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**Second call for scholarship application for
MSc, Academic Staff and Trainees positions in
the framework of the Intra Africa PATH project**

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PATH Project:

Capacity Building of African Young Scientists in Precision Agriculture Through Cross-Regional Academic Mobility for Enhanced Climate-Smart Agri-Food System

1- Background

Climate change is one of the main problems affecting food and nutrition globally, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa. Adapting to and mitigating climate change in the agri-food sector requires merging **information technologies, genetic innovations, and sustainable farming practices** to empower the agricultural youth sector to create effective and locally adapted solutions. **Precision Agriculture applied to crops (PAAC)**, has been advocated as a strategic solution to mitigate/adapt agriculture at a smallholder and global scales to climate change effects and enhance the digital skills of the younger generations, whilst increasing their interest in agriculture. PATH project, funded by the Intra-Africa Program of the **Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) of the European Commission**, is an initiative of four highly qualified public universities from three African regions and one university in Europe to advance knowledge in precision/digital agriculture. The Project is coordinated by the University of Abomey-Calavi (UAC), Republic of Benin. Partner universities include the University of Cape Coast in Ghana (West Africa), the University of Rwanda (Eastern Africa), the University of Eswatini (Southern Africa) and Institut Agro Montpellier in France (Technical partner). The University of UM6P in Morocco is also member of the consortium as associate partner.

The objectives of PATH project are to:

- train 12 PhD and 32 MSc African scholars in precision agriculture applied to crops (PAAC) to upgrade the continent's capability;
- build capacity of 10 young African staff and 10 trainees in PAAC; and
- improve PAAC and ICT4Ag (Information and Communication Technology for Agriculture) curricula and research at the participating African Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to address more efficiently the current challenges of agriculture and climate change.

We value collaboration with seed companies and private enterprises involved in digital agriculture for hosting trainees for entrepreneurship.

2-Profile of the proposed positions and study crops

2.1 Profile of MSc and study crops

The MSc are the students who has started and finished a MSc coursework in his home institution. He/she will be in mobility to conduct a research work in a selected host institution among those involved in the PATH consortium (University of Abomey-Calavi, University of Cape Coast, University of Rwanda, University of Eswatini). After completing the research activities, the MSc student will return to his home country to defend his/her thesis. Such scheme is named: credit seeking mobility.

Selected crops per country as well as key words MSc subjects can be found in Table 1. MSc students are invited to develop their research proposal on a selected crop with focus on the key words listed in Table 1.

Table 1. Selected crops and key words per partner institution

Countries	Crops	Key words for candidates
Benin	Pineapple	Artificial intelligence + Crop biophysical models OR Precision farming + Satellite
	Maize	Pest Management + Precision farming
	Groundnut	Water management + remote sensing OR Precision pest management + remote sensing + leaves diseases
	African eggplants	Genomics and Precision Agriculture
Ghana	Pineapple	Artificial intelligence + Crop biophysical models OR Precision farming + Satellite
	Sorghum	Geospatial Data and mapping + precision farming OR Remote Sensing of Soils + Precision farming
	Cassava	Geospatial Data and mapping+ Precision agriculture OR Remote Sensing of Soils and Crops (including Phenotyping) + Precision Agriculture
	Maize	Climate-smart pest protection strategies for selected Maize varieties in Ghana +Artificial intelligence
Eswatini	Maize	Machine learning models + pest management + yield OR Detection of pest infestation and spot application of pesticides
	Sweet Potatoes	Screening of planting material through use of biotechnology techniques (On farm experimentation + Precision agriculture) OR Pest and disease management + Precision farming
	Potato	Screening of planting material through use of biotechnology techniques (On farm experimentation + Precision agriculture) OR Pest and disease management + Precision farming
	Tomato	Machine learning models + disease + prediction of tomatoes

Rwanda	Potato	Site specific nutrient + modeling + artificial intelligence +climate smart agriculture OR Field Pest Management and remote sensing + Artificial intelligence +climate smart agriculture
	Beans	Site specific nutrient + modeling + artificial intelligence +climate smart agriculture OR Bacterial blight, anthracnose and rust diseases management + Precision farming
	Cassava	Detection, identification and mapping of cassava brown streak and cassava mosaic virus diseases in Rwanda using different remote sensing technologies OR Artificial intelligence and climate smart agriculture practices for cassava growth and yield parameters
	Sorghum	Geospatial Data and mapping + precision farming OR Remote Sensing of Soils + Site specific nutrients

P.S. The hosting university reserves the right to change the crop and/or modify the subject depending on the gap in the literature.

2.2 Profile of Staff position

The academic staff are the employed person in one of the Higher Education Institution involved in PATH project (University of Abomey-Calavi, University of Cape Coast, University of Rwanda, University of Eswatini). They will be selected based on the needs expressed in their motivation letter, their background, and the importance of the capacity-building activity (requested mobility) for their home institution.

