Deadlines:

Deadline for submission of research proposals	: 14/03/2025 at Midi night
Notification of review/acceptance	: 04/04/2025

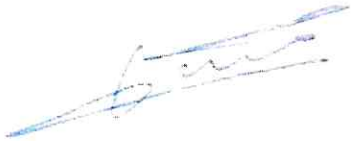
**WTO Chairs programme team:**

Prof Jonas Barayandema  
Prof François Niragire  
Prof Samuel Mutarindwa  
Dr Jean Bosco Shema  
Dr Fidele Mutemberezi

**Stakeholders:**

MINOCOM, BNR, MINAFFET, Private Sector Federation, TradeMark East Africa, International Growth Centre, International Trading Corporation, UNECA, EPRN, UNDP, etc.

**Prepared by:**



Prof Jonas Barayandema  
WTO, Chair



**Approved by:**



Dr Joseph Nkurunziza  
Ag Principal  
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