



Makerere University Research and Innovations Fund: Request for Applications (RFA) Supported by the Government of the Republic of Uganda

Round 6, Track 1: New Research & Innovation Agenda-based Proposals Financial Year 2024/2025

SECTION A: BACKGROUND

A1. Funding opportunity description

Makerere University received special funding from the Government of the Republic of Uganda, to support high impact Research and Innovations that contribute to national transformation. The Financial Year 2024/25 will be the sixth year of this fund's availability. The fund illustrates the increasing importance that the Government attaches to Research and Innovation as a driver of socio-economic transformation. The objective of the fund is to increase the local generation of translatable research and scalable innovations that address key gaps required to drive Uganda's development agenda. The fund is therefore aimed at complementing available funding to address unfunded priorities critical to accelerating development. Over the last five Financial Years, government appropriated 130.5 Billion Uganda Shillings. Between the five years, MakRIF has funded 1337 projects across all sectors critical for development, of which 667 have been completed. During the Financial Year (2024/25), Makerere University expects to receive about 25 Billion Uganda shillings (≈US\$ 6.8 million) under the Government Research and Innovation Fund (RIF). Of this, at least five (5) Billion Shillings will fund new ideas that respond to a widely consultative Research Agenda focused on national priorities while the rest will fund continuing projects from previous financial years, extension of multi-year projects, needs based priorities, and commercialization/scaling of prior funded projects. The Makerere University Research and Innovation Grants Management Committee (GMC) therefore announces the **RIF Round 6, Track 1 (New Research & Innovation Agenda-Based Grants)**. Available funds are obligated for the Financial Year 2024/2025. The GMC therefore invites applications with original ideas that demonstrate a clear link to key thematic areas of the National Research and Innovation Agenda.

A2. Research for Economic Development

To transition to middle-income status, low-income countries must increasingly invest in research and innovations that provide solutions to persistent development challenges. Universities should be at the forefront of driving this research agenda. The Government of Uganda is currently implementing the 3rd National Development Plan (NDP) (2020/21 – 2024/25). However, the NDP and sector-specific plans require research to fill evidence gaps. The main objective of the RIF is to support R&I initiatives that contribute to better delivery of National Development initiatives in all sectors critical to the economy.

A3. Scope and Technical Description of the Research and Innovation Grant

The RIF GMC's terms of reference include development of an instructive research agenda as the basis for identifying funding priorities. In the FY 2023/2024, the GMC conducted a review

of the research agenda, to update it with emerging issues of national importance. The GMC conducted a comprehensive stakeholder consultation to identify priority emerging thematic areas of interest for national development. These consultations included meetings with representatives from key government sectors, semi-autonomous government agencies, the private-for-profit sector and civil society. The GMC triangulated this information with that from the National Development Plan III, the Makerere University Strategic Plan and Research Agenda, the Sustainable Development Goals, and the critical areas in the National Budget for FY2025/2025. The **RIF Round 6, Track 1 (Research & Innovation Agenda-Based Grants)** will therefore specifically target research and innovation projects that align with priority thematic issues in the instructive Research Agenda that arose from these consultations. Research and Innovation ideas are therefore sought in the following thematic areas:

THEME 1: AGRICULTURAL TRANSFORMATION, FOOD SECURITY AND LIVELIHOODS

<i>Sub-Theme</i>
1.1 Transforming the agricultural sector to drive development
1.2 Agricultural and environmental policy and planning
1.3 Sustainable landscapes and human settlements
1.4 Livestock Farming and Animal Health

THEME 2: HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

<i>Sub-Theme</i>
2.1 Achieving Sustainable health as a means to sustainable development
2.2 Healthcare Quality Improvement
2.3 Mental Health Services and Interventions
2.4 Introducing ICT in health service delivery
2.5 Infectious Disease, Zoonoses and Neglected Tropical Diseases (using one health approach)
2.6 Aging and Gerontology
2.7 Maternal, Child Health and Adolescent Health
2.8 Healthcare Innovation and Technology
2.9 Law, Policy and Governance

