

## Background

The quest for an innovative way to exploit and utilize Africa's existing scientific excellences, promote greater participation and involvement of African scientists, researchers and institutions in implementing the Consolidated Plan of Action (CPA) of the African Union Commission, piloted the design of the African Union Research Grant programme. The CPA was developed by the Ministers of Science and Technology (AMCOST) in 2005 to ensure Africa's comparative advantage and to leverage her capacities to focus her research and development to respond to the continent's challenges and needs.

## What is the African Union Research Grant

The African Union Research Grant (AURG) is a programme within the department of science and technology of the African Union Commission designed to ensure that science and technology in Africa contributes to its sustainable development efforts. This Programme was formulated as one of the lighthouse projects identified among the early deliverables in Partnership No.8 of the EU-Africa Joint Strategy and its Action Plan. It has received financing through the Financing Agreement made between the EC and ACP Group of States under the 10th EDF Intra-ACP Envelop.

## Objectives

Working with stakeholders in partnership across regional and sub regional levels, AURG aims to provide a framework for the African Union Commission to deploy and to improve science and technology research so that it contributes to Africa's poverty reduction, economic growth and social development efforts. And specifically to:

- Build the AU Commission capacity to create a sustainable system of competitive research grants at Pan-African level and to put in place procedures and processes to manage such grants with the ambition to utilize the accumulated experience to develop a full fledged African Framework Programme for research;

- Innovatively and sustainably build Africa's research capacities through direct funding of the AU Science and Technology Policy, particularly implementation of the Africa's Science and Technology Consolidated Plan of Action and its Lighthouse Projects; and

- Enhance intra-regional scientific collaboration and research that contributes to Africa's sustainable development efforts.

## Implementation Strategy

The implementation strategy (Fig1) for the grant is through the creation of partnerships (research networks) for regional and sub-regional co-operation and of inter-institutional co-operation in Africa via setting up of consortia of scientists to address the relevant research action for a particular call. The strategy highlights a two way engagement process of science and policy to contribute to Africa's poverty reduction strategies, economic growth and social development efforts.

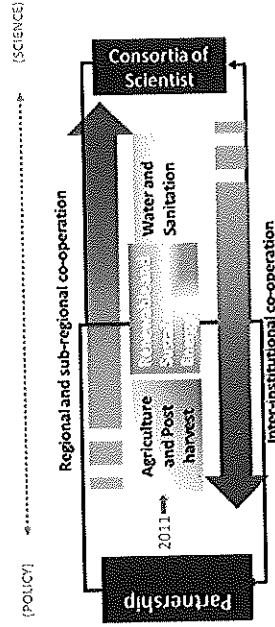


Figure 1 Chain of partnership linkages

## African Union Research Grants -Call for proposals

The African Union Commission through its department of Human Resources Science and Technology (HRST) will launch specific calls for research proposals. This is an open call for proposals, where all documents are submitted at one stage (Concept Note and full proposal) The First Call for Research Proposals for 2011 research grants will be launched in January 2011. Based on experiences derived from the first call, a second call will be launched before the end of 2011 and the third before the end of 2012.

## 2011 call for proposals

The African Union Research Grants First call for proposals for 2011 will distinctly focus on the following priorities actions of the Africa's Science and Technology Consolidated Plan of Action (CPA) and its Lighthouse Projects:

- (1) Post-harvest and Agriculture
- (2) Renewable and Sustainable Energy
- (3) Water and Sanitation

See the activity timeframe in figure 2.

## Indicative amount of call for proposals

The African Union Commission as Delegated Regional Authority for African Component of the Programme will allocate an amount of 7,000,000€ for the 1st call of proposals (2011) indicatively distributed across the priority thematic areas as follows:

- 3,500,000 € for Post-harvest and Agriculture
- 1,750,000 € for Renewable and Sustainable Energy