



Climate Research for Development (CR4D)

Guide for Full Application

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Summary

This document provides guidelines for completing the online application form for the Climate Research for Development (CR4D) fellowship scheme.

The postdoctoral fellowship: The AAS is a pan African organisation headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya that aims to drive sustainable development in Africa through science, technology and innovation. Its mandate is to pursue excellence by recognising scholars and achievers; provide advisory and think tank functions for shaping the continent's strategies and policies; and implement key science, technology and innovation (STI) programmes that impact developmental challenges.

The AAS Strategic Plan (2013 - 2018) identifies six STI focus areas namely: climate change; health and wellbeing; STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics); water and sanitation; food security and nutritional wellbeing and sustainable energy.

A programmatic arm of the Academy, the Alliance for Accelerating Excellence in Science in Africa (AESA), provides a funding and agenda-setting platform to support the best scientific minds in Africa. It also cultivates productive research hubs across the continent, implementing initiatives that produce robust and relevant data, and innovations that have the potential to impact sustainable development on the continent and globally.

Through the AESA platform, The AAS manages several highly prestigious post-doctoral fellowship and award schemes. The fellowships aim to build a critical mass of independent African research leaders to lead science programmes at local and international levels. These leaders will have the capacity to engage successfully with funders, policy makers, communities and other stakeholders, and to serve as mentors and supervisors for the next generation of researchers in Africa. The CR4D fellowship scheme will emulate these objectives.

Proposals are invited for a funding of a maximum of US\$ 130,000. The duration of the CR4D Fellowship is up-to 12 months, with an expected start date in May 2019. It is anticipated that 15 fellowships will be supported under this call.

Proposals can be submitted between 18 January to 10 February 2019.

Research proposal: Applicants must provide a comprehensive 3000-word research proposal, a 200-word summary of the proposed research and a clear, concise description of the proposed research, demonstrating their expertise in the proposed area and

elaborating on how it contributes to knowledge or practice at the intersection of climate change and development.

Supervisors/Collaborators: Applicants must suggest a supervisor/collaborator and eligible host institution for their CR4D fellowship. It is expected that the supervisor/collaborator would be a renowned expert, internationally or in Africa in the proposed project subject area and would have agreed formally to supervise and/or collaborate with the applicant. Early career scientists will need two supervisors with at least one of them being an African based in Africa.

Expert References: Applicants are required to give the names and contact details of experts in their fields and to suggest a collaborator/supervisor who could provide an independent peer review of their research. If necessary, the nominated peer reviewers MAY be contacted by the selection panel to review your application after submission.

Financial support: Fifteen research grants of up to US\$ 130,000 will be awarded under the CR4D scheme, subject to the applicants' approved research budget. Allowable budget items are listed in Section 3.2.

Selection process: Eligible proposals will be selected on scientific merit. An initial shortlist will be developed through a peer review and scoring process (see Section 4.2.2). This will be followed by face-to-face interviews by a panel of reviewers from the CR4D partner institutions and specialists in the applicant's field of research. Interviews for the final shortlisted candidates will be held at the AAS headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya in March 2019. Interview candidates will be expected to give a presentation of and defend their research proposal to the panel.

1 Introduction to this Application Guide

This guide provides practical information to potential applicants in preparing and applying for the Climate Research for Development (CR4D) fellowship. All other more general information on AAS, CR4D, ACPC and the DFID Weather and Climate Information SERVICES for Africa (WISER) Programme and can be found on their respective websites (see Section 7). Applications must be submitted online using the AAS *Ishango* Online System (<https://bit.ly/2CmXEWF>). Please refer to Section 5 of this guide for practical information about the AAS *Ishango* online system. This guide provides information on how to prepare, upload and submit an application.

2 Overview of the CR4D fellowship.

2.1. The programme management.

The WISER Programme, funded by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland's (UK) Department for International Development (DFID), is working to improve the generation and use of weather and climate information across Sub-Saharan Africa. The programme has two main components:

- a) A regional 'pilot' East African Component focussing on the Lake Victoria Basin and surrounding region (Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda) and aimed at improving the quality and relevance of weather and climate information and supporting its uptake and use. The Fund Manager for this component is the UK Met Office. It is envisaged that this regional initiative will provide a 'proof of concept' to inform the development of other regional initiatives in imminent subsequent phases.
- b) A pan-African Policy and Enabling Environment Component (PEEC) focussing on improvement of the governance and enabling environment for weather and climate services. This is delivered through support to the Africa Climate Policy Centre (ACPC).