THEME 3: SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

<i>Sub-Theme</i>
3.1 Re-imagining Education to unlock capacity for economic development.
3.2 Science Communication and Public Engagement
3.3 Emerging Technologies
3.4 Information science
3.5 Information Technology and Computer Science
3.6 Space Science and Exploration

THEME 4: NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT, URBANIZATION AND CLIMATE CHANGE

<i>Sub-Theme</i>
4.1 Water Resource Management and Agricultural Sustainability
4.2 Environmental sustainability, climate change and resilience
4.3 Ecosystem Services and Biodiversity Conservation
4.4 Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency
4.5 Energy and Minerals as drivers of rapid economic development

4.6 Urban Sustainability, smart cities and Climate Resilience

THEME 5: CULTURAL, HERITAGE AND CREATIVE ARTS

Sub-Theme

5.1 Heritage Site Management and Planning

5.2 Public Engagement and Education

5.3 Digital Heritage and Virtual Reality

5.4 Indigenous knowledge systems

5.5 Art Practices and Management

5.6 Climate Change and Cultural Heritage

5.7 Heritage Tourism and Economic Development

THEME 6: GOVERNANCE, SOCIAL JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Sub-Theme

6.1 Governance

6.2 Human Rights

6.3 Gender Justice

6.4 Law Reforms

6.5 Economic Justice

6.6 Disability Justice

6.7 Media Representation and Cultural Justice

6.8 Alternative Dispute Resolution

THEME 7: ECONOMIC GROWTH AND INNOVATION

Sub-Theme

7.1 Solutions to catalyse business and enterprise

7.2 Economic modelling and policy analysis

7.3 Works, manufacturing, science and technology as tools to accelerate development

MakRIF Grants are open to all technical disciplines in Makerere University as long as the research questions align with the instructive research agenda themes above. Particular attention will be paid to unfunded priorities, those for which funding has been inadequate, or for which available funding only covers one or a few of the components needed to inform development initiatives in a holistic way. This grant is not primarily meant to supplement existing research projects that already have funding from other sources. However, researchers can apply on the platform of existing projects if they provide a strong justification that there are important funding gaps and that there are distinct added deliverables from the additional support. This grant also emphasizes a multi-sectoral approach. Research groups are therefore encouraged to work with other sectors that complement their technical focus.

A4. Categories and size of grants to be issued:

Grants will be issued in the following categories:

Scenario 1

Categories	Amount (Ug. Shs)	Approximate No. of Projects*	Res.	Innov.	Total (Ug. Shs)
Cat 1	Up to 175,000,000	Approx. 15	8	7	2,625,000,000
Cat 2	Up to 100,000,000	Approx. 20	10	10	2,000,000,000
Cat 3	Up to 50,000,000	Approx. 15	8	7	750,000,000

		Approx. 50	26	24	5,375,000,000
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Res= primarily research/research ecosystem-based; Innov= primarily Innovation-based

* The R&I Grants Management Committee reserves the right to determine/change the number and size of awards based on prevailing circumstances informed by demand, quality of applications, availability of funds and level of utilization of funds by grantees. 50% of all awards will go to research or ecosystem strengthening projects while 50% will go innovation-based projects.

Note:

- Experience from earlier RIF calls showed that most applicants (Over 50%) target Category 1 which makes it highly competitive; Applicants are encouraged to consider all categories.
- Researchers who have applied for RIF funding multiple times in the past but have never been funded are **STRONGLY** encouraged to apply for this round as added considerations will be given to them
- Junior Faculty Researchers are encouraged to apply. (Junior Faculty are not defined by age, but by rank and research experience. They are researchers at the rank of Lecturer or below, researchers with less than 5 years of experience in research/innovation or less than 2 years as independent researchers/innovators or have never been PIs for a research/innovation project greater than US\$ 100,000 (or 365 Million Uganda Shillings).

