

Overview of Call for Proposals

The Office of Research Affairs of Haramaya University is committed to promoting high-quality, innovative, and impactful research that addresses national and local development challenges. To strengthen the University's research capacity, foster interdisciplinary collaboration, and enhance postgraduate training, the Office invites academic staff members to submit research proposals under the **2026/27 Research Grant Call for Proposals**.

Grand Challenge Research Grant (HUGG): The HUGG is designed to support large-scale, multi-/trans-disciplinary research projects that address complex societal challenges and generate transformative scientific, technological, and policy innovations. The grant encourages collaboration across colleges, institutes, and disciplines to tackle priority research areas requiring integrated expertise. Projects funded under this category may run for 3–4 years and receive funding of up to ETB 4,000,000 per project. Research teams are expected to comprise members from multiple disciplines and contribute significantly to postgraduate training through the recruitment of at least two PhD students, or one PhD student and two MSc/MA students.

Regular Research Grant (HURG): HURG is intended to support small- and medium-scale research projects that address priority research problems and can be completed within a shorter timeframe. The grant aims to encourage research participation by early- and mid-career researchers and strengthen research-based postgraduate training. Projects funded under this category may run for a maximum of two years and receive funding of up to ETB 1,500,000 per project. Each project is required to recruit and support at least two MSc/MA students.

Women Research Grant (HUWG): HUWG is intended to encourage and empower women researchers to actively engage in research by developing and submitting competitive research projects that benefit the community in general and women in particular. Applicants may apply either for funding of up to ETB 4,000,000 or ETB 1,500,000. Accordingly, the eligibility requirements and project conditions of HUGG and HURG apply to the respective funding



categories. For the ETB 4,000,000 category, the Principal Investigator (PI) must be a female PhD holder, while for the ETB 1,500,000 category, the PI must be a female MSc/MA holder or above. In both cases, at least 50% of the other research team members must be female staff members.

Multidisciplinary Requirement: The scope of all grant categories must cover a wide range of research areas under the University's thematic priority areas. *Multidisciplinarity is a mandatory eligibility criterion for all grant categories.* Every proposal must involve researchers representing at **least three different disciplines/cross departments**, with clearly defined and complementary roles that contribute to addressing the proposed research problem. Preference will be given to projects demonstrating strong integration of disciplinary perspectives and meaningful collaboration among team members throughout the research process.

Eligible project proposal

The University supports research projects that:

- ✓ Address pressing local, regional, and/or national challenges and generate solutions with substantial societal impact.
- ✓ Demonstrate strong potential for producing high-quality research outputs, including publications, patents, copyrights, technologies, innovations, policy briefs, and other scholarly outputs that enhance the University's visibility and reputation.
- ✓ Generate new scientific knowledge, technologies, products, services, or discoveries through innovative approaches.
- ✓ Promote multi-/trans-disciplinary collaboration by integrating expertise from at least three disciplines.
- ✓ Contribute to postgraduate training and capacity building.
- ✓ Demonstrate clear pathways for knowledge transfer, technology dissemination, policy influence, and societal impact.
- ✓ Align with one or more of the University's thematic research priority areas.

Eligibility and Restrictions

Grand Challenge Research Grant

- ✓ The Principal Investigator (PI) must possess a PhD degree and be a full-time staff member of Haramaya University.



- ✓ The research team must include members from at **least three different disciplines/cross departments** relevant to the proposed research problem.
- ✓ Any academic, research, or technical staff member of Haramaya University may participate as a Co-Investigator.

Regular Research Grant

- ✓ The Principal Investigator must possess a minimum qualification of **Master's degree (MSc/MA)**.
- ✓ Applicants should preferably hold the rank of **Lecturer or above**.
- ✓ The project team must include researchers from at least three different disciplines.
- ✓ The project must recruit at least two MSc/MA students.

General Eligibility Requirements

- ✓ Any academic, research, or technical staff member of Haramaya University may participate as a Co-Investigator.
- ✓ A staff member may apply as Principal Investigator for only one proposal under this call and may participate in a maximum of two additional proposals as a Co-Investigator. Alternatively, a staff member may participate in a maximum of three proposals solely as a Co-Investigator.
- ✓ Principal Investigators are strongly advised to obtain written confirmation from all team members regarding their willingness to participate and compliance with participation limits and eligibility requirements, including the absence of overdue research projects.
- ✓ The Office of Research Affairs will not entertain complaints arising from incorrect declarations made by team members after proposal submission. Applicants are encouraged to verify the status of all proposed team members with the relevant thematic research leader before submission.
- ✓ The proposed research must directly address one or more of the priority thematic areas identified under the 2026/27 Call for Proposals.
- ✓ The geographical focus of the proposed project should preferably be in Eastern Ethiopia unless strong justification is provided for addressing a nationally relevant issue.
- ✓ Staff members on study leave are **not eligible** to serve as Principal Investigators or Co-Investigators.
- ✓ The use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) in proposal preparation should be limited. Applications containing substantial AI-generated content exceeding 30% of the total



proposal text without significant intellectual contribution from the research team shall be rejected.

