

Strategies for a Successful PhD

Baldwyn Torto

Behavioral and Chemical Ecology Unit
International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology
Nairobi, Kenya

June 3, 2020

The **PASET** Regional Scholarship and Innovation Fund

An Africa-led initiative to bridge the skills gap in Applied Sciences, Engineering, & Technology



Regional Coordination Unit



1

Where do you see yourself in 10 years?



The **PASET** Regional Scholarship and Innovation Fund

An Africa-led initiative to bridge the skills gap in Applied Sciences, Engineering, & Technology



Regional Coordination Unit



2

Why a PhD program?



- Employability
- To be the first from my village
- Learn more about the subject
- A natural step
- To be a Professor

The **PASET** Regional Scholarship and Innovation Fund



An Africa-led initiative to bridge the skills gap in Applied Sciences, Engineering, & Technology

Regional Coordination Unit



3

Strategies



The **PASET** Regional Scholarship and Innovation Fund



An Africa-led initiative to bridge the skills gap in Applied Sciences, Engineering, & Technology

Regional Coordination Unit



4

Step 1: GOALS



The **PASET** Regional Scholarship and Innovation Fund

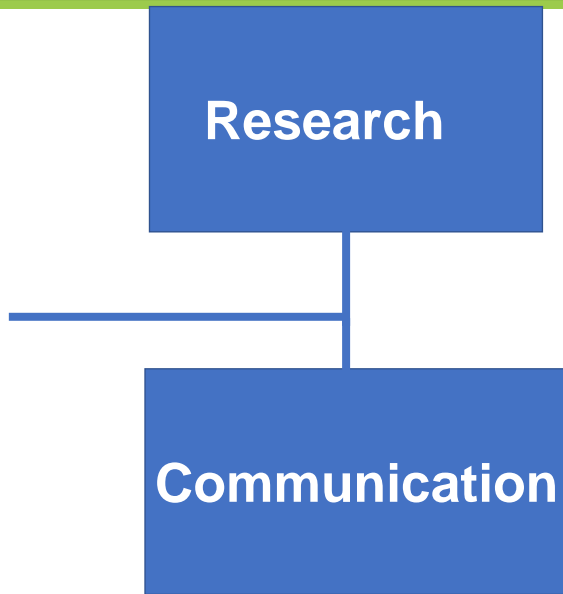


Regional Coordination Unit



5

Step 2: PLANNING



The **PASET** Regional Scholarship and Innovation Fund



Regional Coordination Unit



6

A) Research



Selecting a potential mentor

The **PASET** Regional Scholarship and Innovation Fund



An Africa-led initiative to bridge the skills gap in Applied Sciences, Engineering, & Technology

Regional Coordination Unit



7

How do you find out about a potential mentor?



- Publications
- Websites/webpages
- Professional meetings
- Contact the mentor
- Face-to-face meetings

The **PASET** Regional Scholarship and Innovation Fund



An Africa-led initiative to bridge the skills gap in Applied Sciences, Engineering, & Technology

Regional Coordination Unit



8

Main Research Components

- Formulating and selecting the research idea
- Design and experimentation
- Ethics (Standard Research Practice)
- Data Management Plan
- Monitor plan

Mentor



Bottom up and
not top down

Mentee

The **PASET** Regional Scholarship and Innovation Fund



An Africa-led initiative to bridge the skills gap in Applied Sciences, Engineering, & Technology

Regional Coordination Unit



9

Communication

- Establish a communication strategy

e.g. listen, read and learn, attend scientific writing workshops, present at internal seminars (lab and student seminars), publish good papers (**start with a review paper**), learn and attempt grant writing; mentor undergrad. students, interns...

The **PASET** Regional Scholarship and Innovation Fund



An Africa-led initiative to bridge the skills gap in Applied Sciences, Engineering, & Technology

Regional Coordination Unit



10

GET on to the big stage



- Professional membership/ meetings
- Awards
- Mini-Grants

The **PASET** Regional Scholarship and Innovation Fund



An Africa-led initiative to bridge the skills gap in Applied Sciences, Engineering, & Technology

Regional Coordination Unit



11

Step 3: Time Management



Balancing multiple responsibilities

- To do list
- Rank tasks
- Minimize distractions
- Track your time
- ??

The **PASET** Regional Scholarship and Innovation Fund



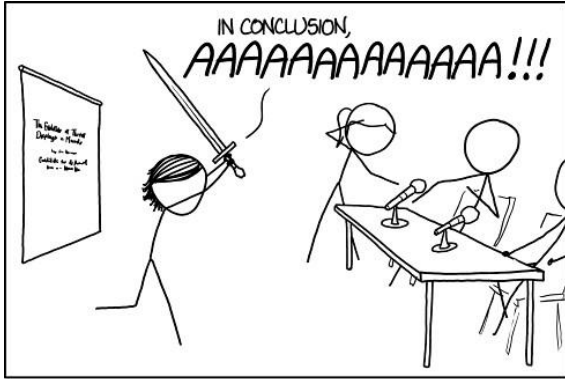
An Africa-led initiative to bridge the skills gap in Applied Sciences, Engineering, & Technology

Regional Coordination Unit



12

Step 4: PhD Defense and Transition



THE BEST THESIS DEFENSE IS A GOOD THESIS OFFENSE.

- 4 years of research in 20 min
- Follow University guidelines
- Prepare well
- Practice well
- Present well
- Answer questions well

The **PASET** Regional Scholarship and Innovation Fund



An Africa-led initiative to bridge the skills gap in Applied Sciences, Engineering, & Technology

Regional Coordination Unit



Graduation



The **PASET** Regional Scholarship and Innovation Fund



An Africa-led initiative to bridge the skills gap in Applied Sciences, Engineering, & Technology

Regional Coordination Unit



Transition



The **PASET** Regional Scholarship and Innovation Fund

An Africa-led initiative to bridge the skills gap in Applied Sciences, Engineering, & Technology



Regional Coordination Unit



15

Thank you



The **PASET** Regional Scholarship and Innovation Fund

An Africa-led initiative to bridge the skills gap in Applied Sciences, Engineering, & Technology



Regional Coordination Unit



For more information contact

Regional Coordination Unit

Regional Scholarship and Innovation Fund

International Centre of Physiology and Ecology (*icipe*)

P.O. Box 30772-00100, Nairobi, Kenya

Tel +254 (20) 8632000



dg@icipe.org, icipe@icipe.org,
rsif@icipe.org



facebook.com/TheRSIF



@pasetrsif



linkedin.com/in/PASET-RSIF/

16