



RE-ADVERTISED

**CALL FOR APPLICATIONS FOR PHD SCHOLARSHIPS WITHIN THE
“IMPROVING GENDER BALANCE IN THE TRANSITION FROM STEM
SECONDARY EDUCATION TO STEM HIGHER EDUCATION IN RWANDA”
PROJECT – A COLLABORATION BETWEEN KU LEUVEN AND THE
UNIVERSITY OF RWANDA.**

I. Background

The project entitled “*Improving gender balance in the transition from STEM secondary education to STEM higher education in Rwanda*” is a five-year project (September 2022 to August 2027), being implemented by universities KU Leuven in Belgium and University of Rwanda in Rwanda, under the funding of the Flemish Interuniversity Council (VLIR-UOS).

II. Role and description

STEM education is at the forefront of accomplishing the SDGs, from the use of digital technology for economic development, to meeting health and environmental challenges. Women are underrepresented in STEM, depriving the society of innovation that diversity brings. This project hopes to contribute to changed gender norms which encourage male and female students alike to pursue STEM higher education and careers in Rwanda, contributing to the 2030 sustainable development agenda. The project will support the University of Rwanda together with relevant education stakeholders to reduce stereotype threat in STEM education. This will be done through engaging in Gender and STEM focused research, capacity building of University of Rwanda staff through funding of PhD students, strengthening of capacities of UR staff through workshops and other activities.

The project therefore has two aims:

- (i) Understanding the mechanisms behind gender imbalance in the transition from STEM secondary education to STEM higher education in Rwanda;
- (ii) Strengthening strategies to overcome gender imbalances. One of the major components of this project will be the sponsorship of **two full-time PhD candidates**.

III. Call for application

Interested candidates are invited to apply for a PhD programme run by KU Leuven, which will also award the PhD degree. However, the two PhD candidates will be jointly supervised by KU Leuven and the University of Rwanda academic staff. The PhD candidates will be enrolled in the doctoral



program of the Faculty of Social Sciences at the KU Leuven. The doctoral program includes mandatory theoretical and methodological training, seminars, conferences, a minimum of one peer reviewed publication, and regular meetings with the supervisory team. The PhD program takes four years, in which the doctoral thesis should be written and submitted to the examination committee. More information about the doctoral program can be found at the following URL address (copy & paste in your browser). <https://research.kuleuven.be/en/career/phd/index>

The two PhD candidates are also required to spend one month in Belgium at the Faculty of Social Science prior to PhD enrolment as a predoctoral training in research methods.

IV. Funding

The scholarships for the 2 candidates come from the project funding and shall cover fees, supervision costs, travel costs, stipends while in Belgium, field work in Rwanda, conference attendance and other requirements like laptops and books as stipulated in the project.

V. Application requirements

The candidate must be:

- A citizen of Rwanda
- A permanent staff or contractual staff of the University of Rwanda or employed at a collaborating government institution with a commitment letter from the head of the institution (employer) that they will be granted a study leave and that the applicant's salary will continue to be paid during the period of study once they are selected.
- Have a background in social sciences. Candidates from other disciplines in humanities can also apply, but should be willing and capable to work/research in the project area of Gender and STEM and to work as a PhD in the context of the doctoral school of KU Leuven Faculty of Social Sciences
- Proven skills in qualitative and quantitative research methods are a requirement.
- Ready to spend about half of the PhD time in Belgium through multiple visits.
- Have had at least 75% in the previous year's work performance evaluation report
- Be fluent in English, both orally and in writing
- Female candidates are encouraged to apply. In case of strong comparable or equal competences in the applications, priority will be given to female candidates.
- Age requirements for male applicants should be below the age of 40 years of age and female applicants below 45 years of age.
- Applicants should not have another scholarship for PhD Studies



VI. Application file

Interested applicants should submit the following documents:

- An application letter for the PhD scholarship addressed to the Director-UR Centre for Postgraduate Studies;
- A personal motivation statement for the programme of study, demonstrating commitment, motivation and reasons why the candidate should be considered (max 2 pages);
- Recommendation letters from two academic or professional referees;
- Certified copies of Bachelor's and Master's degrees and their transcripts;
- Copies of valid identification card or passport;
- Current CV (maximum of 3 pages) including full specification of the Master's degree specialization and any other previous experience relevant to the programme (e.g. research assistantship, scientific publications, teaching experience and/or any other experience that may be relevant).
- A research proposal of maximum five pages, on a topic related to gender differences in teaching and learning in STEM. The research proposal should describe the envisioned research project, including aim and objectives and research questions, theory, methods, earlier literature and ethical considerations.

VII. Selection methodology

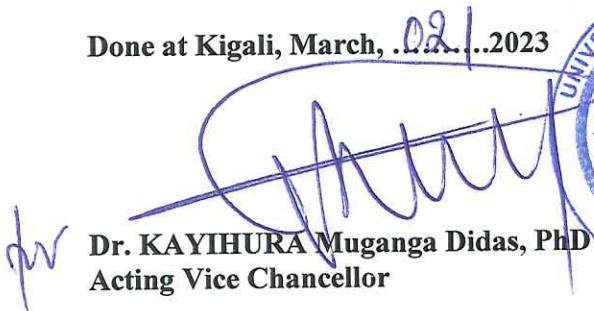
Only shortlisted candidates will be notified and called for an interview on dates that will be communicated through emails.

VIII. How to apply

Please send the above mentioned documents (scanned and saved in one document) to the following emails: UR CPGS email: ur-cpgscholarship@ur.ac.rw with a copy to the project promoters: Dr. Jolly Rubagiza at: jo.rubagiza@gmail.com and Prof. Cecil Meeusen at: cecil.meeusen@kuleuven.be Please name the application folder with your name and "[document name]". **Note: A candidate should submit only one application**

Application should be submitted not later than **24th March 2023**.

Done at Kigali, March, 02/...2023


Dr. KAYIHURA Muganga Didas, PhD
Acting Vice Chancellor