As part of the PEEC, WISER supports African-led climate research through the Climate Research for Development (CR4D) in Africa initiative. CR4D is a partnership between the ACPC of United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), the African Ministerial Conference on Meteorology (AMCOMET), the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), and the Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS), and the African Academy of Sciences (AAS) as the research grant manager.

The AAS will support the CR4D fellows to track their career development path via an up-to-date online log of activities before, during and after their fellowship. The log will be a useful resource for CR4D fellows to monitor and evaluate the progress made through the fellowship and to report on their activities. CR4D fellows will also be invited to contribute to public domain online blogs, Op-Eds, *etc.*

It is expected that fellows will generate scientific publications, new grants, collaborative research and expanded international research networks. To support this, the AAS programme management team will maintain an ongoing reporting system for fellows for updates on their research during the fellowship and extending beyond.

2.2. Eligibility criteria

Eligible candidates for the CR4D fellowship must:

- i. Be African nationals. Applicants from all African countries are eligible for this fellowship.
- ii. Be hosted at or affiliated with a university, higher education institution or research institution in Africa.
- iii. Hold a PhD at the time of submission of their application and/or have demonstrable significant research experience in climate or related science with a proven track record of high level research in their field of expertise.

Proposed research projects must:

- i. Be guided by the CR4D priority research areas and address identified climate research gaps in Africa (see Section 2.3).
- ii. Be transdisciplinary and demonstrate strategic partnerships with local and/or regional stakeholders for enhanced output and impact.
- iii. Create a research ecosystem where research leadership is provided, and young researchers may be mentored.
- iv. Show a commitment by the applicant's host institution to support the applicant in delivering the research objectives. (See criteria for eligible host institutions)
- v. Work with national meteorological services and/or other sector-specific stakeholders for enhanced impact.
- vi. Be locally relevant but scalable and replicable elsewhere.

2.3. CR4D priorities for research and gaps in climate research

CR4D has set the following priorities for research;

- i. Foundational climate science: focusing on improved understanding of the underpinning drivers and dynamics of climate variability and change in Africa; improving forecast and climate prediction skills; developing robust climate change projections for Africa at multiple scale; and better prediction and attribution of extremes of climate and impacts.
- ii. Impacts, information, translation, communication: focusing on enhanced added-value in sub-seasonal to seasonal predictions; enhanced understanding and communication of climate impacts across five priority GFCS areas {agriculture, water, health, disaster risk reduction, and energy}, as well as migration, urbanization, marine and coastal zones, *etc.*; improved metrics and analytics for evaluation and validation of skills and uncertainties in forecasting and projecting future climate and impacts, including understanding communication theory, barriers and opportunities.
- iii. Engagement with policy, development and decision communities: focusing on improved assessment of the uptake, application and user value of climate and impact

information by stakeholders and enhanced capacity for co-production including trans disciplinary research.

2.4. African climate research gaps.

Although several gaps have been identified in African climate research, this call focuses on:

- i. Robust scenarios projection aligned to specific goals / milestones of Agenda 2063 and the Paris Agreement. There is a need for a more comprehensive continent-wide scenario projection for key socio-economic sectors in Africa, based on 1.5° – 2°C temperature thresholds (pursuing climate-conscious development);
- ii. Effective integration of climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning;
- iii. Collaborative research partnerships for co-designing, co-resourcing and co-producing demand-driven research;
- iv. Research that enhances early warning systems to enhance disaster preparedness for effective response;
- v. Climate research in priority areas that are informed by national and regional climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies, that would also support implementation, review and monitoring of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs);
- vi. Enhanced understanding of climate impacts across five priority GFCS areas; agriculture, water, health, disaster risk reduction, and energy.

Applications must fall under the above three priority areas and address one or more of these research gaps. Proposals **should not** focus **solely** on foundational climate science but must focus on practical actions to support climate-conscious development by considering impacts on key socio-economic sectors in Africa, based on 1.5° - 2°C temperature thresholds.

2.5. Linkages to local, regional, and global climate research focus areas

As a pan-African organization, the AAS fosters intra-Africa collaborations to address common challenges facing the continent. This is also a key focus of CR4D. Proposals that prioritise strong Africa-based research collaborations and support research capacity development for early career researchers are strongly encouraged. Applicants are also encouraged to align their proposed projects with existing agendas of local, regional or global policy initiatives such as but not limited to;

- i. The African Union Agenda 2063
- ii. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)'s 6th Assessment Report (AR6) working group chapters and related IPCC special reports

- iii. Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS) priority areas
- iv. The WCRP's [Scientific Strategy 2019-2029](#)

3. Fellowship Details

3.1. Number of fellowships

CR4D will award up to fifteen (15) fellowships to conduct research based at an African institution for a 12-month period.

