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## CALL FOR PhD AND MSc SMALL RESEARCH GRANTS APPLICATIONS IN BIODIVERSITY AND NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

### I. Introduction

The Centre of Excellence in Biodiversity and Natural Resource Management (CoEB) at the University of Rwanda in collaboration with the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and Rwanda Forest Authority (RFA) has been implementing an activity to build research capacity within the “Reducing Vulnerability to Climate Change through Enhanced Community-based Biodiversity Conservation in Eastern Rwanda” (COMBIO) project. This will be accomplished by supporting postgraduate student research whose focus is to support evaluation research of COMBIO and Transforming Eastern Province through Adaptation (TREPA) project impacts in the intervention sites, and the relationships between biodiversity and ecological functions, resilience, and climate change adaptation/mitigation within selected ecosystems and restoration sites in Eastern Province of Rwanda (Bugesera, Rwamagana, Kayonza, Ngoma, Gatsibo, Nyagatare and Kirehe districts). Specific objectives are (1) to assess the impact of biodiversity on ecological function and (2) impact evaluation research on the project interventions.

### II. Purpose of the small research grants

The intention is to engage one PhD student and two MSc students enrolled in UR in the assessment of the impacts of the COMBIO project on biodiversity, ecological functions, or people’s livelihoods in the areas of interventions. The research projects will focus on restoration interventions to inform what is working and what needs to be changed and adapted. Research may include studies of biodiversity and conservation, ecosystem functioning, resilience, and relationship to ecosystems and landscape conservation, health, and integrity of ecosystems (economic value, status, trends, and impact), climate change adaptation/mitigation, and social-ecological contributions, among others. This information will in turn support decision-making in the design and implementation of policies, programs, and activities that can ensure sustainable conservation and management of selected ecosystems in the eastern province. For more information about the COMBIO project please visit <https://coebiodiversity.ur.ac.rw/?q=content/research-and-monitoring>

### III. Call for applications

The UR-CoEB in collaboration with the IUCN is pleased to announce the availability of 2 MSc and 1 PhD students enrolled in UR for research in the indicated localities and areas of research.

### IV. Funding

Selected candidates will be facilitated for:

- (1) **Research:** Data collection, laboratory work, and data analysis,



- (2) **Equipment and publication:** the publication might be in a peer-reviewed and Scopus-indexed journal.

Each facilitated student will have the main supervisor from the UR/CoEB and another supervisor who may be external to UR and each shall benefit from limited financial support for the supervision work. The oversight board will work with the student to select appropriate supervisors if needed.

#### V. Application requirements

- The PhD student must be a holder of a master's degree or equivalent in the field related to the specific area of the PhD training and enrolled in one of the PhD programs offered by UR.
- The MSc student must be enrolled in one of the programs offered by UR and have experience in the domain of this call.
- Having at least one publication in the domain of interest is an additional value for PhD applicants.

#### VI. Application file

Interested candidates should submit the following documents:

- A motivation letter addressed to the UR Director of Research and Innovation justifying the specific position he/she is applying for and why he/she is the right person to get the grant.
- Each applicant must submit a detailed research proposal not exceeding 15 pages including Introduction and research objectives (3-4 paragraphs), literature review, research methodology, timeline, budget, and references. If the applicant has identified a potential supervisor, the name and contact information of the supervisor should be mentioned in the proposal. The proposal should indicate a detailed budget of 8000 USD maximum for PhD students and 5500 USD for MSc students.
- A curriculum vitae (CV)
- Certified copies of previous degrees
- Proof of enrolment in PhD or MSc program under UR
- Two recommendation letters from academic staff who know the applicant's area of research and abilities concerning research activities.

#### VII. Selection methodology

Applicants will be evaluated based on the quality of their proposals: writing quality, quality of the literature review that shows an understanding of the seminal and current relevant literature, the relationship of the research questions to the intention of the research funding opportunity, probability that the research outputs will provide information to assess COMBIO and/or TREPA project impacts, and the applicant's prior experience based on evidence from CV and letters of recommendation. Shortlisted candidates will be invited to the interview on dates that will be communicated through email.





**VIII. How to apply and key dates**

A copy of the complete application file should be submitted by email to the UR-DRI at [i.bideri@ur.ac.rw](mailto:i.bideri@ur.ac.rw) with a copy to [coeb@ur.ac.rw](mailto:coeb@ur.ac.rw), Dr. Venuste Nsengimana: [venusteok@gmail.com](mailto:venusteok@gmail.com)/[v.nsengimana3@ur.ac.rw](mailto:v.nsengimana3@ur.ac.rw) and Alice Dukuze at: [alicedukuze2022@gmail.com](mailto:alicedukuze2022@gmail.com)

Note: A candidate should submit only one application

**The application should be submitted no later than 25 May 2024**

For more information, contact:

The project contact: Mr Venant NZIBAZA (Project Coordinator, Email: [nzibazavenant@gmail.com](mailto:nzibazavenant@gmail.com) and Tel: 0785646244)

Done at Kigali .....13.....May 2024



**Assoc Prof KAYIHURA Muganga Didas**  
**Ag. Vice Chancellor**