

**CALL FOR APPLICATIONS: FELLOWSHIPS TO GENERATE EVIDENCE ON “YOUTH ENGAGEMENT IN AGRIBUSINESS AND RURAL ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES IN AFRICA”**

**Deadline for Applications: 15 March 2019**

**General**

The International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) received a three-year research grant for “Enhancing Capacity to Apply Research Evidence (CARE) in policy for youth engagement in agribusiness and rural economic activities in Africa” funded by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).

IITA is pleased to announce 30 research fellowships for 2019 under the framework of the CARE project. The fellowships are action-oriented and target young academics and professionals, and graduate students at the post-course work/research stage of their programs. The fellowship program seeks to contribute to policy development on youth engagement in agribusiness and rural economic activities in Africa. It is designed to provide opportunities for the youth by improving the availability and use of evidence for inclusive and “youth-friendly” policies on youth engagement in agribusiness and rural economic activities. The fellows will be provided by providing them with funding, technical support and the expertise of IITA’s socio-economics scientists, skills and competencies in social and economic research, and a network of other fellows with whom to exchange ideas.

This is not a one-time invitation for applications, but rather a continuing call for research on this topic till 2020.

**Scope**

We seek research fellows for the study of **Youth Engagement in Agribusiness and Rural Economic Activities in Africa**. The following are offered as illustrations of appropriate topics, but applications are not limited to these areas.

<b>Research area</b>	<b>Topics</b>
Impact and evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Effectiveness of design and implementation of programs and projects targeting youth employment in agriculture.</li> <li>- Impact of youth in agribusiness interventions on creating gainful employment for different categories of youth and its gender-dimensions.</li> <li>- Impact of different agribusiness models such as contract farming on creating employment opportunities for youth.</li> </ul>
Incentives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Incentives and requirements with regards to policies (e.g. land tenure, taxing systems), markets, capacity development, and access to financial and other resources for successful engagement of youth in agribusiness.</li> </ul>
Markets and institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Influence of markets and institutions (e.g., networks, rules, regulations, norms, and values) in shaping the behavior and perspectives of the youth to engage in agribusiness and other rural economic activities</li> <li>- Effective value chains (profitable, minimal risk, long-term) for youth engagement.</li> </ul>
Policy engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Opportunities and constraints of youth-inclusive policy processes, mechanisms to negotiate interests of youth, and capture the needs and priorities of the youth in agribusiness related policies.</li> <li>- Evidence based policy making for gainful employment of different categories of youth in agribusiness and other rural economic activities.</li> </ul>
ICT and youth employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Impact of ICT on success/failure of youth-led (young men and women) agribusiness activities in different agricultural value chains.</li> <li>- Policy measures to make ICT accessible and affordable for use in youth-led agribusiness projects.</li> </ul>

Rural dynamics	- Processes and trends of rural transformation (e.g. migration, changes in availability of natural resources, the socio-cultural, legal, and policy frameworks) and their influence on employability of youth in farm and non-farm activities.
Innovations	- Innovations of youth in response to the rural transformation and its impact on youth employment.
Scaling up	- Challenges, opportunities and threats for scaling up successful approaches/models of youth engagement in agribusiness and other rural economic activities.

### Eligibility Criteria

- Applicants must be young Africans.
- The research will be carried out in the following countries: Benin, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Malawi, Morocco, Nigeria, Rwanda, Tanzania, Senegal, and Zambia.
- Applicants must not be more than 40 years old at the time of application.
- Applicants must be young scholars at a research institute or university in Africa or a student registered in a PhD or Master's program in recognized universities in Africa, majoring in agricultural economics, agribusiness, or economics or a related social science field, and must have finished their university course work.
- **The duration of the research should not exceed 6 months.**

### Awards

- Awards for Research Grants are up to \$10,000 (Proposals with a reasonable higher budget can also be selected depending on the quality of the research proposal).
- Grantees will be supervised by IITA's socio-economics scientists in close collaboration with their national/university supervisors.
- Grantees will be offered training on research methodology, data management, and scientific writing.
- Grantees will be offered training on production of research evidence for policy-making.

### Application Requirements

To apply for the Research Fellowship, applicants must submit the following:

- Completed application form (download application form [here](#)).
- Copy of the passport or other statement of citizenship.
- Curriculum Vitae (CV), which includes work history and education. CVs should be no longer than two pages.
- Proof of registration at an accredited university for MSc and PhD programs (for students).
- Proof of employment at a research institute or university in Africa (for young academics and professionals).

### Guidelines for research proposals

Research proposals should be organized in the order listed below, and page limitations for components must be observed.

The Research proposal must include the following components in one PDF document.

1. The proposal narrative should not be more than seven pages in length, single-spaced, in 12-point type with 1" margins. Approximately three pages should be devoted to the problem statement/policy issue, theoretical framework, review of current literature, and research questions. The remaining four pages should include the methodology, contributions to policy, work plan, and dissemination plan. Applicants must present a clear and well thought out methodology and the analysis to be done. The brief dissemination plan should include the intended audience and relevant journals where the research findings might be submitted for publication and professional meetings where the findings might be presented (7 pages maximum).

2. The conceptual model(s) that outline the framework or design of the study (2 pages maximum).
3. Contribution to the field to briefly describe the potential contributions this research will make to the field of youth engagement in agribusiness and rural economic activities in Africa (200 words maximum).
4. Reference list. A list of all references included in the text or in the models. Use complete citations, including titles and all authors. (No page limit)
5. Budget. There is no specific template for the budget. It may be a simple 2-column format or a more complex spreadsheet.
6. Please save and send your documents in this format: LastName\_FirstInitial\_Document.pdf (example: Smith\_K\_proposal.pdf).

### **Selection Criteria**

Evaluation criteria will include the importance of the proposed policy issue, the strength of the methodological model, and proposed analysis of the study. Additionally, the review criteria will include: Is the policy issue clearly defined? What is already known on the issue? How does the methodology relate specifically to the policy question? Does the analytical plan fit the question and the data? Is the applicant qualified to carry out the proposed study?

### **Submission of Applications**

Applications must be submitted electronically in English or French, by email to [IITA-TrainingUnit@cgiar.org](mailto:IITA-TrainingUnit@cgiar.org). Application documents must be submitted as PDF files. The deadline for submission is 23:59 WAT, 15 March 2019. Applicants are encouraged to submit applications in advance of the deadline.

Contact [IITA-TrainingUnit@cgiar.org](mailto:IITA-TrainingUnit@cgiar.org) if you have questions regarding the application or submission process. All applications will be acknowledged, but only short-listed candidates will be contacted.