A5. Grant principles

This grant is guided by the following principles:

- ***A commitment to results and impact:*** This grant is committed to results and impact. The expectation is that researchers will address the most pressing development issues and that the findings generated from the research and innovation activities supported by this grant will be of use to policy makers, program implementers or the private sector. Research teams ought to demonstrate attainment of tangible and useful deliverables within 1 year of implementation, including projects that require multi-year funding.
- ***Equity and inclusion:*** Measures will be taken to ensure that all Colleges will benefit from the fund. The GMC will also ensure that women researchers and junior faculty are well represented in the grant portfolio. However, equity will not mean equal allocation, because 1) MakRIF aims to fund the best and most impactful research proposals and competition is at the center of its approach, and 2) the nature, capacity and cost of research and innovation initiatives differs markedly across disciplines.
- ***Multi-disciplinarity:*** The development challenges we are seeking to solve require more than the effort of one sector. It is therefore important that researchers demonstrate a multi-disciplinary approach to the research-to-translation continuum, reflected through the problems selected, the technical proposals, and their team composition.
- ***Accountability and utilization of funds:*** To protect the University's and the researchers' reputation and ensure continuity of this funding, accountability for the RIF will be of utmost importance. All funds disbursed should be accounted for in a timely way and to acceptable standards (both financial and implementation-wise). The GMC will therefore regularly track all awardees' performance. Researchers with substantial accountability arrears and those who do not utilize allocated funds will, be temporarily stopped from accessing these funds in the future.

SECTION B: ELIGIBILITY

B1. Guidelines for Eligibility

This grant targets researchers and innovators from Makerere University. This includes Makerere University appointed academic staff (Assistant Lecturers, Lecturers, Senior Lecturers, Associate Professors and Professors) and research staff (research fellows and senior research fellows) who hold a valid and current appointment issued by the Directorate of Human Resources of Makerere University. Academic staff from all Colleges of Makerere University

are eligible to apply as well as senior staff from the following administrative units: Library, Gender Mainstreaming, Guidance and Counselling, Quality Assurance, Planning, and the Directorate of Research and Graduate Training. Individual researchers or research teams will be required to have a letter of support from the Head of the academic unit under which the lead researcher is tenured. Researchers from other institutions of higher learning are not eligible to apply as principal investigators nor co-PI. However, RIF encourages the inclusion of researchers from other HEIs as co-investigators or resource persons. Students may not apply as PIs but may also be part of a research team whose PI is an academic staff of Makerere. Collaborations with researchers from government agencies, civil society organizations, independent research institutions, business and industry is encouraged. To be eligible for funding, a research team should meet the following criteria:

- (i) The Principal Investigator (PI) shall be an academic or research staff of Makerere University on a permanent appointment or fulltime contract issued by the Directorate of Human Resources or a staff member from one of the administrative units linked to research (Library, Gender Mainstreaming, Quality Assurance, Guidance and Counselling, Planning and the Directorate of Research and Graduate Training (DRGT)).
- (ii) The PI shall be actively in service (not on study or sabbatical leave).
- (iii) The PI shall obtain a letter of support from his/her department or school or College (any **one** of the three).
- (iv) The PI shall attach a copy of his/her appointment letter or most-recent letter of promotion issued by the Directorate of Human Resource of Makerere University
- (v) A researcher cannot be a PI on more than **ONE** application. It is allowable for any person to be a team member on up to a maximum of three applications.
- (vi) Each applying team will be required to indicate a co-Principal Investigator who will be co-signatory to the contract upon award and will be jointly responsible for the results; the requirements for one to be a co-PI are similar to those required of a PI.
- (vii) Researchers from Makerere University are encouraged to collaborate with resource persons from civil society organizations, government sectors, other universities within and outside Uganda, independent research institutions, business and industry as part of their teams; in such cases, the external team members will provide a letter of support from their institution.
- (viii) Research fellows working in projects within academic units but are not appointed centrally by Makerere University are not eligible as PIs but may be part of a research team. Students in general are not eligible to apply as PIs. However, students with strong ideas can market them to their academic supervisors/mentors who can apply on their behalf.

Researchers should note carefully the following:

PIs who currently hold an active RIF award (RIF-1, 2, 3, 4,5), while eligible to apply, **will only be considered for award if prior to the final selection activity, all their existing projects have been completed, all pending accountabilities have been submitted, and they have completed the official close-out report.** The close-out reports and full accountability should have been submitted by Friday 22nd November 2024.