3.2. Funding and costs

The full cost of the award per fellow is a maximum of USD 130,000. Applicants are required to use the following budget lines (as detailed on the application form);

- i. Personnel costs in accordance with their host organization's policy.
- ii. Travel costs.
- iii. Research supplies and services.
- iv. Other direct costs.
- v. Research support costs. This includes indirect costs charged by organizations according to the organization's policy but not exceeding 15% of the grant amount.

For additional details please refer to the [AAS Cost Guidelines Policy](#).

NB: CR4D grantees are eligible to publish their research on [AAS Open Research](#) at no fee. With prior approval from the grant manager, Article Processing Charges (APCs) for publications outside of AAS Open Research may be paid from the grantee's budget. All publications will be guided by the [AAS Open Access Statement](#).

Fellows will be expected to attend other CR4D fellowship networking activities and meetings including an inception meeting and an Annual Scientific Meeting. These are opportunities for fellows to meet and share their research findings and connect the fellowship community to the AAS and its partners.

Costs related to the inception and scientific meetings (travel, accommodation, meals, and visas) will be covered separately by the CR4D Programme.

3.3. Duration of CR4D fellowship

The CR4D Fellowships will be for a fixed term of up-to 12 months ending in February 2020. No cost extensions will not be considered for this grant.

3.4. Host institution eligibility

Each applicant who is awarded a fellowship must be hosted by an eligible African institution. A and a letter of commitment from the applicant's host institution is a precondition for this award.

Eligible host institutions in sub-Saharan Africa include:

- African Public/State Controlled Institutions of Higher Education and Research.
- African Private Institutions of Higher Education and Research.
- For profit organisations are not eligible to host CR4D Fellows.
- Candidates can apply to hold the fellowship at their current institution in sub-Saharan Africa or to move to a new host institution in sub-Saharan Africa. If an applicant needs to move from his/her home institution for the CR4D fellowship, a written authorisation by their employer is required.

Host institutions must:

- Provide the required laboratory and office space for the Research Fellow to meet the aims of their research programme and ensure they have access to equipment at the institution.
- Limit the teaching responsibilities of the research fellow (including lecturing, tutorials, supervision and examining of students and other student contact time) to a maximum of 7 hours per week. The Research Fellow should have a minimal administrative load.
- Ensure that the Research Fellow receives the same level of support as other members of staff at the institution including access to postgraduate students and other resources and will be invited to departmental meetings along with other faculty staff.
- Provide the Research Fellow with support within the department from an experienced member of the faculty who can advise them on the development of their career.
- Ensure that the Research Fellow has timely access to the funding provided by the CR4D Fellowship and will not unduly delay access to funding.
- Demonstrate a good level of financial grants management. This will be determined by audit before the award is made and the institution will be required to complete the AAS Good Financial Grant Practice (GFGP) assessment.
- Provide information on how the institution/department supports the development of early career researchers transitioning to independence including relevant policies on supporting early career researchers (post-PhD).

The programme will ensure that an institution is approved only if it shows that it has a

conducive environment to support the successful completion of the research. The CR4D grant manager will conduct a pre-award assurance and where necessary, site visits to ascertain the eligibility status of a host institution before an award is made.

4. Project proposal and assessment criteria

4.1. Project outline

A comprehensive research proposal of maximum 3000 words and an abstract not exceeding 200 words must be submitted for the CR4D fellowship application via an online application form (see Section 5). Proposals exceeding these word limits will be rejected.

The following are some general guidelines;

- i. A clear idea and working title:
 - Early in the proposal, you should explain what your project is about briefly and clearly.
 - The title should reflect the project's topic.
- ii. Purpose, key objectives and relevance of research project:
 - Explain the main idea behind the research: What is the intellectual puzzle you are interested in studying? How will your research influence a sustainable development challenge faced by Africa?
 - What is the central research question and how does it relate to climate change and climate services?
 - Explain the major aims and objectives of the project (e.g., what do you want to demonstrate/ critically assess/question/challenge?).
 - Outline why you consider this research to be important/necessary (relevance to the academic field, CR4D objectives, and, where applicable, to sustainable development and economies).
 - Outline the potential impact of the proposed work and its audience (e.g. academia, policy-makers, civil society etc). Explain how you intend to ensure your research has practical application or value and, where appropriate, provide a short description of your anticipated 'pathway to impact'.
- iii. Context and background knowledge:
 - Outline how the topic of your project relates to 'the state of climate research, i.e. how you would locate it in existing academic literature in your field of

expertise.

