

# Africa Regional Scholarship and Innovation Fund for Applied Sciences, Engineering and Technology

## Progress Report

1<sup>st</sup> August 2018 to 31 January 2019

### A. Component 1: Capacity development for Operation of the Scholarship, Research and Innovation Fund

#### 1.1 Setting up the RSIF Permanent Fund

- 1.1.1 Terms of Reference for a consultant to undertake a feasibility study on the establishment of the Fund was approved by the World Bank and a Request for Expression of Interest from eligible firms was published with deadline date for 15 February, 2019.
- 1.1.2 The interim resource mobilization plan was updated, and specific activities undertaken as part of implementation of the Plan. Preliminary meetings have been held with Government representatives of Sweden and Norway and been scheduled with France. Discussions are also being initiated with targeted Foundations, including the MasterCard Foundation in line with the resource mobilization plan. Discussions are underway with the Ministry of Education in Kenya to hold a fundraising breakfast for selected Kenyan based potential funders, including the private sector.

#### 1.2 Management of PhD scholarships and research grants

- 1.2.1 A second [call guidelines](#) and application materials for RSIF host universities was prepared and approved by the PASET Executive Board on 6 November 2018. It was published on 8 November 2018 with a deadline of 17 January 2019. 144 applications were received. The RCU developed selection criteria for the host university selection with input from the Consultative Advisory Group (CAG) that was approved by the Executive Board (EB) (See Annex 1). The RCU undertook compliance/eligibility check and 80 applications were sent out to be reviewed by three independent external reviewers each (Table 1). The three top proposals in each thematic area will be selected and an Independent Evaluation Committee will select those to be visited for onsite evaluation prior to recommendation to the Board by mid-April, 2019.

**Table 1: Eligible Applications Received at RCU for RSIF Host Universities**

Priority Area*	CC	E	FS	ICT	MM	Total
No. of submitted proposals	13	17	24	14	12	80

\* ICT=Information and communication technology including big data and artificial intelligence; FS=food security and agribusiness, CC=climate change, E=energy including renewables, and MM=minerals mining and materials engineering

- 1.2.2 The [Expression of Interest for RSIF partner organizations](#) was prepared and approved by the PASET EB on 6 November 2018. It was announced in French and English and shared with over 42 institutions in the United States of America, China, Japan, and Korea. The EoI has been further improved and will continue to be shared with other institutions. Discussions are planned with over

twenty institutions including ten in Korea (A visit is planned to Korea in the next period), three in the United States, two in Europe and two in Japan. Discussions are also planned to enable existing scholars to apply and initiate ‘matching’ of research topics with Korean Professors at Korea Institute of Science and Technology (KIST).

### 1.3 Capacity building of host universities

*icipe* and the 4 existing host universities met on 3 – 4 December 2018 at *icipe* in Nairobi, Kenya to align requirements for the call for PhD scholarships, and discuss issues on current RSIF PhD scholars and other RSIF activities.

*icipe* will undertake a capacity assessment of both the newly selected and existing host universities to inform the capacity building strategy for host universities. This will be done in the next period, subsequent to selection of Host universities.

### 1.4 Management of innovation grants

An innovation grants administration unit has been set up, building on *icipe*'s capacity for management of innovation processes including private sector engagement. ICT tools and systems available are being reviewed for strengthening the operationalization of the unit. Draft Terms of Reference (ToR) for a consultant to develop a framework and operational plan for the grants was prepared. Further, a research and innovation grants officer is being recruited and is expected to report on 1 April 2019.

## B. Component 2: PhD Scholarships, research grants and innovation grants

### 2.1 PhD Scholarships

The 16 existing RSIF Students are in the process of finalizing their research proposals and have taken or about to take TOEFL exams. TOEFL with minimum score of iBT79-80/ CBT 213 is required for participation in the Korea Sandwich Program. The RCU has initiated engagement with students to provide necessary oversight to the students studies.

The call guidelines and application materials for the PhD scholarships are under preparation for approval by the PASET EB. A [pre-announcement of the call](#) was made in early December 2018. A second [pre-announcement of the call](#) will be made in March, 2019 prior to the Call (the Call will be made subsequent to the selection of Host Universities) for PhD Scholars to apply in May, 2019. The Call will target emerging faculty and women and Host Universities will be encouraged to distribute the call across their networks encouraging applications from a diverse pool of applicants. The RCU will finalize development of an online centralized application tool in preparation for receiving PhD Scholarship applications.

### 2.2 Research grants

*icipe* has prepared a draft ToR for the development of the framework for research grants for discussion by the CAG.

