

**CALL FOR APPLICATIONS : FELLOWSHIPS TO PROMOTE RESEARCH ON “YOUTH ENGAGEMENT IN AGRIBUSINESS AND RURAL ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES IN AFRICA” funded by International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)**

**Deadline for Applications: 19 December 2019**

**General**

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

Under the framework of this project, IITA is pleased to announce 30 research fellowships for 2020. This is an action-oriented fellowship for young academics and professionals, and students at the post-course work/research stage of their programs. The research grant program seeks to contribute to policy development in youth engagement in agribusiness and rural economic activities in Africa. It is designed to provide opportunities to engage youth to improve the availability and use of evidence for youth policies and decision-making related to youth participation in agribusiness and rural economic activities by providing them with: funding, support, and the expertise of IITA’s scientists; skills and competencies in social and economic research; and a community of other fellows with whom to exchange ideas.

**Scope**

We seek research fellows for the study of **Youth Engagement in Agribusiness and Rural Economic Activities in Africa**. Fifty fellowships were awarded in 2018 and 2019, and this is the third-round call for applications. Thematic areas include but NOT limited to the following:

**Skills, and innovations, and entrepreneurship**

Innovative skills development; entrepreneurship and employability skills for engaging youth in agribusiness; innovativeness of rural youth to engage in agribusiness; school to work transition; skills mismatch and youth employment

**Rural dynamics**

Socio-cultural norms (cultural norms, gender norms, informal rules, family and peer relationships) and youth engagement in agribusiness; intergenerational land transfer and youth engagement in agribusiness; youth-led agribusiness development in rural-urban continuum; small town development and youth-led agribusiness; diversity, interaction and collective action among youth in agribusiness; migration and youth engagement in agribusiness; rural youth migration and nutrition and food security of households of origin; remittances role in financing agribusiness

**Policies, markets, and institutions**

Influence of finance policies and practices, land policies and practices, small and medium enterprise development policies and practices on youth engagement in agribusiness; influence of laws, regulations, standards on effectiveness of youth-led agribusiness; youth-inclusive agricultural extension services and cooperatives; youth-inclusive land tenure systems; efficient markets for youth-led agribusiness; incentives for youth-led agribusiness

## Impact

Private sector growth, public and private sector collaboration, impacts of interventions on financial inclusiveness, investments in 'hard' and 'soft' skills, ICT-enabled agricultural extension systems on youth engagement in agribusiness; on youth-employment in agribusiness; engagement in agribusiness and well-being of youth; entrepreneurship promotion (e.g. media, organized youth groups, platforms, stakeholder forums, policy networks, alliances, and advocacy) and youth employment in agribusiness

## Scaling up

Challenges, opportunities and threats for scaling up successful approaches/models of youth engagement in agribusiness and other rural economic activities

## Eligibility Criteria

- 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 a young scholar 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, economics or a related social science, and must have finished their university course work.
- Applicants must be able to conduct research in the target countries.
- **The duration of the research should not exceed 6 months.**

## Award

- Awards for Research Grants are up to \$10,000.
- Grantees will be supervised by one IITA scientist in close collaboration with their national/university supervisor.
- 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), work history and education. CVs should be no longer than two pages.
- Proof of registration at an accredited university for MSc and PhD programs.
- Proof of employment at a research institute or university in Africa.
- Research proposals should be organized in the order listed below, and page limitations for components must be observed. Please save and send your documents in this format: LastName\_FirstInitial\_Document.pdf (example:Smith\_K\_proposal.pdf). The Research proposal must include the following components in one PDF document.

## Guidelines for research proposals

1. The research proposal must focus on youth engagement in agribusiness and rural economic activities (Proposals without this will not be considered)
2. The abstract of the proposal must not exceed ten (10) pages, spacing paragraph 6, line spacing one (1), size 12 points with margins of 1. "Approximately three (3) pages should be devoted to the statement of problem, theoretical framework, objectives and research questions. The remaining seven (7) pages should include the methodology (3 pages), possible contributions to policy development (0.5 pages), the work plan and the dissemination plan (1.5 page), budget (1 page), list of selected references (1 page) Applicants must present a

clear methodology and methods of analysis that will be used. The dissemination plan should include relevant journals where the results research could be submitted for publication and professional meetings where the results could be presented (10 pages maximum).

**Please note that any proposal exceeding the number of pages requested (10 pages) will not be considered**

3. The conceptual model describes the framework or design of the study.
4. The contribution to the field briefly describes the potential contributions of this research in the field of youth engagement in agribusiness and rural economic activities in Africa.
5. Budget. There is no specific model for the budget. It can be a simple 2-column format or a more complex spreadsheet.
6. Please use your Last name and the first letter of your first name to name your file (example, Lastname\_Initial of firstname\_proposal.pdf).

### **Selection Criteria**

Evaluation criteria will include the importance of the proposed policy issue and how clearly it is defined, the strength of the methodological model, and proposed analysis of the study. Gender consideration is a plus.

### **Submission of Applications**

Applications must be submitted electronically in English or French, by email to [IITA-TrainingUnit@cgiar.org](mailto:IITA-TrainingUnit@cgiar.org). Applicants will be asked to enter specific information in text boxes and upload documents in PDF format. The deadline for submission is 23:59 WAT, 19 December 2019. Applicants are encouraged to submit proposals 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.