The PASET Regional Scholarship and Innovation Fund (RSIF)

Strengthening RSIF partnerships with Japanese Private Sector

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Tokyo, Japan
September 3, 2019
Introduction

The future we want starts with how we do business in a sustainable manner today!

How?
…embrace sustainable & transformative technologies!
African economies are among the fastest growing in the world. The continent is poised to actively contribute to global development.

Sub Saharan GDP Growth Rate projected to grow from

2.9% to 3.9% between 2017 and 2020

Africa to account for ¼ of World’s population by 2050

Source: African Economic Outlook 2019
However, future growth, which should be higher, sustained & more inclusive, will require:

a. Diversifying the economy…

b. Building stronger innovation ecosystems…

…but in a rapidly advancing & connected global tech world – that is moving towards industry 4.0
Stronger collaboration and partnership between industry and academic institutions of higher learning is necessary for innovation in Africa.
Innovation thrives in a supportive environment or ecosystem, with functional elements of **financing**, strong R&D tradition, enabling policies and education system that produces high quality human capital.

**RSIF** is a collaborative effort to address each of these elements in SSA by **building sustainable doctoral training, research and innovation ecosystem** to develop **transformative technologies** in Africa for economic growth and development.
icipe: PASET RSIF’s Regional Coordination Unit

• RSIF RCU is icipe (since 1st Aug 2018)

• Building on icipe’s core capacity for innovation and capacity building

• Manage PhD training, research and innovation, institutional capacity building activities, help develop partnerships and networks

• Manage and grow the Permanent (Endowment) and General Funds
RSIF Design

Permanent (Endowment) Fund (US$15 million by 2024) → General Fund (US$50 million by 2024)

Window 1: Scholarships, institutional capacity building, partnerships & networks

Window 2: Research Grants

Window 3: Innovation Grants and creation of innovation environments
PASET-RSIF Priority Thematic Areas

1. ICTs including big data & artificial intelligence
2. Food security & agribusiness
3. Minerals, mining & materials engineering
4. Energy including renewables
5. Climate change
RSIF PhD Sandwich Program

**Year 1**
- African Host University (AHU)
  - Up to 1 year
    - Admitted to an AHU PhD program
    - Matching with suitable IPI supervisor completed early in program
    - Student, with support from both supervisors, develops research proposal and plan for activities at AHU and IPI
    - Student begins research as required
    - Completes coursework as required by AHU
    - Takes TOEFL exam if required by IPI

**Years 2 & 3**
- International Partner Institution (IPI)
  - 6 mths to 2 years as a visiting scholar/researcher
  - Conducts major part of doctoral research
  - Coursework as required by IPI
  - Writes scientific papers

**Year 4**
- African Host University (AHU)
  - 1+ year
    - Finalise research as necessary
    - Writes scientific papers
    - Complete thesis
    - Thesis defence is heard by both parties from AHU and IPI
    - Degree awarded by AHU
    - Graduation

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**Joint supervision** by African Host University and International Partner Institution supervisors

An Africa-led initiative to bridge the skills gap in Applied Sciences, Engineering, & Technology
## Window 2: Research Grants

### Type 1 - Research Awards
1. Grant size: US$ 90,000
2. No. to be awarded: 10
3. Duration: 3 yrs
4. Eligible: AHU Faculty involved in RSIF PhD Program.
5. Source of funds: Govt of Korea & World Bank (piloting)

### Type 2 - Junior Investigator Res. Award
1. Grant size: US$ 80,000
2. No. to be awarded: 16
3. Duration: 3 yrs
4. Eligible: RSIF PhD graduates who get postdoc or permanent position at university or research centre in SSA.
5. Source of funds: Govt of Korea
Window 3: Innovation Grants

Type 1 - Innovation Capacity Building

- Grant size: US$ 50,000
- No. to be awarded: 6
- Duration: 2 yrs
- Eligible: AHU
- Source of funds: World Bank (piloting)

Type 2 - Cooperability Grant

- Grant size: US$ 50,000
- No. to be awarded: 5
- Duration: 2 yrs
- Eligible: Faculty of RSIF AHU involved in PhD training.
- Source of funds: World Bank (Piloting)
Proposed areas of collaboration

Partnerships needed for innovation

• Partner with RSIF AHUs on innovation projects

• Participate in guest lectures on special topics on innovation and entrepreneurship

• Leverage RSIF’s Competitive Grants System for generation of innovations relevant to African context in your industry
Proposed areas of collaboration

Partnerships for research and development

• Joint research projects with AHUs on development needs and priorities of SSA

• Builder longer term research partnerships with RSIF AHUs through contract research, prototyping, testing, Quality Control etc
Proposed areas of collaboration

Capacity Building of PhD Programs

- Work with RSIF AHUs to improve quality of PhD programs in SSA
- Host PhD students for internship opportunities for 6 months - 2 years as an international partner
- Support the award of more scholarships
Why RSIF?

Leveraging RSIF geographical presence in African countries as an entry point for expansion of business operations to Africa

Increased brand awareness among African countries especially the RSIF contributing countries

Better understanding of the African market to inform business decisions and enhance competitiveness
Why RSIF?

- Access to highly skilled workforce
- Benefit from innovation funding to test and bring commercially viable transformative technologies to scale
- Access to knowledge sharing events and social recognition for contributing to SDGs
How do we formalize the partnership?

- Partner expresses interest to engage in RSIF partnership.
- Or PASET/African Host University nominates a partner.
- RSIF-RCU* (icipe) holds discussions with international institution. Signing of MoU between Partner and PASET.
- International Institution holds discussions with African Host Universities to determine which ones it can support.
- Partner Institution signs a Partnership Agreement with one or more African Host University and RSIF-RCU (icipe).

*Regional Coordination Unit (icipe)
Conclusion

• Partnerships for innovation are absolutely necessary for the growth and development of Africa.

• RSIF is seeking partners co-create with and commercialise innovative ideas and technologies.
Together we can do more!!
Thank you

For more information contact

**Regional Coordination Unit**

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