UNESCO SCIENCE FOR CRISIS RESPONSE AND SOLUTIONS PROGRAMME

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

SCRS Research Continuity Grants for Africa · First Pilot Call

A second chance for interrupted research. If conflict or a natural or biological hazard stopped or seriously delayed your natural-science research, this small grant may help you restart the work, protect what has already been achieved and bring a clearly defined part of the research to completion.

About the call

UNESCO's Science for Crisis Response and Solutions (SCRS) Programme is committed to helping scientific systems continue, recover and become more resilient before, during and after crises (conflict, natural or biological hazard). Through the first SCRS Research Continuity Grants for Africa, UNESCO will provide six institutional grants of up to USD 2,000 each to eligible researchers based at recognized universities or research institutes in Africa.

The pilot recognizes this small grant can make the difference between research being abandoned and valuable data, fieldwork, experiments or analysis being preserved and completed. It also aims to generate practical lessons that can strengthen future support for research continuity across Africa.

Objectives

- Enable researchers to resume or complete a clearly defined part of natural-science research interrupted by conflict, a natural or biological hazard.
- Preserve scientific capacity, data, research teams and earlier institutional investments.
- Strengthen the resilience of host institutions and wider scientific systems in crisis-affected settings.
- Promote equitable access to research-continuity support, particularly for women, scientists under 40, and scientists from least developed countries and Small Island Developing States in Africa.
- Gather practical lessons and begin building a future African network of researchers with direct experience of maintaining science through crises.

Grant at a glance

Number of grants	Six
Maximum amount	USD 2,000 per grant

Grant recipient	The selected applicant's recognized host university or research institute
Eligible field	Natural sciences; interdisciplinary research is eligible where it has a substantial natural-science component
Eligible crisis	Armed conflict, natural or biological hazard within the previous three years, or continuing material effects of such a crisis
Implementation period	Up to six months from receipt of funds
Application deadline	15 November 2026 at 23:59 Paris time

Who can apply?

Applicants must:

- possess African nationality and be based at a recognized university or research institute in an African country;
- hold at least a Master's degree, or an equivalent recognized research qualification, in a relevant field;
- be conducting natural-science research, or interdisciplinary research with a substantial natural-science component;
- show clearly how an armed conflict or a natural or biological hazard interrupted the proposed research within the previous three years, or how its consequences continue to materially affect the work;
- propose focused activities that can be completed within six months and within the USD 2,000 ceiling;
- provide a signed support letter from an authorized representative of the host institution; and
- confirm that the same costs are not being funded from another source.

Applications are welcome from all African countries that meet the crisis criteria. Researchers from Burkina Faso, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Uganda and Zimbabwe are particularly encouraged to apply; this list is not exhaustive.

What can the grant support?

Eligible costs may include:

- consumables and small research supplies;
- local fieldwork and research travel;
- data collection, processing or secure storage;

- minor equipment repair or essential short-term access to equipment or facilities; and
- laboratory, publication or open-access costs directly linked to the interrupted research.

The grant cannot support salary replacement, honoraria or personal allowances; international relocation or long-term subsistence; major equipment or construction; institutional overhead; or activities unrelated to the interrupted research.

How applications will be assessed

Eligible applications will be assessed on:

- the strength of the crisis link and evidence of interruption;
- scientific merit and relevance to sustainable development or recovery;
- the feasibility of the workplan, timetable, institutional support and risk-management measures;
- the clarity and value for money of the proposed budget;
- specific and verifiable expected results, including potential benefit to the host institution, scientific community or national research system; and
- willingness to share lessons and contribute to a future SCRS African Research Continuity Network.

All eligible applications will be assessed on merit. Subject to application quality and eligibility, UNESCO will also seek gender, crisis-type and geographic balance, and strong participation by scientists under 40, scientists from least developed countries and scientists from Small Island Developing States in Africa.

How to apply

1. Read the Terms of Reference and the Concept Note carefully.
2. Complete and sign the Application Form in English or French.
3. Attach your curriculum vitae, proof of your highest relevant qualification, and a signed institutional support letter.
4. Attach any ethics, research or fieldwork authorization required for the proposed activities.
5. Submit application online at https://forms.cloud.microsoft/Pages/DesignPageV2.aspx?subpage=design&token=06eb1bf90336481eb511f230062ab8df&id=Uq5PHbM5-kuwswIpVrERlHW37JkE9FhGtSeaOfqLz29UQ0kzV1IyTTVQUFRQSUNWSjFZUkdSMkxLUi4u&topview=Preview
6. and if not possible, email the complete application package to scienceresponse@unesco.org by 15 November at 23:59 Paris time. Use the subject line: SCRS Africa Grant Application - [Applicant name] - [Country].

Important: Incomplete or late applications may not be considered. Questions may be sent to scienceresponse@unesco.org by 15 November 2026.

For full conditions, eligible costs, safeguards, assessment criteria and reporting requirements, please consult the Terms of Reference, Concept Note and Application Form. Awards remain subject to UNESCO administrative requirements and final approval.

Indicative timeline

Call published	05 October 2026
Deadline for questions	14 November 2026
Applications close	15 November 2026, 23:59 Paris time
Eligibility and technical review	16 November-30 November 2026
Announcement	December
Agreements and transfers	December January 2026
Implementation	Up to six months from receipt of funds