



CALL FOR APPLICATIONS FOR PHD SCHOLARSHIPS WITHIN THE “*IMPROVING GENDER BALANCE IN THE TRANSITION FROM STEM SECONDARY EDUCATION TO STEM HIGHER EDUCATION IN RWANDA*” PROJECT – A COLLABORATION BETWEEN KU LEUVEN AND THE UNIVERSITY OF RWANDA

1. Background

The project entitled “*Improving gender balance in the transition from STEM secondary education to STEM higher education in Rwanda*” is a five-year project (September 2022 to August 2027), being implemented by universities KU Leuven in Belgium and University of Rwanda in Rwanda, under the funding of the Flemish Interuniversity Council (VLIR-UOS). The project has two aims: (i) understanding the mechanisms behind gender imbalance in the transition from STEM secondary education to STEM higher education in Rwanda; and (ii) strengthening strategies to overcome gender imbalances.

One of the major components of this project will be the sponsorship of **two full-time PhD candidates**, who should be junior academic staff at the University of Rwanda.

2. PhD Programme

The PhD programme will be run by KU Leuven, which will also award the PhD degree. However, the two PhD candidates will be jointly supervised by KU Leuven and University of Rwanda academic staff.

The PhD candidates will be enrolled in the doctoral program of the Faculty of Social Sciences at the KU Leuven. The doctoral program includes mandatory theoretical and methodological training, seminars, conferences, a minimum of one peer reviewed publication, and regular meetings with the supervisory team. The PhD program takes four years, in which the doctoral thesis should be written and submitted to the examination committee. More information about the doctoral program can be found: [Doctoral Programme Social Sciences - Welcome - Doctoral Programme Social Sciences \(kuleuven.be\)](#)

More general information about starting a PhD at the KU Leuven can be found: [PhD studies at KU Leuven - Research](#)

The two PhD candidates are also required to spend one month in Belgium at the Faculty of Social Science prior to PhD enrollment as a predoctoral training in research methods.

3. Funding

The scholarships for the 2 candidates come from the project funding and shall cover fees, supervision costs, travel costs, stipends while in Belgium, field work in Rwanda, conference attendance and other study related expenses stipulated within the project.



4. General Eligibility criteria

The candidate must be:

- i) Permanent staff of the University of Rwanda,
- ii) Have a background in social sciences (broader humanities).
- iii) Requirements in terms of research methods? Proven skills in qualitative or quantitative research methods are a requirement.
- iv) Citizen of Rwanda
- v) Ready to spend about half of the PhD time in Belgium through multiple visits
- vi) Have had at least 75% in the previous year's work performance evaluation report
- vii) Ready to continue working at the University of Rwanda after completion of the PhD programme
- viii) Should not have another scholarship for PhD Studies

5. Specific eligibility criteria

- i) Be fluent in English, both orally and in writing
- ii) Female candidates are encouraged to apply: In line with UR's gender policy and UR's commitment to bridge the gender gap in research and teaching, female candidates are encouraged to apply. In case of strong comparable or equal competences in the applications, priority will be given to female candidates.
- iii) Male applicants should be below the age of 40 years of age and female applicants below 45 years of age are given priority for PhD Scholarships.

6. How to apply:

Interested applicants should submit the following documents:

- i) An application letter for the PhD scholarship addressed to the Director - UR Centre for Postgraduate Studies;
- ii) A personal motivation statement for the programme of study, demonstrating commitment, motivation and reasons why the candidate should be considered (max 2 pages);
- iii) Recommendation letters from two academic or professional referees;
- iv) Recommendation letter from the UR College Principal where the candidate belongs;
- v) Certified copies of Bachelor's and Master's degrees and their transcripts;
- vi) Copies of valid identification card or passport;



vii) Current CV (maximum of 3 pages) including full specification of the Master's degree specialization and any other previous experience relevant to the programme (e.g. research assistantship, scientific publications, teaching experience and/or any other academic experience that may be relevant).

viii) Research proposal:

- A maximum five - page research proposal on a topic related to, gender differences in teaching and learning in STEM. The research proposal should describe the envisioned research project, including aim and objectives and research questions, theory, methods, earlier literature and ethical considerations.
- The research proposal must be checked for plagiarism, and a proposal with more than 20% similarities will be rejected.

Please send the above mentioned (scanned and saved in one document) to the following emails: UR CPGS email: ur-cpgscholarship@ur.ac.rw with a copy to the project promoters: Dr. Jolly Rubagiza at: jo.rubagiza@gmail.com and Prof. Cecil Meeusen at: cecil.meeusen@kuleuven.be Please name the application folder with your name and "[document name]".

7. Submission deadline

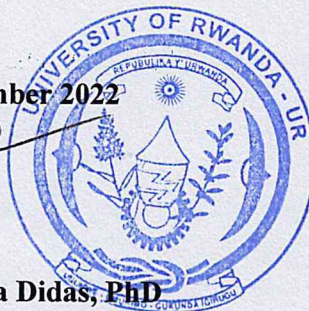
Submissions for application for this call are open *for 3 weeks*, from *15th November 2022 to 6th December 2022*.

8. Recruitment process

Only shortlisted candidates will be notified and called for an interview.

The recruitment team includes UR staff who are project team members, CASS, CE and KU Leuven staff UR. Successful candidates will be notified a couple of weeks after the interview and *are expected to start in early 2023*.

Done at Kigali, 11th November 2022



Dr. KAYIHURA Muganga Didas, PhD
Acting Vice Chancellor