SECTION C: GRANT GUIDELINES

C1. The research problem

The RIF is meant to fill research gaps arising from development priorities of government and its implementing partners. Only research/innovation problems that have a clear link to the national development priorities and align with the thematic priorities of the comprehensive multi-stakeholder research agenda will be funded. The proposed solution (research or innovation) must be articulated clearly including the knowledge or intervention gap it is trying to address. Research problems will also be assessed on the basis of their responsiveness to the needs of government, public, industry and academia. Researchers should ask themselves the question: *“If you were a decision-maker in a government sector, would this research be very useful to you?”* Three broad types of research gaps are anticipated: 1) Those that need primary research to fill a critical knowledge gap, 2) Those that need an innovation (technology or approach) to address a critical pain point or community need, and 3) Those that target R&I ecosystem enhancement to overcome a major barrier that prevents high-value research from being conducted. For projects that require research, the research problem (i.e., the discrepancy between the current knowledge and the desired knowledge) should be clearly articulated. For projects that are innovation-based, a clear articulation of the stakeholder need/pain-point that needs the solution should be articulated. For projects that require ecosystem enhancement, the discrepancy between the existing capacity for research services and the desired capacity should be clearly articulated. All three types of problems should be aligned to one or more themes in the research agenda.

C2. The proposed solution

Researchers should clearly articulate the objectives of the planned research and the proposed solutions. Researchers should also describe the critical content of the solution (i.e., the ‘research methodology’ for projects that are primarily research, or the ‘technical approach’ for projects that are innovation based, or the content of the planned enhancement for projects targeting R&I ecosystem enhancement). Researchers should defend the relevance of the proposed solution to addressing key development outcomes of the respective sector and its alignment to one or more thematic areas specified in this call. Researchers/innovators should also demonstrate that the research is feasible and will result in tangible results within one (1) year of execution. Research projects that require multi-year implementation will only be considered if they can show actionable intermediate results attainable within 1 implementation year. Apart from a summary of the proposed approach, researchers will provide a more detailed description of their technical approach to enable a robust assessment of the rigor of the proposed methodology. For research-based projects, researchers should describe clearly but concisely the methods proposed, demonstrating scientific merit and rigor. For innovation-based projects, researchers should describe concisely the design approach to be used and the stage of the solution proposed. For R&I ecosystem enhancement-based projects, a description of the content of the enhancement (e.g., specialized training activities, or specialized equipment to be procured, its installation, or specialized training in its use) should be provided. (Note: Training in basic research skills or procuring simple routine equipment shall not be considered unless it is part of a holistic system upgrade).

C3. Outputs, outcomes and impact

Researchers will be expected to describe clearly the outputs anticipated to arise from their research projects. Outputs are the immediate tangible results of the research or innovation activities undertaken. Beyond outputs, applicants will describe the anticipated outcomes and impacts of the solution they propose. The target populations (primary and secondary) to be involved in and impacted by the research should be clearly described as well as the anticipated reach of the outcomes and impacts stated. Since this funding is specific to the current financial

year, projects must demonstrate clearly the deliverables they expect within one year, matching the level of investment made and attainable in the 1-year timeframe.

Often, science requires more than one year of implementation to effectively answer the required study questions and as such, some projects are designated as ‘multi-year’. However, since the available funding has been committed for one Financial Year, all proposed projects including multi-year projects must articulate clearly the deliverables expected to be attained within one (1) year. Within a particular funding round, research proposals will not receive grants that span more than one year. However, recognizing that some projects require longer timelines to achieve full impact, Level 2 and Level 3 funding will be provided for in the subsequent financial years. Projects wishing to attract Level 2 and Level 3 funding will compete for this funding with new applications for extension funding.

