

2026/27 Call for Proposals: HU Staff Research Grant Competition

Full Proposal Preparation Guide

The full proposal, **including all sections from the Executive Summary through the References, shall not exceed 30 pages**. The Logical Framework and Researcher Biography are compulsory sections and will be assessed as part of the proposal evaluation process.; however, they are not included in the 30-page limit.

Applicants are advised to carefully follow the instructions provided under each section of the proposal template to ensure that all required information is presented clearly, comprehensively, and in the prescribed format.

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Format (Font size: 12 pts, Times New Roman, 1.5 spacing, 1 inch margin in all sides).

Cover page

⇒ Title page consists of project title, theme and sub-theme and authors' name and (both telephone and e-mail addresses) of all the investigators.

Title (Max 25 words)

⇒ The title of the Research Proposal must reflect clearly and succinctly the area of the research that is to be embarked on. The title should be fully explanatory when standing alone.

Table of Contents

⇒ This part is generally organized into main sections and sub-sections. Should not include subsections more than 3 levels.



Executive Summary to Reference (30 pages)

Executive summary (Max one page)

- ⇒ This should briefly highlight the background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives, methodological approaches, methods of data analysis and the expected outputs and intended impacts of the proposed research/project. This should not exceed one page.

1. Introduction (Max 4 pages)

1.1. Background of the Study

- ⇒ The introduction must consist of a general description of the background of the research.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

- ⇒ The **challenge(s)/problems identified must be clearly defined and elaborated (what is the problem; and why and how it is a problem (justification) why is it the problem worth solving)**. It should also indicate the **innovativeness and relevance of the proposed research** (and the research gaps to be bridged) in terms of solving the societal problem and/or advancing knowledge.

1.3. Objectives

- ⇒ This is should be closely related to the statement of the problem and a clear statement of the purposes of the study. One general objective should be indicated (what expected to be achieved in general terms) and specific objectives related to the general objective (breakdown of general objective into several smaller and logically connected parts).

2. Literature Review (Max 4 pages)

- ⇒ This part should contain an analysis of other associated research works or studies. It indicates what other researchers have done and the gaps that have not yet been addressed



(synthesis of relevant and updated literature on the statement of the problem). It's not just a summary of what others have done; it's a synthesis of relevant, up-to-date literature that identifies and analyses the gaps in current knowledge and reiterate how your proposed research will fill the identified gaps.

*

3. Methodology (Materials and Methods)

- ⇒ This can be named as research methodology or materials and methods based on the type of the proposed research (may be different for experimental studies and social and related disciplines). This includes, but not limited to, description of study area, materials and equipment, treatment, survey protocol, data collection methods (what, when, how and from whom the data collected) and analysis and others relevant.
- ⇒ Besides, the methodology section of your proposal is a critical part for evaluating the value for money for the proposed budget. It needs to be written with precision and clarity, as the evaluators and/or review committee will evaluate the proposed budget directly against the activities and resources you outline here. A well-defined methodology demonstrates that your project is feasible, your budget is justified, and your approach is sound.



4. Work Plan (Max 2 pages)

This section should be a table of planned Activities (list each activity to be carried out), timeline (estimated timeframe for each activity), responsible person (specify the research team member accountable for each activity) and budget (include a sub-total budget estimate for each activity) and deliverables (identify any expected outputs or deliverables, which may result from one or more activities).

An example table format is provided below to guide your submission (Delete this instruction).

Activities	Time (duration)				Total budget allocated (Birr)	Responsible persons
	Year I (2026/27)	Year II (2027/28)	Year III (2028/29)	Year IV (2029/30)		
Outputs (Deliverable) 1: A detailed report on the provision of agricultural production inputs, including the list of beneficiaries, the types and quantities of inputs procured and distributed, and the selection process of implementing partners						
Activity 1: Provision of agricultural production inputs					Lumpsum budget here	Name of the responsible research group member (specify the name) and his/her expertise
1.1. Participatory identification of targeted beneficiaries	May–Sep.					
1.2. Procurement of production inputs	Jun. – Dec.					
1.3. Selection of implementing partners and preparation of Letters of Agreement	Jun. – Dec.					
1.4. Distribution of the production inputs	Jun. – Dec.					
Deliverable 2:						
Activity 1					Lumpsum budget here	
2.1.		Jul.–Dec.				
2.2.		Jul.–Dec.				
2.3.		Jul.–Dec.				