- Demonstrate an initial understanding of the major debates and/or some specific work that is closely linked to your topic. Include bibliographical references as necessary.
- Explain how your project contributes to the existing literature, how it critiques it and how it builds upon existing work.
- Identify the links you see between your department's or institution's research agenda and your topic.

iv. Research Design and Methodology

- Outline the selection of cases/processes/people and your reasoning behind it.
- Explain which method(s) and approach(es) you will use to study your topic, and why. For example, will you conduct a comparative study, or analyse a single case study; will you apply an existing theoretical approach to a defined set of cases; will you interview individuals, conduct archival analysis or use an oral history approach? A strong proposal will have a rigorous description of the methodology and measurable outcomes that can be delivered within the proposed budget and project timelines.
- Address probable concerns the reviewer/selection panel might have about the feasibility of the project (e.g., with respect to the collection of data/access to sources/number of cases/lack of specific approach).

v. Timelines

- Briefly outline how you anticipate your project unfolding over the period of your fellowship.
- Provide the reviewer/panel with a rough indication of the major stages of the project.

vi. Budget

- A summary budget following the guidelines given in Section 3.2. Please note that the online application form has a section for budget details
- A more detailed budget will be required at the grant award stage

vii. References

- Include a list of references used in your proposal in a consistent and accepted citation and reference style.

4.2. Assessment and selection process

4.2.1. Candidate selection process

The selection of successful applications will be based on the intellectual quality and scientific merit of the research proposal, the applicant's training and professional experience, including their record of research accomplishments, the relevance of the proposed research to global, continental and national priorities, and the applicants' potential for development into research leaders. Budgets will be scrutinized for appropriateness and value for money.

Review of applications will be done by a panel of experts who have strong scientific credibility, significant knowledge of the African climate research environment and are able to judge the value addition brought by the proposed projects. In summary, successful proposals will meet the following criteria:

- i. Relevance to the priority themes and areas set out in this call documentation.
- ii. Scientific and technical excellence, including a clear and rigorous conceptual framework for research activities.
- iii. Innovation, including creativity of the project's approach and clear differentiation from existing approaches.
- iv. Appropriate project resources, including investigator and host institution capabilities and potential to enhance collaborations, mentorship and supervision in future.
- v. Value in terms of appropriateness of the budget and timelines relative to project complexity, risk, and potential outcomes/impact.
- vi. Potential to lead to significant advancement of knowledge in the chosen field of study, or solutions with wide application and substantial impact.
- vii. Demonstrate how the proposal is expected to have an impact on practice.
- viii. The home institution of the applicant agreeing to protect research time of the staff in situations where the researcher is hosted in his/her home institution.

4.2.2. Shortlisting, due diligence process, and grant award.

Interviews for shortlisted candidates will be conducted in Nairobi to inform the selection of candidates for the grant award. A pre-award due diligence process will be undertaken on all the finalists' institutions as a precondition for the grant award. Institutions will be required to complete The AAS's [Good Financial Grant Practice \(GFGP\)](#) assessment. Once the requirements for the award are met, Award Agreements will be signed as provided for by the

[AAS Grant Acceptance Policy.](#)

An inception meeting for all grantees will follow soon after the grants are awarded. This is an integral part of the grant award process and all grantees must attend.

5. Submission of applications

All applications must be submitted online via the AAS *Ishango* Grants Management System by the deadline indicated for this call. Applicants are advised to submit applications as early as possible to avoid delays due to any last minute technical problems. **Submissions after the specified deadline will not be accepted.** Once submitted, the applications cannot be revised. Ensure that your application is ready for submission before you SUBMIT it.

Information on application submission in AAS *Ishango* Grants Management is available for download at <https://bit.ly/2ul322g>.

Queries about the application process will be addressed via email at CR4D@aasciences.ac.ke

Successful candidates are expected to commence their fellowship in May 2019. Timelines for application and selection process are provided below for your guidance:

	Activity	Dates
1	Call for Applications	January/February 2019
2	Desk Review and Triage	February 2019
3	Internal/external review of proposals	February 2019
4	Shortlisting of successful applicants	February 2019
5	Notification to applicants	February 2019
6	Face to face interview with shortlisted candidates	March 2019
7	Announcement of offers	March/April 2019
8	Funder due diligence, legal review and grant-making	April 2019
9	Commencement of fellowships	May 2019

6. Maternity, disability and special needs

A request for details on maternity, disability or special access/needs requirements will be made after the shortlisting stage. Efforts will be made towards accommodating these needs according to AAS policies.

7. Relevant websites for further information

AAS <https://aasciences.ac.ke/>

ACPC/WISER/CR4D <https://www.uneca.org/wiser>

WISER project <https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/about-us/what/international/projects/wiser>