C4. Team composition

Researchers may apply individually or in teams. Team applications will be at an added advantage. Individuals or teams should demonstrate that they have the technical expertise to execute the planned study. Disciplines relevant to the proposed research question/innovation challenge should be represented. For research areas where a multi-sectoral/multi-disciplinary approach is clearly needed, the extent to which the composition of the team covers the pertinent sectors/disciplines will be important. Teams that include an industry, business, public sector or implementing agency partner will have an added advantage.

C5. Provision for capacity development

Research and innovations that include a capacity-building component will be at an advantage. Researchers should articulate how they expect their research project to build capacity for stakeholders and their own department. Examples could include mentorship of junior researchers, equipment, and training of investigators, students, research fellows or research assistants. Co-designing of the research methodology or participation in field implementation, data management or analysis are other possible avenues for capacity building. Projects are strongly encouraged to include provisions for students to attachments so that students can benefit from the research. Projects should indeed involve teams of students from different academic disciplines working together.

C6. Dissemination Plan/Scalability/Sustainability

Since this fund is aimed at supporting government and its partners to improve service delivery and to accelerate development, researchers/Innovators should show a clear plan for dissemination their findings to audiences critical for policy and program change so as to achieve impact at scale. For primarily research-based projects, this will include a clear description of the knowledge translation and dissemination plan to stakeholders in the relevant sectors including the knowledge products anticipated to arise from the study (e.g., policy briefs, knowledge briefs, publications etc.). Research without a clear link to policy/program impact will not be funded. Innovation-based projects should articulate a scaling strategy, including linkage to scaling partners within the industry (for commercially viable enterprises), or within the relevant public sectors (for innovations targeted to the public) or within relevant implementing agencies (for social enterprises). Innovations targeting commercial interest should demonstrate the anticipated commercial potential, anticipated demand, anticipated patents/copyrights/industrial design claims/trademarks if applicable and the path to commercialization. Innovations targeting social impact (social innovations) should elucidate the path to wide scale community uptake. Teams that already have the necessary connections

to sector ministries, implementing partner agencies (e.g., NGOs) or industry partners should articulate these connections.

For research and innovation initiatives that are expected to run longer than 3 years, researchers should articulate the sustainability of their projects beyond the RIF funding. Sustainability will also mean availability of co-funding or solicitation of continued funding from other grant applications beyond RIF. However, for projects that have already received or anticipate funding from elsewhere, researchers should show how the RIF funding fits into the broader funding structure. In general, researchers should show that they will not become dependent on RIF funding and that MakRIF will only kick start their endeavors to solicit for other grants so as to expand their funding base.

C7. Ethical implications and Environmental Impact

For research or innovation projects involving human subjects and are not benign investigations, researchers should clearly articulate the anticipated ethical challenges if any, how subjects will be protected and how they will obtain the relevant ethical certifications. If your research involves animal subjects, in what ways are animal subjects involved and how will the animals be protected? How will animal welfare be ensured? For research that involves changes to the physical environment, researchers should identify the project environmental and social impacts, explain the measures to mitigate the damage to the environment, and to monitor and act on such damage.

C8. Conflict of interest declaration

Researchers will declare if there is any conflict of interest regarding their project e.g., if it is co-funded by an industry partner that may compromise the impartiality of the team or the outcomes of the study. Teams with strong linkages to GMC members should declare this so that it is duly addressed during the selection process.

C9. Budget

Researchers will prepare a summary budget for their project. Budgets should be submitted in the official currency (Uganda Shillings). Because these are university funds, academic units (Departments, Schools and Colleges) will not charge institutional overheads to any of the research funds. Budgets should not spread beyond one Financial Year. Projects requiring multi-year implementation should indicate so in the application. However, such projects should only provide a budget for one Financial Year. Multi-year budgets will only be funded to the extent needed for this financial year and within the grant caps indicated for the various award categories. Failure to articulate a one (1) year budget might lead to disqualification. The budgets will include the following sections:

- 1.0 Personnel costs
- 2.0 Travel
- 3.0 Supplies and services
- 4.0 Equipment
- 5.0 Program activity costs
- 6.0 Dissemination

Under Personnel costs, applicants should not budget for ‘Salaries’ for staff who are paid a regular salary by Makerere University or another Government of Uganda institution (whether on permanent or contract terms) as this would constitute double payment. However, such researchers can budget for ‘activity-based’ time input or ‘level-of-effort-based’ allowances for

their additional time input into the project. The latter should be justified by specifying the extra-time demands for each individual involved.