5. Expected Outputs, Intended Impact and Dissemination Plan

5.1 Expected outputs and deliverables

The Provide project milestones and deliverables on a semi-annual or annual basis, organized by *Year I, Year II, Year III, and Year IV*. These should enable effective monitoring of project progress and continuity. Deliverables may include:

- Knowledge, Knowledge, information, and technologies generated
- Human capacity development (e.g., MSc and PhD training)
- Publications in indexed journals (PubMed, Scopus, Web of Science)
- Facilities, products, databases, guidelines, or other outputs developed

Note: *Ensure that all proposed deliverables are realistic, achievable, and aligned with the project timeline and budget. Overcommitting may negatively affect the credibility and feasibility of the proposal. Focus on clear, practical, and measurable outputs.*

Table 5.1: Expected Outputs and Deliverables of the project by Year (Examples)

Project Year	Expected Outputs and Deliverables
Year I	• Baseline survey completed and research sites established. • 2 MSc and 1 PhD students recruited. • Climate-smart agronomic package developed.
Year II	• Agronomic and socio-economic data generated and analyzed. • Package tested at research stations. • One stakeholder training conducted.
Year III	• Multi-location validation studies completed. • Two manuscripts submitted/published in journals indexed in Scopus or WOS • On-farm validation completed.
Year IV	• Two additional manuscripts submitted/published in journals indexed in Scopus or WOS • Two MSc and one PhD students graduated. • Recommended technology package released. • Final dissemination workshop conducted • Extension guideline and policy recommendations finalized.



5.2 Intended impact

Potential societal impact of utilization of the proposed research outputs. Research outputs in terms of publications on high quality journals. Provide key indicators of how the expected outcomes will be measured. The research result dissemination and communication strategy for the intended users.

Examples of short- and long-term impacts

- Improved knowledge on climate-smart sorghum production practices.
- Increased adoption of recommended agronomic practices.
- Improved sorghum productivity in target areas.
- Reduced production risks associated with climate variability.
- Improved food and nutrition security among farming households.
- Increased farm income and livelihood resilience.
- Enhanced contribution of sorghum production to regional and national agricultural development goals.

5.3 Dissemination and Communication Plan

Provide an effective and convincing research result communication and dissemination plan/strategy. This is very important as communication and dissemination are critical to ensure that your research reaches the right audience/ for the intended users and makes an impact. Allocate budget for the dissemination and communication plan.

The dissemination and communication plan should clearly indicate:

- Target audiences and intended users of the research outputs (e.g., farmers, industry, policymakers, government agencies, development partners, researchers, communities, NGOs, extension workers, etc.).
- Key messages and outputs to be communicated.
- Communication and dissemination channels to be used.
- Timing and frequency of dissemination activities.
- Expected outcomes of dissemination efforts.
- Budget allocated for dissemination and communication activities



6. Budget Breakdown

Breakdown of the different cost components should be clearly itemized in terms of unit costs and total costs using the template provided by research office. **Inflating costs (unreasonable cost) might lead to rejection of the proposal.**

Every item in your budget should be directly linked to an activity or resource mentioned in your methodology. The committee will look for a clear, logical connection. For example:

- Travel costs should align with the locations mentioned in your study area.
- The budget for research participants should correspond to your stated sample size.
- Costs for chemicals and supplies should be justified by the methods you have described.
- Personnel costs should reflect the time and effort outlined in your timeline.

