

Ugandan science and technology researchers to get \$2.2 million

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Institutional research teams have an opportunity to be in line for at least \$2.2 million (over Ushs3.8 billion) in grants, for writing excellent scientific and technological research proposals that can help Uganda achieve a science and technology-led growth, instead of agriculture.

The revelation comes hot on the heels of the announcement on the opening of the second phase of competitions for grants under the Millennium Science and Technology Initiative (MSI) Project in Uganda, in the local press October 4. The project is financed by the Uganda government and the World Bank.

According to the Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (UNCST), the facilitators of the project, "MSI aims to support high quality research and development of undergraduate and graduate training of more scientist and engineers."

In addition, the project also seeks to enable the private sector to employ more and better qualified scientist for the purpose of mechanizing the economy, as part of efforts to achieve the Millennium Development goals in Uganda.

The five lucrative grants which are up for grabs range between \$50,000 (about Ushs87.5 million) for Window C and \$1.25 million (Ushs2.2 billion) for Window B making it the highest amount. A maximum of \$800,000 (Ushs1.4 billion) and low of \$500,000 (Ushs875 million) has been set For Window A.

"The grants will be awarded competitively in three categories namely: Window A, B, and C. Window A grants are for senior and emerging research teams which are required to conduct relevant, high quality scientific and technological research with a postgraduate training, said communication from UNCSI. Window B funds are for creating and upgrading undergraduate science and engineering degree programmes at public or licensed private universities in Uganda."

It was said that researchers in Window C would benefit from works that show support for activities aimed at giving private sector firms, greater access, development and use of technology and skills and to strengthen the linkages with research and academic institutions.

"For Window A and B, initial proposal will be evaluated to obtain a shortlist of finalists. The finalist will then be invited to submit full proposals from which the winning ones will be selected. "Grant proposals for Window C will be received throughout the year and considered for selection once every quarter, on a first come-first-served basis," a statement from UNCST said.

Eligibility to the grants has been limited to not more than four research members and at least 6 Postgraduate or graduate students, all public and licensed private universities in Uganda, and firms and industry associations in partnership with research teams.

Participants in the competition have been advised to electronically submit their proposals to UNCST website. The deadline for submission of proposals is 5PM on 31st January 2008.

Those who have access to the internet can email: http://uncst@starcom.co.ug. Those who cannot can send a copy of their proposal on CD-Rom to UNCST Grants Administration offices. Plot No. 3/5/7. Nasser Road, Kampala. Not later than 5PM, 31st January 2008.

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