Researchers can budget for salaries for critical project staff that are not paid by Makerere or the Government of Uganda e.g., Project Coordinators, Administrative Assistants, Research Officers etc. Regular Personnel costs excluding field research assistants should **not exceed 33% of the budget**. Projects that exceed this threshold will be disqualified. Because of the observation that projects without administrative support tend to be the ones most affected by implementation and accountability delays, projects are strongly advised to include Coordination or Administrative support in their teams. Field research assistants (or Data collectors) if needed should not be included under ‘Personnel costs’ but should instead be included under ‘Program Activity Costs’. All salaries and all repetitive allowances will be subject to mandatory statutory deductions at source, to pay the relevant taxes.

In addition to the summary budget, research teams will be required to attach a detailed budget (As an MS Excel attachment) that breaks down all expenditure line items, inclusive of a budget justification that explains the rationale behind the different budget items. Teams that do not attach a detailed budget and budget justification might not be evaluated. The level of efficiency in the budget will be a major evaluation criterion. Lumpsums will not be accepted. To avoid under-budgeting, researchers are strongly advised to consult with the relevant guidance documents provided on the RIF Portal to get standard rates for allowances, procurables and contractable services. Researchers are strongly advised **not to exceed the maximum amount indicated within the category for which they have applied**. All projects that exceed their category ceiling will be automatically disqualified.

C10. Workplan

Researchers will provide a list of key milestones for the project clearly demonstrating the deliverables expected at each point. These will be used as the basis for tracking implementation of activities towards project goals and outputs. Given the time implications of the awards, it will be important that researchers commit to a clear time-bound set of deliverables all achievable within one year for the main deliverable targeted during the current period of funding. Failure to articulate a one (1) year plan will imply inability to utilize the grant funds within one (1) year.

SECTION D: THE GRANT PROCESS

D1. Submission of applications

For the present round, applications will open on Monday 28th October 2024. Submission of applications will be done via an online platform: <https://rif.mak.ac.ug/portal>. Applicants must first register in the grants website and create an account in order to access the application. Applicants who already have an account in the system should use their log-in credentials to access the application. The Grants Committee will not consider applications submitted by any other means. Applicants are therefore advised to prepare their submissions on-time. If an applicant experiences any challenges in the submission process, they should send an email to: info.rif@mak.ac.ug. The closing date for submissions is 11.59pm, Friday 22nd November 2024.

D2. Application form

The application form is available on-line at the following link: <https://rif.mak.ac.ug/portal> Because it is a one-step application, applicants should read and understand all the key requirements of the different sections of the form so as to provide all the critical information required within the word limit provided. All entries will be conducted on-line. However, applicants can download a PDF/MS Word version of the form to enable preparations before filling in the domains. Applicants can also copy and paste information into the online application domains.

D3. Rules governing applications

All applications should be written in English. All applications should be submitted via the online portal mentioned above. Complete applications must be submitted not later than 11.59pm East African Time on the closing date. No submissions after closure of applications will be accepted. Any attempt at solicitation of acceptance beyond this date will not be entertained. The Grants Committee bears no responsibility for submissions that are not completed in time and incomplete submissions will not be considered. If none of the submitted applications meets the requirements to receive a grant, the call may be reopened at the sole discretion of the Grants Management Committee. An individual researcher should not submit more than **ONE** application as a principal investigator. However, it is allowable for a PI on a submitted project to be a team member on up to two other submitted projects.

Participants agree to assume any and all risks, and to waive claims against Makerere University and the Grants Management Committee for any injury, death, damage, or loss of property, revenue, or profits, whether direct, indirect, or consequential, arising from their participation in this grant implementation.

D4. Applicant support

Sensitization: The GMC will hold a Zoom-based public meeting on Friday 1st November 2024 to sensitize researchers about the grant.

