Third call for scholarship application for MSc, Academic and administrative 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 underlined 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 have finished a MSc coursework in his/her home institution OR will finish their coursework before their departure to the host country, if selected) and will conduct research work in selected host institution members of PATH consortium (credit seeking mobility).

Selected crops per country as well as key words MSc subjects can be found in the Table below:

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
	Bambara groundnut	Water management + remote sensing OR Precision pest management + remote sensing + leaves diseases OR Precision nutrient management /agronomic practices
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

Students are invited to develop their research proposal on a selected crop with focus on the key words listed in Table 1.

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 staff are the employed person in one of the HEIs. They will be selected based on the needs expressed in their motivation letters, 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 with other staff of their home country institution who would not benefit from the mobility. Staff applicant must have the skills required by the university they are visiting (table below).

University	Expected skills for staff mobility (in coming mobility)
University of Abomey-Calavi	Willing to host administrative and/or academic staff proficiency in IA, remote sensing, drone, satellites, photosynthesis research
University of Cape Coast	Willing to host administrative and/or academic staff highly skilled in Artificial Intelligence, satellite, Drone imagery analysis, or GIS solutions.
University of Rwanda	Willing to host administrative and/or academic staff highly skilled in Artificial Intelligence, satellite, Drone imagery analysis, or GIS solutions.
University of Eswatini	Willing to host administrative and/or academic proficiency in IA, satellite, Drone imagery analysis, or GIS solutions.

2.3 Profile of Trainees position

Trainees aimed at improving entrepreneurship in precision agriculture by building the capacity of young African trainees 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 desire to acquire in the 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.

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 (including the return ticket of the students during his mobility, settling-in allowances), participation costs, contribution to research costs and insurance in line with EACEA procedures.

• **MSc students will receive a monthly stipend of 890 Euros. This also includes (1) travels cost to and from the host institution and (2) settling allowance.**

• **Staff members will receive a monthly stipend of 2370 Euros. This also includes (1) travels cost to and from the host institution and (2) settling allowance.**

• **Trainees will receive a monthly stipend of 1230 Euros. This also includes (1) travels cost to and from the host institution and (2) settling allowance.**

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 third 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). Masters students can come from Target Group 1 and 2. Staff and Trainees can only come from Target Group 1. **Currently, thirteen (13) MSc, (9) staff and (5) Trainees positions are available. For the Trainees position, applicants are not allowed to apply for Cape Coast University as host university.**

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. Previous transcript record for Staff and Trainees
11. A support letter from home HEIs (from an authority of the University, Vice chancellor or Dean or Vice Dean or Head of Department/School)
12. Two recommendation letters
13. Detailed curriculum Vitae.
14. Certificate of English or French language skills if any
15. Employment certificate (only for staff)
16. 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.
17. 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)
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 home country. Students who are still attending coursework scheduled for the last semester should finish the course work before their departure date to the host country (if selected) (check the timeline below).

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 Dr. Christel Ferréol Azon, christelazon@gmail.com and copy Dr Carlos Houdégbé, houdariscarl@gmail.com and Prof Kwame Agyei, kfrimpong@ucc.edu.gh.

8- Deadline

Applications should be submitted to: mobilitypathb@gmail.com and copied to Prof Kwame Agyei, kfrimpong@ucc.edu.gh and Prof Dompreh Kwadwo kwadwo.dompreh@ ucc.edu.gh. Applications are open from December 08, 2025– January 31, 2026 (West Africa time). Shortlisted candidates will be contacted and invited for interviews.

Tentative timeline

Activity	Tentative Timeline
Applications open	December 08, 2025– January 31, 2026
Applications screening for eligibility	February 1 – 15, 2026
Applications assessment	February 16 – 28, 2026
Interviews	March 1st – 15, 2026
Outcome of the selection	March 25, 2026
Tentative month for selected applicants to travel to host country	April/Mai 2026

Selected MSc students should then provide proof that they have completed the course work no later than March 15, 2026. A letter from the student HEI or supervisor stating that he/she has completed the coursework can also be accepted.

Female and socio-economically vulnerable applicants are strongly encouraged to apply. Applicants with special needs (for example, those with disabilities) are also highly encouraged to apply. The PATH project will provide appropriate facilities and support to accommodate their stay and learning process.

To find more information about the person vulnerable, please click **here**.

The list of academic programmes offered by different host institutions can be found in the table 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