They will be asked to provide a plan to share the acquired knowledge from the mobility with other staff of their home country institution who would not benefit from the mobility.

2.3 Profile of Trainees position

Trainees are students enrolled in a bachelor/master/PhD programme in one of the African beneficiaries HEIs (University of Abomey-Calavi, University of Cape Coast, University of Rwanda, University of Eswatini). The objective is to improve their entrepreneurship in precision agriculture by building their capacity in precision agriculture applied to crops. Trainees will be selected to build their capacity in entrepreneurship, and soft skills and will broaden their knowledge in climate-smart agriculture practices as well as the use of Precision Agriculture (PA) in enterprise.

They will be asked to provide a plan on the knowledge they would like to acquire in selected enterprise in the host country which will turn around:

- Development of business and management skills in the context of precision agriculture technologies and practices.

- Increased potential for innovation, creation of agribusinesses, and entrepreneurial ventures in the field of precision agriculture.
- Access to networks, mentors, and resources to support the establishment and growth * of their entrepreneurial initiatives.

Note that the host University will select the enterprise in which the trainees will conduct the internship based on the student's needs and perspective.

3- Scholarship: duration and financial support

- For MSc students, the maximum duration of the scholarship is **12 months for credit seeking mobility**,
- For Staff, the maximum duration of the scholarship is **2 months**
- For Trainees, the maximum duration of the scholarship is **3 months**

The scholarship includes subsistence allowances, participation costs, contribution to research costs and insurance in line with EACEA procedures. Please note that under the current EU scheme, scholarships holder will have to bear the cost of their flight ticket (round-trip) to the host institution. The monthly stipend has been revised by the EU commission to allow students to cover their travel ticket.

- **MSc students will receive a monthly stipend of 890 Euros.**
- **Staff member will receive a monthly stipend of 2370 Euros.**
- **Trainees will receive a monthly stipend of 1230 Euros.**

Research costs, tuitions fees, costs related to training, participation to conferences and insurance costs are covered by the host institution following EACEA guidelines. Note that participation to conferences and special training has to be approved by the supervision team in the host institution.

4- Eligibility

4.1. Eligibility for MSc students

To apply to this call, students should be either (1) proficient in agronomy (agricultural sciences) with a willingness to learn ICT or (2) proficient in ICT with a willingness to learn agricultural sciences. Therefore, **students holding degrees in agronomy (or related agricultural science fields) or ICT (or related fields) are eligible**. In addition, eligible "students" must comply with the below criteria at the time of the application for a scholarship.

At the time they apply for a scholarship, candidates must be national of and resident in an African country:

a) MSc must be registered/admitted in or having obtained a degree in a HEI from:

a-1) one of the HEIs included in the PATH consortium (**Target group 1**). This target group includes students from all partner universities as follows:

- University of Abomey-Calavi, Republic of Benin
- University of Cape Coast, Ghana
- University of Rwanda, Rwanda
- University of Eswatini, Eswatini

a-2) HEI not included in the PATH consortium but established in an EACEA eligible country (**Target group 2**). This target group includes students registered/admitted in or having obtained a degree from another HEI other than University of Abomey-Calavi, University of Cape Coast, University of Rwanda, University of Eswatini, but established in Africa.

and

b) have sufficient knowledge of the language of the courses in the host countries.

The consortium involves Francophone and Anglophone countries and will promote bilingual aptitude in students throughout the implementation of the project. Language courses will be offered to help students improve their skills.

In each HEI involved in the consortium, two main faculties will be involved in the students training: the faculty of agricultural sciences and the faculty of ICT.

4.2 Eligibility for Trainees and academic staff

a) Trainees must be a student enrolled in a bachelor/master/PhD programme in one of the African beneficiaries HEIs (University of Abomey-Calavi, University of Cape Coast, University of Rwanda, University of Eswatini) and (1) proficient in agronomy (agricultural sciences) with a background in ICT OR (2) proficient in ICT with a background in agricultural sciences.

b) Staff must be working in one of the beneficiaries HEIs (University of Abomey-Calavi, University of Cape Coast, University of Rwanda, University of Eswatini). Academic staff applicants should hold an MSc or PhD degree and (1) proficient in agronomy (agricultural sciences) with a background in ICT or (2) proficient in ICT with a background in agricultural sciences.

Students having benefited from scholarship(s) under the previous intra-Africa Academic Mobility Scheme are eligible to receive scholarship under this current call.

PS. Nationals are **not eligible** to apply to the scholarships of their home university.