Separate excel template is provided for budget breakdown preparation subjected to adjustment accordingly to the nature of the project.

References

Relevant and up-to-date references. Use APA reference style.



Logical framework

	Indicators of achievement	Means of verification	Assumptions
Goal <i>What are the overall broader goal of the project?</i>	<i>What are the key indicators related to the goal?</i>	<i>What are the sources of information for these indicators?</i>	
Outcome <i>The change that occurs if the project outputs are achieved</i>			
Outputs (Deliverables) The outputs are the results envisaged to achieve the specific objective. What are the expected results? Output 1.1: Output 1.2: Output 1.3:	<i>What are the indicators to measure whether and to what extent the action achieves the expected results?</i>	<i>What are the sources of information for these indicators?</i>	<i>What external conditions must be met to obtain the expected results on schedule or which prevent the outcome from being achieved ?</i>
Activities What are the key activities to be carried out and in what sequence in order to produce the expected outputs? (group the activities by outputs) (for Outputs 1.1) 1.1.1: 1.1.2: (for Outputs 1.2)	<i>What are the means required to implement these activities, e. g. personnel, equipment, training, studies, supplies, operational facilities, etc.</i>	<i>What are the sources of information about action progress?</i> <i>Costs</i> <i>What are the action costs?</i> <i>How are they classified?</i> <i>(breakdown in the Budget for the Action)</i>	<i>What pre-conditions are required before the action starts?</i> <i>What conditions outside the Beneficiary's direct control have to be met for the implementation of the planned activities?</i>



1.2.1			
1.2.1			

Sample logical framework available online

1. https://hmrp.cimmyt.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/56/2019/02/logical_framework.pdf
2. <https://www.forest-trends.org/wp-content/uploads/bbop/32darwin-initiative-logical-framework-pdf.pdf>
3. <https://www.fao.org/4/i1725e/i1725e09.pdf>



Researchers Biography

Complete the table below for each research team member, including the Principal Investigator (PI), Co-Investigators (CoIs), and key collaborators. For each team member:

- Briefly describe their academic qualification, rank, specialization, and experience relevant to the proposed research.
- Focus on expertise directly related to the project objectives.
- Clearly describe the scientific, technical, managerial, supervisory, or analytical roles the team member will play.
- Explain how the individual's expertise contributes to achieving specific objectives and outputs of the project.
- Avoid generic role descriptions such as "assist in the project" or "participate in data collection."
- Ensure that all team members have clearly defined responsibilities.
- Inclusion of researchers without specific and meaningful contributions may negatively affect proposal evaluation.

Example

Biography of Researchers	Roles of the research in the project
PI is Associate Professor of Agronomy, PhD in Crop Production and Management. Has more than 12 years of experience in crop improvement, climate-smart agriculture, and field experimentation. Principal investigator of four completed research projects and author of 30 peer-reviewed publications related to crop productivity and resilience.	Lead the overall project implementation and coordination. Provide scientific leadership, oversee experimental design, supervise postgraduate students, coordinate multidisciplinary collaboration, ensure quality assurance, lead stakeholder engagement, and oversee publication and dissemination of project outputs.
Co-Investigator 1: CoI-1 is Associate Professor of Soil Science, PhD in Soil Fertility and Nutrient Management. Extensive experience in soil characterization, soil health assessment, and sustainable land management. Has led several national research projects on soil fertility restoration.	Lead soil sampling and laboratory analysis. Design soil fertility experiments, oversee soil-related data collection and analysis, contribute to technology development, supervise student research related to soil management, and co-author scientific publications.
Co-Investigator 2: CoI-2 is Associate Professor of Agricultural Economics, PhD in Agricultural Economics. Expertise in value chain analysis, impact assessment, adoption studies, and economic evaluation of agricultural technologies.	Lead socioeconomic assessments, cost-benefit analyses, adoption studies, and policy analysis. Assess economic feasibility of developed technologies and contribute to policy recommendations and stakeholder engagement activities.