Q&A: Applicants will have an opportunity to ask questions and obtain answers/clarifications regarding this RFP or any part of the application process. The question submission period will run from Tuesday 29th October to Tuesday 5th November 2024. Questions should be submitted to info@rif.mak.ac.ug. The Questions and Answers will be posted on the FAQ section on the platform website <http://rif.mak.ac.ug> by Friday 8th November 2024.

Webinar: The Grants Management Committee will host a public webinar via Zoom or Facebook Live on Friday 15th November 2024 to support potential applicants needing additional support.

D5. Review of applications

A three (3) step application evaluation process will be used. Step 1 will involve determination of eligibility. This will be conducted by the GMC Secretariat to select only those applications that fit within the eligibility criteria specified in sub-section B1 of this document. Step 2 will involve a detailed technical review, undertaken by an independent team of credible reviewers (Ugandan and international) appointed by the GMC and aligned to the technical expertise required of the different applications. The review process will take a cross-disciplinary approach in which in addition to subject matter experts, reviewers from other disciplines that align with the core-discipline of the research idea will be engaged. Reviewers will conduct an electronic scoring of the applications based on standardized criteria. Each proposal will be reviewed by at least 3 reviewers. A shortlist of the best proposals will be provided to the GMC. In Step 3 of the review, the GMC will select from the best-scoring proposals the ones to be funded. This will be strongly guided by the scores and recommendations from Step 2. However, the GMC will consider additional aspects like clear link to the funder's vision and

the research agenda themes as well as impact within the relevant sector, equity between Colleges, consideration of gender and junior faculty, the budgets, and the funds available.

D6. Evaluation criteria

The following evaluation criteria will be used:

Category	Criterion	Score
1. The problem	Is the problem clearly articulated i.e. the knowledge gap (for research-based projects) or the stakeholder need (for innovation-based projects) or the research capacity gap (for research ecosystem development projects)?	__/5
	Does the problem clearly align to a theme within the priority research areas identified in the research agenda?	__/15
2. The proposed solution	Is the proposed solution aligned to the problem? Is the proposed solution aligned to the research/innovation needs specified in the Research Agenda	__/5
	Is the idea innovative? Does it have the potential to add substantially to knowledge (for research-based projects) or to improve the way things are done (for innovation-based projects) or to enhance research capacity (for ecosystem enhancement projects)	__/10
3. Technical approach and methodology	Are the objectives (either research objectives, or innovation objectives, or ecosystem capacity development objectives) clear and attainable?	__/5
	Is the methodology clearly articulated? Does the methodology have a sound scientific basis? Is the methodology appropriate to the research questions?	__/20
4. Anticipated results/Impact	Is there a clear articulation of results expected from the project (Outputs as well as anticipated outcomes? Note: Impact is optional given the time duration of the projects).	__/5
	Are there clear deliverables to show within 1 year and are the deliverables worth the investment?	__/5
5. Team composition	Does the research team have adequate technical capacity/expertise to execute the project including multi-sectorality where needed?	__/3
	Empowerment: Are women researchers included on the team? Are young faculty included on the team?	__/2
6. Capacity building	Is there provision for capacity building through mentorship of students or young faculty?	__/3
	Does the proposal describe ways in which the capacity of the unit (Department, School or Unit) will be strengthened?	__/2
7. Dissemination plan and scalability	Is there a clear articulation of a dissemination plan (for research-based projects) or a scaling plan (for innovation-based projects) or a commercialization plan (for projects with a commercial orientation)?	__/5
	Does the dissemination/scaling plan show anticipated impacts to policy or programs or to society beyond the study?	__/5
8. Feasibility	Is the project viable, implementable, with the potential to have significant milestones within 1 year? Is it ethically and environmentally sound?	__/5
	Is the budget realistic and feasible? Are the budget items rational (i.e. not over-budgeted or under-budgeted)?	__/5
	Total score	/100

D7. Notification of successful applicants

Successful applicants will be informed by email to their designated point of contact. Successful teams will also be profiled on the Grants website: <http://rif.mak.ac.ug>. Researchers should be cognizant of the fact that not all research applicants should expect to be funded - this is a normal part of grants processes. The GMC will be as impartial and as technical as possible in the selection process to ensure that the best projects win. Not winning a grant should therefore not be construed as being a result of an unfair selection processes. GMC members have sworn an oath of impartiality and readiness to serve with diligence.

