THE MPALA RESEARCH FUND

Overview

Princeton University serves as the managing partner for the Mpala Research Centre (MRC), a multidisciplinary field-research station located in Kenya’s Laikipia County. The center provides scholars unparalleled opportunities to conduct research on conservation, sustainable human-wildlife co-existence and semi-arid ecosystems in Africa and, increasingly, on climate change, the environment and public health. In addition to the Natural Sciences, the site provides unique opportunities for faculty in the Humanities, Social Sciences and Engineering.

The Mpala Research Fund aims to support faculty members from all disciplines who are interested in exploring or pursuing research opportunities and/or teaching initiatives at Mpala. Faculty members from all disciplines are welcome to apply. We especially encourage applications from faculty members with interests in expanding the use of Mpala to fields in the humanities, social sciences, and engineering. In addition, administrative staff and administrative units of the University involved in or proposing service or experiential learning initiatives are also eligible.

Grants of between $5,000 and $75,000 per year are available with duration of 1 to 2 years. Funding can be dispersed as early as March 2019. Any legitimate research or teaching expense may be eligible, but priority will be given to direct research and programming costs and support costs such as travel. Faculty or other compensation, if awarded, will be consistent with Dean of the Faculty guidelines.

Some examples of proposals that would be eligible for Mpala Research Fund:

- Scholarly research proposals on topics of all disciplines that can be pursued at Mpala and leverage the unique site
- Proposals for collaborations with Kenyan or regional universities and institutions based at Mpala
- A conference or international workshop to be held on-site on relevant topics such as conservation, food security, water resource management, climate change, African literature or art, etc.
- A faculty-led break trip of short duration (1-2 weeks) as part of a course approved by the Dean of the College
- A service project bringing Princeton students to Mpala to work with local communities in anthropology, conservation, public health, education, and engineering or another related field
• A summer internship program for STEM students to conduct research at Mpala

In recognition of the fact that many departments and programs administer endowed or term funds that are restricted and require the University to spend them before unrestricted general funds, and in order to make this fund accessible to as many faculty members as possible, we ask all applicants to seek a financial commitment from their department chair or program director to include with their proposal to the Mpala Research Fund. The selection committee recognizes that available resources vary among departments or sponsoring programs for supporting these types of activities, and this will be taken into account when the proposal is reviewed.

**Eligibility**

All regular faculty members (senior lecturers, instructors, assistant professors, associate professors, and professors) and research scholars are eligible. Full-time lecturers and language lecturers are also eligible, provided their appointments for the award period have been approved by the Dean of the Faculty. Administrative staff and administrative units of the University involved in service or experiential learning initiatives are also eligible.

Proposals from all faculty, scholars and relevant administrative units will be considered. However, priority will be given to proposals submitted by faculty, scholars, and others who have not previously used Mpala as a research and teaching site.

**How to Apply**

As a first step, please contact the Assistant Provost for International Affairs, Aly Kassam-Remtulla (8-8003, akassam@princeton.edu) to indicate interest.

**Application components:**

1. **Cover sheet with basic information** (please use the template on our [website](#))
   a. Proposer’s name/department and contact information
   b. Optional: Co-proposer’s name/department and contact information
   c. Project name
   d. Project start/end date
   e. Department chair’s / program director’s financial commitment / endorsement
   f. Optional: 2nd department chair’s / program’s director’s financial commitment / endorsement
2. **Project description** (up to five pages, no more than 2000 words)
   a. Project plan
   b. Participants in the project
   c. Ongoing benefits of the project to Princeton faculty members and students

3. **Project budget** (please use the template on our [website](#))
   a. Eligible expenses include travel, meals, housing, and ground transportation for faculty members, postdocs, other researchers, and students; honoraria and fees from host organizations; visa, medical, and other required fees in preparation for travel; equipment, material, and supplies.
   b. Under “sources/income” section, include funding committed by your department/program as well as funding from other sources applied for or committed.
   d. Funding from the Mpala Fund may be available for expenditure as soon as March 2019. Project length may be up to two years.

**Application Timeline**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>October 15, 2018</td>
<td>Applications available</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 15, 2018</td>
<td>Applications due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 15, 2019</td>
<td>Notifications made</td>
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**Selection Procedure**

Successful proposals will be chosen by a faculty committee convened by the Assistant Provost for International Affairs, including the Director of CITR and, as appropriate, other senior academic administrators (e.g., deans and deputy/associate deans of the faculty, the graduate school, the college, the school of engineering, and research).

The proposals will be evaluated in terms of scholarly or pedagogical merits; intellectual and academic creativity and experimental ideas are welcomed and encouraged. The selection committee may ask for revisions to the proposal before final approval of
funding.

**Reporting Requirements**

Grant awardees are required to submit a brief annual report on their project at the end of each year of the grant.

**Contact Us**

For further information, please contact Assistant Provost for International Affairs, Aly Kassam-Remtulla (8-8003, akassam@princeton.edu) or Associate Director for International Affairs Claire Hu (8-7232, ch@princeton.edu).