### C. Crosscutting activities

- 3.1 AAU has handed over RSIF documents, host universities and students as at 29 October 2018.
- 3.3 Terms of reference for translations services was prepared and approved by the World Bank. The Expression of interest was advertised with a deadline of 15 February 2019.
- 3.4 *icipe* prepared RSIF brochure; and hired a short-term communications consultant to prepare additional materials.
- 3.5 *icipe* was represented by Dr. Julius Ecuru at the first Africa-Japan Higher Education Partnership workshop from 22 – 26 October 2018 in Tokyo and Kyoto, Japan.
- 3.6 *icipe* was represented by Dr. Rob Skilton at the Technical Review Meeting of the Africa Centers of Excellence from 12 – 14 November 2018 in Kigali, Rwanda.
- 3.7 *icipe* Director General, Dr. Segenet Kelemu and Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Education, Dr. Amina Mohamed, signed the French version of the PASET/*icipe* memorandum of understanding, and also recognized the USD 9.0 million contribution from the Government of Korea towards the PASET RSIF. The [ceremony](#) took place on 24 November 2018 at the Intercontinental Hotel, Nairobi, Kenya.
- 3.8 All the other relevant legal documents and processes were all concluded, including the financing agreement between World Bank and *icipe* for the RSIF Project, the World Bank RSIF letter of effectiveness, agreement between the World Bank and *icipe* for the administration of the Korea Government contribution to RSIF, and the opening of relevant bank accounts.
- 3.9 The PASET RSIF website is now under the full management of *icipe*. The domain was transferred from AAU to *icipe*. The site is undergoing reconstruction and update. Similarly, the Facebook page will soon be operational again.
- 3.10 *icipe* is making use of the World Bank STEP system for procurement and has published four activities including for consulting firms to provide translation services. Further training on STEP has been requested for *icipe* staff.
- 3.11 The RCU manager reported on 15 January 2019. Four other staff due to report from February and an additional seven staff are expected to report in March with the unit expected to be fully operational by end of March 2019.

### D. Key planned activities for the next period (February– June 2019)

#### General Fund and Endowment Fund

- 4.1. Hire consultant to undertake a study on the establishment of the permanent fund.
- 4.2. Initiate feasibility study on the establishment of the permanent fund.
- 4.3. Implement the interim resource mobilization plan per the activities and schedules indicated therein
- 4.4. Further develop the comprehensive resource mobilization strategy

#### Management of PhD Scholarships and Research Grants

- 4.5. Select the second cohort of host universities
- 4.6. Advance in the selection of at least three additional partner organization
- 4.7. Initiate contracting of individuals to develop the framework for research grants.
- 4.8. Initiate contracting of individuals to develop the framework for innovation grants.

#### Capacity building of host universities

- 4.9. Undertake host university capacity and training needs assessments (both existing and new)
- 4.10. Hold individual discussions with RSIF host universities during 5th PASET Forum in Kigali, Rwanda
- 4.11. Attendance of icipe, Host Universities and Cohort 1 scholars at the 5th PASET Forum
- 4.12. Increase access to science and technology journals at host universities

#### PhD Scholarships

- 4.13. Complete the selection and pairing of the first cohort of PhD students with their academic advisors at partner institutions
- 4.14. Support students to prepare and present posters highlighting at the PASET Forum
- 4.15. Organize cross cutting courses on Communication Skills (how to present a poster to a scientific and nonscientific audience), Research Ethics, Information Literacy, and introduction and orientation on living and working in Korea.
- 4.16. Develop quarterly and annual student reporting tools
- 4.17. Open the call for PhD scholarships for the next cohort of 40 students
- 4.18. Ongoing recruitment of independent evaluation members/ reviewers for the review and selection process of RSIF scholars
- 4.19. Open invitation for RSIF Scholars in 1st cohort who are selected to go to Korea to submit statement of interest for the Samsung Dream Foundation Scholarship
- 4.20. Host virtual orientation session for independent evaluation committee to provide in-depth details on the student selection process and RSIF scholarship selection criteria

#### Cross cutting activities

- 4.21. Complete the recruitment of RSIF RCU staff
- 4.22. Hold second RSIF Project World Bank Implementation Support Mission (ISM) (week of 18th February 2019).
- 4.23. icipe will be represented by Dr. Moses Osiru at the Africa Centers of Excellence for Development Impact Project in Djibouti on 21 & 22 February 2019, where he will present to the eight countries on joining the PASET initiative.
- 4.24. Participate in mission to Korea led by the World Bank to identify and strengthen partnership with Korean academic, research and government institutions
- 4.25. Hire consultancy firm to offer English to French/French to English translations
- 4.26. Develop an RSIF communication strategy and continue preparations of relevant communication materials targeting key stakeholder segments, including governments, private sector executives, and donors in English and French.