5- Number of available scholarships for this second call

The PATH project is open to all students from the partner universities (Target Group 1) and those from other African universities (Target Group 2) for Masters credit seeking mobility. For Staff and trainees, only staff and students in the HEI (Target group 1: University of Abomey-Calavi, University of Cape Coast, University of Rwanda, University of Eswatini) are concerned. **Currently, sixteen (16) MSc, (6) staff and (6) trainees positions are available.**

6- Submission

The Scholarship application form together with other required documents should be sent **as a unique PDF attachment (combining all the required documents in one file)** to emails indicated below. Other required documents are listed in the application form and include:

1. Cover letter
2. Scholarship Application form ([available here](#))
3. Student research proposal (for MSc)
4. Study work plan in the selected host university (Only for Staff)
5. Provide a clear motivation on the learning outcome from the internship (only for trainees)
6. National ID or Copy of Passport Data page
7. Certificate of previous degree /or a Proof that the degree has been completed (for Staff applicants)
8. First year MSc transcript records (for MSc applicants)
9. Proof of enrolment in second year MSc degree course (or proof of eligibility to register) from home institution (for MSc applicants)
10. Proof of enrolment in bachelor/master/PhD programme in one of the African beneficiaries HEIs (University of Abomey-Calavi, University of Cape Coast, University of Rwanda, University of Eswatini) (only for Trainees)
11. Previous transcript record for Staff and Trainees
12. A support letter from home HEIs (from an authority of the University, Vice chancellor or Dean or Vice Dean or Head of Department/School)
13. Two recommendation letters
14. Detailed curriculum Vitae.
15. Certificate of English or French language skills if any
16. Employment certificate (only for staff)
17. Proof of socio-economic vulnerability attested by an authority of the home HEI for those vulnerable. The letter should have the HEI letter header and Email and contact of the signatory person.
18. Any other supporting documents

In order to meet the general selection requirements for MSc Mobility Grant (maximum 12 months' scholarship mainly for research), the applicant must have completed the first two semesters (coursework) of a Master of Science course in Agronomy (or related agricultural sciences fields) or in ICT (or related fields), in his home country. It is obligatory that the students submit their academic transcripts to prove that the required coursework has been successfully completed.

For the choice of the host university, the students are allowed to only apply for the University of Abomey-Calavi (Benin), University of Cape Coast (Ghana), University of Rwanda (Rwanda), University of Eswatini (Eswatini).

7- Contact

Due to difference in the partners higher education system, specific academic arrangements will be performed to assure that scholars are admitted in the right program and can make benefit of the mobility. These arrangements will be fixed on a case-by-case basis between the host HEI and Coordinating Institution.

For more information, please contact Mr. Christel Azon, christelazon@gmail.com and copy Dr Dompkeh Kwadwo, kwadwo.dompkeh@ucc.edu.gh and Prof Kwame Agyei, kfrimpong@ucc.edu.gh.

8- Deadline

Applications should be submitted To: mobilitypathb@gmail.com and copied to Dr Dompkeh Kwadwo kwadwo.dompkeh@ucc.edu.gh and Prof Kwame Agyei kfrimpong@ucc.edu.gh and no later than July 12nd, 2025. Shortlisted candidates will be contacted and invited for interviews.

Female and socio-economic vulnerable applicants are strongly encouraged to apply. The list of academic programmes offered by different host institutions can be found below.

Table 2. List of academic MSc programs

Beneficiary name	Country	Name of the programme	Thematic field of study
University of Abomey-Calavi	Benin	MSc in Biotechnology and Plant Breeding	Agricultural sciences
University of Abomey-Calavi	Benin	MSc in Sustainable Management of Tropical Soil Fertility	Agricultural sciences
University of Abomey-Calavi	Benin	MSc in Sustainable Pest Management and Biopesticide Development	Agricultural sciences
University of Abomey-Calavi	Benin	MSc in Information System and Computer Networks	Computer Science
University of Abomey-Calavi	Benin	MSc in IT Security	Computer Science
University of Abomey-Calavi	Benin	MSc in Software Engineering	Computer Science
University of Cape Coast	Ghana	Land Use and Environmental Science	Land Use, Precision Agriculture, climate Change, climate Change
University of Cape Coast	Ghana	Land Policy and Administration	Land Policy and Administration
University of Cape Coast	Ghana	Computer Science	Embedded systems
University of Eswatini	Eswatini	MSc in crop Science	Agricultural Sciences
University of Eswatini	Eswatini	MSc in Horticulture	Agricultural Sciences
University of Eswatini	Eswatini	MSc in Environmental Resource Management	Agricultural Sciences
University of Eswatini	Eswatini	Computer Science	Applied Computer Science
University of Rwanda	Rwanda	MSc, Crop Science	Agricultural Sciences
University of Rwanda	Rwanda	MSc, Agroforestry and Soil Management	Agricultural Sciences
University of Rwanda	Rwanda	MSc, Agribusiness	Agricultural Sciences
University of Rwanda	Rwanda	Africa Centre of Excellence in Internet of Things	Computer Science