- ✓ Inclusion of team members without clearly defined scientific contributions, responsibilities, or relevant expertise is discouraged and may negatively affect proposal evaluation.
- ✓ Staff members with **overdue final project reports** shall not be eligible to apply.
- ✓ The presence of any team member with an overdue project or multiple applications (more than 3 proposals) shall result in rejection of the proposal.
- ✓ Researchers holding grants awarded **before 2023/24** fiscal year under **HURG, HUIF, HUWG, HUSS and HUKT** (e.g projects with code **HURG_2022/2021/2020**, etc) are considered to have overdue projects unless all pending reports are submitted before the proposal submission deadline.

Grant Amount and Duration

Grand Challenge Research Grant

- Funding ceiling: Up to **ETB 4,000,000** per project.
- Project Duration: **3 to 4 years**.
- Maximum annual budget: **ETB 1,000,000**.
- Budgets must be activity-based and adequately justified.
- Projects must demonstrate value for money and efficient utilization of resources.

Regular Research Grant

- Funding amount: Up to **ETB 1,500,000** per project.
- Duration: Maximum of **2 years**.
- Budgets should be realistic, cost-effective, and aligned with planned activities and expected outputs.

Women Research Grant

- **Funding Options:** Applicants may apply under either the ETB 4,000,000 category or the ETB 1,500,000 category.
- **Core Requirement:** Depending on the chosen category, the exact duration, annual caps, and operational criteria of either the Grand Challenge (HUGG) or the Regular Research (HURG) category will apply



Funding Allocation

Subject to the availability of funds and the quality of proposals received, approximately **80% of the total projects** will be funded under the **HUGG category**, while approximately **20%** will be funded under the **HURG category**.

The final number of projects funded under each category will depend on the quality of submitted proposals, available budget, and recommendations of the Research Steering Committee.

Application process and evaluation criteria

Applicants are required to submit a **full research proposal**. Proposals must be prepared using the official proposal template and guidelines provided by the Office of Research Affairs.

Proposals must be submitted online through the **Research Grant Management System (RGMS)** at <https://grant.haramaya.edu.et/login>.

Researchers should create an account or log in to their existing account and submit their application under the appropriate grant category (**HUGG** or **HURG**).

The deadline for submission of full proposals is **September 14, 2026**. The Research Grant Management System will close on **September 14, 2026, at 4:00 PM (10:00 o'clock local time)**.

⚠ Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit their proposals well before the deadline to avoid technical or network-related difficulties that may occur on the final day of submission.

Proposal Evaluation Process

The evaluation of full proposals will consist of a **three-stage review process**:

1. Administrative Screening

- Verification of applicant eligibility.
- Compliance with proposal format and submission requirements.
- Assessment of completeness of all required sections and annexes.
- Plagiarism ($\geq 30\%$ similarity index)



2. Expert Review

Proposals passing administrative screening will be subjected to independent peer review by experts in relevant fields. Proposals will be evaluated by independent experts based on:

- Significance and magnitude of the problem being addressed.
- Scientific merit, originality, and innovativeness of the proposed research.
- Relevance to the University's priority thematic research areas and societal needs.
- Strength of multidisciplinary and/or transdisciplinary integration.
- Technical quality, methodological rigor, and feasibility of implementation.
- Qualifications, expertise, and composition of the research team.
- Postgraduate training and capacity-building contributions.
- Expected research outputs, outcomes, and societal impact.
- Quality of the work plan, monitoring framework, and implementation strategy.
- Budget appropriateness, justification, and value for money.

3. Research Steering Committee (RSC) Review and Funding Decision

- Review of proposals recommended through expert evaluation.
- Consideration of strategic relevance, thematic balance, available budget, and overall ranking.
- Final approval and funding recommendation.

Important Note: Applicants must strictly follow the prescribed proposal format and submission guidelines. Any proposal that fails to comply with the required format, eligibility criteria, or submission requirements may be rejected without further evaluation.