D8. Tracking your application

The grant website will contain information on the status of the applications at the different stages. Tracking will be provided for the entire batch of applications and not for individual applications.

D9. Post award processes

Due to the urgent need to produce results and ensure accountability, the GMC and its Secretariat will conduct a series of post-award activities to awardees. While these will target as little interference as possible, they will be focused on ensuring that set milestones are achieved, the evidence of anticipated deliverables is available and that funds are accounted for in time. In particular, support processes will include:

- **Induction:** A brief post award induction, in form of an online course and a Zoom-based Induction workshop. The online course will be mandatory before signing the contracts.
- **Procurement plan:** Before signing contracts, successful awardees will be required to develop a procurement plan covering all procurables in their budget.
- **Contracting:** The GMC will execute an agreement with the awardees on the terms and conditions of the award.
- **Capacity building:** The GMC Secretariat will provide inductive orientation for researchers (open to both awardees and non-awardees) on 1) Research project management; 2) Financial Management; 3) Research Leadership; 4) Gender and inclusiveness in research and 5) Research translation for impact. Schedules of these trainings will be made available in due course. These courses will also be made continually available for long term capacity building.
- **Release of funds:** Release of funds will be in phases incumbent on proper accountability and demonstration of milestones achieved in the previous payment phase.
- **Tracking of deliverables, performance, and accountability:** The Grant Secretariat will conduct continuous checks on awardees to ensure deliverables are met, funds are utilized, and releases are accounted for. Consistent failure to demonstrate deliverables or utilize funds might lead to issuance of unspent balances to other grantees. Therefore, for the avoidance of large amounts of unspent balances, the GMC will maintain dynamic tracking of performance of projects and might decide to reallocate non-performing awards to those that need them.
- **Reporting:** Awardee researchers will provide interim reports every three (3) months using a standard reporting form that will be provided by the GMC.

D10. Intellectual property

Intellectual Property derived through the Government grants will be owned jointly by the awardee Teams and Makerere University. All awardee teams grant to Makerere University and the Government of Uganda are non-exclusive, royalty-free, perpetual license to use any resultant or derived intellectual property (e.g., product, service, or technology) that will be

developed using the Government grants for development work of public benefit without encumbrance. However, for projects that have a commercial value, researchers will clearly delineate any intellectual property included that is their creation. The GMC will undertake a determination of what percentage of stake the university will claim on the basis of its investment into the idea. Notwithstanding this, the researchers retain the bulk of the claim to intellectual property arising from their project. All proceeds accruing from commercialization of IP generated via government grants, following the conclusion of the grant period will be negotiated on a case-by-case basis amongst the parties, but with the researchers taking a controlling stake.

D11. Grant timeline

Milestone	Date
1. Issuance of RFA (Soft launch)	Monday 28 th October 2024
2. Researcher sensitization meeting	Friday 1 st November 2024
3. Q&A period	Tuesday 29 th October to Tuesday 5 th November 2024
4. Posting of FAQs	Friday 8 th November 2024
5. Researcher Support Webinar	Friday 15 th November 2024
6. Closing date for applications	Friday 22 nd November 2024
7. Selection – stage 1	Monday 25 th November to Friday 29 th November 2024
8. Selection – stage 2	Monday 2 nd December 2024 to Friday 3 rd January 2025
9. Selection – stage 3	Monday 6 th January to Thursday 9 th January 2025
10. Award notification	Friday 10 th January 2025
11. Induction	Tuesday 21 st January 2025

D12. Subsequent RFAs within this Financial Year’s funding

At the discretion of the Grants Management Committee, subsequent calls within this round or new rounds of calls may be issued within this Financial Year, depending on availability of resources, performance of awardees, and other provisions within the Terms of Reference for management of the Government RIF.